Annotated Bibliography

An annotated bibliography includes the bibliographic reference of a series of sources as well as a brief account or review of each source. In a few lines, this descriptive or critical comment seeks either to inform the reader of the source’s main ideas, or to measure the source’s quality by evaluating its credibility, its accuracy and its relevance. The annotated bibliography can be a paper in itself or be part of a larger research project. Here is the suggested format for this type of paper.

This resource is not exhaustive and does not replace the assignment instructions given in class. Writing a paper must always be done according to the professor’s requirements.

Bibliographic References

- **Complete bibliographic reference of each source**
  Do the entries with a hanging indent and put them in alphabetical order according to the authors’ surnames.
  - Make sure that you format the bibliographic information according to the right referencing style.
    (APA, Chicago Manual, MLA …)

Descriptive or Critical Comments

- **OPTION 1: Account of each source**
  Write a paragraph of a few lines presenting the source’s main ideas. Insert it right under its bibliographic reference.

- **OPTION 2: Review of each source**
  Write a paragraph of a few lines presenting the source’s content and particularities as well as its strengths and weaknesses. Insert it right under its bibliographic reference.
GUIDELINES

STEP 1) Following the instructions
- In order to meet the course requirements and the professor’s expectations, you must follow the instructions. Make sure that you understand and respect them.

STEP 2A) Planning the annotated bibliography: Doing active reading
- Before writing your annotated bibliography, read and reread each source.
- Highlight the key terms and give an account of each source in your own words.
- First, look at the headings and introduction in order to identify the sources’ thesis and main ideas. Then, read the sources from start to finish several times to make sure that you understand them.

STEP 2B) Planning the annotated bibliography: Focusing on the essential ideas
- Identify the main and supporting ideas of the source as well as the evidence that supports them and the examples that illustrate them.
- Eliminate the content that is not essential to the comprehension of the source.
- Establish the strengths and weaknesses of the source by considering the key terms, the methodology, the results and conclusions, and the theoretical approach.
- Think of the reader; for example, if you had to write the annotated bibliography of 10 scientific articles, which elements should you insist on in your descriptive or critical comments in order for him to have a good idea of the sources’ content or quality?

STEP 2C) Planning the annotated bibliography: Making an outline
- Prepare accurate bibliographic references done according to the appropriate referencing style.
- Place the descriptive or critical comments right under its bibliographic reference.

STEP 3) Writing the annotated bibliography
- Follow the outline.
- If your annotated bibliography is part of a larger research project, its content must be related to your research question, as its purpose is to show the gaps in the literature that justify your research project.

STEP 4) Editing the annotated bibliography
- Before submitting your annotated bibliography, look at content, structure, language and references. Make sure that you allow enough time for editing—putting the finishing touches to your paper helps to establish your credibility as a writer.