

## Formatting & Citation Conventions

While philosophy courses usually emphasize clear writing and argumentation, good formatting of your essays should not be ignored. Of course, there's no one good way to do this — many different conventions apply to different academic areas or traditions. Your other professors may demand different formatting. But the following is a widely-used and fairly simple set of conventions that will serve you well when nothing more specific is demanded. Please use it in this course.

### Type & Spacing

Please use an 11- or 12-point serif font (i.e., one like this and not a “straight” style, “sans-serif” font like that used for the first heading).

Use approximately 1” margins and double-space text throughout (except in block quotes and footnotes, if used). The first line of each paragraph should be indented by about ½” and there should be no additional space between paragraphs. Please do not “justify” the text (just align left) and do not turn on hyphenation.

Please number your pages, either with a single number in the footer or (more formally) with your last name followed by the page number (on all but the first page) in the top right of the page.

Remember that names of major works (books, &c.) should be italicized in the text as well, not just in your reference list. You may also use italics for emphasis (if you *really* want to), but don't overdo it. Please do not use underlining or bold face for emphasis (they're suitable for section titles, however).

### Citing Text

For short quotations (of, say, fewer than three lines), you may insert the quoted material directly into the text. This requires an in-text citation for which there are many conventions. In this class, you should use the short parenthetical style. For example, I might warn you to write without pretension lest you become “tiresome company, having the show of wisdom without the reality” (Plato 1964, 34).

Notice a few things about this example:

- I didn't skip a beat in introducing the quote: it flows naturally with the text.
- The period relative to the quotation marks: the citation is part of the sentence, but not part of the quote (while there was a period at the end of the quoted sentence, it goes *after* the citation).
- The format of parenthetical citations is typically “(Author year of publication, cited page if any)”,
- I did not quote Plato in a longwinded way by writing something like ‘In Ross's 1964 translation of Plato's *Meno*, Plato writes on page 34: ...’. Why not? Because that used up many words that I want to save for my argument — and the information will be in my works cited list at the end of the paper anyway.

You should use block quotes when the quotation would span more than three lines. In this case, quotation marks are not needed — the quoted text is set apart from the rest using spacing and indenting (½” indent on both sides, single line spacing, single blank lines above and below; see right). Notice this time that the citation goes *after* the period of the last sentence. That's just the convention.

Bert Russell  
Essay #1 (PHIL 321)  
Professor Kant  
Word Count: 1,234 words

#### Hume's Abject Failure

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet,  
consectetur adipisicing elit, sed do  
eiusmod tempor incididunt ut labore et  
dolore magna aliqua. Ut enim ad minim  
veniam, quis nostrud exercitation  
ullamco laboris nisi ut aliquip ex ea  
commodo consequat.

Duis aute irure dolor in reprehenderit  
in voluptate velit esse cillum dolore eu

1

Sed ut perspiciatis unde omnis iste natus  
error sit voluptatem accusantium  
doloremque laudantium. Cicero writes:

totam rem aperiam, eaque ipsa  
quae ab illo inventore veritatis et  
quasi architecto beatae vitae dicta  
sunt explicabo. Nemo enim  
ipsam voluptatem quia voluptas  
sit aspernatur. (Lewis 1986, 10)

Sed quia consequuntur magni dolores  
eos qui ratione voluptatem sequi  
nesciunt. Neque porro quisquam est, qui  
dolorem ipsum quia dolor sit amet,  
consectetur, adipisci velit, sed quia non  
numquam eius modi tempora incidunt ut  
labore et dolore magnam aliquam

You will sometimes want to cite a text without *quoting* from it. Perhaps the author doesn't make a point that is easily quoted. I might remark that Jones (1997) argues that Quine's solution to the problem of non-being fails, though Smith (2003, 27) disagrees. Here I have referred to Jones' whole article from 1997 and to page 27 of Smith's article from 2003. This is all the information you need in the text, as you'll be including the full citation in your works cited list at the end of the essay.

When citing the same source over and over again in text, you may omit repetitive information if and only if it is clear that you are citing from the same source. Suppose I quote Jones as claiming that "Quine's solution to the problem of non-being fails" (Jones 1997, 182). I might go on to mention that Jones later argues that this is because "Quine wrongly assumes that existence is not a predicate" (183). Since it's clear that I'm still talking about the same paper by Jones, I can simply cite which page without including the author and date.

## References

There are *many* different conventions for worked cited lists, but again, the most important aspects are consistency and clarity. Remember: every in-text citation must correspond to a full entry in your list of references. Note that these include both works cited and consulted. Here's an example (note the variations for books, articles, webpages):

- Ferris, Timothy (2003) *Coming of Age in the Milky Way*. New York: Harper Collins Publishers, Inc.
- Kraut, Richard (2004) "Plato", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Winter 2003 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), Accessed from <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/plato/> (8/31/07).
- Kuhn, Thomas S. (1996) *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*. 3rd Ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Quine, W.V.O. (1953) "Two Dogmas of Empiricism", *Philosophical Review* 60: 20–43. Reprinted in Martin Curd and J. A. Cover (eds.) *Philosophy of Science: The Central Issues*. New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 1998.

When citing sources in text that are reprinted in a collection I think the best practice is to cite the author and original publication date but use the page number from the reprint. E.g., I could quote Quine as writing that our statements about the world "meet the tribunal of sense experience not individually but only as a corporate body" (Quine 1953, 323), even if page 323 refers to a location in the Curd and Cover reprint.

## Sources & Academic Honesty

This *should* go without saying, but failing to cite work that was instrumental in your work (either copying or being particularly "inspired" by other's work) constitutes a serious breach of academic trust (and will be dealt with through official channels). Know what counts as plagiarism and when in doubt ask.

When it comes to finding other sources on the web, you should also realize that not everything is good. Wikipedia is sometimes helpful, but it's unreliable (especially in philosophy, in my experience — I know a case of a philosopher attempting to correct an entry about himself and being argued with!). Ditto for sources like other professor's course websites/notes and the myriad "study guide" sites out there (e.g., sparknotes.com). You're far better off sticking with peer-reviewed journals or internet encyclopedias (particularly the Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy: [plato.stanford.edu](http://plato.stanford.edu)) if you're looking for further guidance. But if you use these sources, you *must* cite them. Chances are I've already read anything relevant to this class and will notice if your essay is derivative of such professional sources.