



## Documenting Sources

### Why You Should Document

By documenting your sources correctly, you avoid plagiarism. There are two types of plagiarism:

- Using ideas, information, or language without crediting the source.
- Documenting the source, but paraphrasing the language or the sentence structure too closely without using quotation marks to indicate what words or phrases have been borrowed.

Plagiarism is unethical and qualifies as a violation of W&M's Honor Code. The following guidelines are intended to help you document properly and avoid plagiarism.

### What to Document

Document all contributions made by other writers whose work you are drawing from.

These contributions include the following:

- A direct quotation from a source, whether primary or secondary.
- A summary or paraphrase of a source.
- Facts or ideas that you borrow from a source, such as statistics, little-known facts, tables, graphs, diagrams.

### What Not to Document

- Your own ideas
- Common knowledge (what the average college student who has not done your research would know)
- Information that is common to several sources

A good rule to follow if you are not sure whether or not to document a source: when in doubt, document!

### Things to Keep in Mind while Doing Research

When taking notes during your research, write down all pertinent bibliographical information. You will use this information when you are citing your sources and creating your works cited or bibliography page:

- Books – full name of author(s), editor, translator, full title, subtitle, edition number, city of publication, publisher, date of publication; page numbers.
- Articles – full name of author(s), title/subtitle of article, title of publication, date of publication, page numbers, and volume/issue number.

If the source is a book from the library, it's also a good idea to jot down the call number so you can find it again if necessary.

