

Engaging with Sources Guide

Citation is important for several reasons: it gives credit to other scholars for their ideas, it permits you to use their ideas in your work without plagiarizing, and it demonstrates to the reader that your research is sound by listing where you're getting your information.

Types of Sources

There are many ways of using sources, including to provide background, as objects of analysis, or to respond to another scholar's work, to name a few. Listed below are three common uses of sources:

- **Background Sources:** A source the writer relies on to provide context (these include information that has been established as fact)
- **Exhibit Sources:** A source the writer holds up for analysis (such as evidence, primary sources, and data)
- **Argument Sources:** A source that includes arguments other scholars have made about your topic, which you are building on or otherwise responding to

Ways of Citing

There are several ways of incorporating a source, and the way you choose depends on the role your source is playing (is it providing background? Being held up for analysis? A source to which you're responding with your own argument?). Here are three ways of incorporating sources:

- **Summarizing** involves putting the main idea(s) into your own words, including only the main point(s). It is necessary to attribute summarized ideas to the original source. Summaries are significantly shorter than the original and include a broad overview of the source material. *Writers often use summary when providing background, context, or quickly laying out an argument.*
- **Paraphrasing** involves putting a specific passage from a source into your own words. A paraphrase must also be attributed to the original source. Paraphrased material is usually shorter than the original passage, taking a broad segment of the source and condensing it slightly. *Writers often use paraphrase when incorporating a specific part of a source.*
- **Quoting** involves reproducing the exact words of the original text while using a narrow segment of the source. Quotation must match the source word for word and must be attributed to the original author. *Writers often use quotation when they want to emphasize the source author's expertise or hold up their work for analysis (i.e. when using the source as an exhibit).*

Sources in Action

Excerpt 1: The following is excerpted from a student paper titled “Comprehensive Peer Mentoring as a Holistic Strategy for Promoting Student Success at Guttman Community College.” Refer to the following key and the above definitions for examples of how to incorporate background, exhibit, and argument sources:

<u>Background</u>
<i>Exhibit</i>
Argument

...Student peer mentoring has become widely recognized as a strategy for promoting student success, especially among at-risk students. The literature has highlighted several key factors that contribute to its effectiveness. Here I discuss a few of the most prominent factors with high relevance to the Guttman Community College context, namely the non-hierarchical relationship, the far-reaching effects of social engagement, and the strategy’s sustainable model in comparison to other techniques for increasing student success.

Researchers have asserted that peer mentoring is powerful largely because of the non-hierarchical relationship it fosters, based on a shared social position and perspective. **As Collier states in his work, “peer mentors and mentees are more likely than participants in hierarchical mentoring relationships to share a common perspective in regards to how they understand and enact the college student role” (Collier, 2017).** According to Collier, peer mentor and mentee are more likely to share a similar world view and set of experiences than are non-peers. This makes the mentor a reliable and credible figure, someone whose advice the student is likely to heed because of an authentic feeling of being understood....

Another key explanation for the effectiveness of peer mentoring at supporting mentee college success is that the social relationship significantly increases motivation. **Cornelius and others suggest that a sense of social belonging in a community contributes greatly to the likelihood that a student will fully commit to the college experience and everything it entails. Cornelius asserts that “when students are disengaged, they are less likely to spend time and effort in educationally purposeful activities” (Cornelius, 2016). But when students develop strong**

ARGUMENT SOURCE

The writer brings in this source to summarize another author’s claim, which she will then use to analyze and comment on the Guttman Community College peer mentoring program.

ARGUMENT SOURCE

relationships with peer mentors, the experience of social belonging tends to bolsters overall engagement. The mentor acts as an external cheerleader when the mentee’s intrinsic goals are not enough to complete a particular task (Satyanarayana, Li, Braneky, 2014)

Finally, many researchers promote peer mentoring for its financial sustainability...

Guttman Community College in Manhattan has implemented an extensive and innovative peer mentoring program that exemplifies many of the qualities discussed above. The mentoring program was tailored to the specific context of this unique institution. Guttman was established, in part, as a response to declining graduation rates among community colleges. From the fall of 2007 to the fall of 2011, the number of students who received their Associate degrees after two years hovered between 3 and just over 4 percent; the average for 3 years didn’t rise above 17 percent (Hilliard, 2017). Determined to move graduation rates up again, former CUNY Chancellor Matthew Goldstein founded the New Community College, which was renamed the Charles and Stella Guttman Community College after a sizeable donation from the namesake’s foundation. Based on extensive research, the planning team at Guttman came up with services and features they believed would lead to a student’s success. Guttman integrated several innovative approaches to student retention including mandatory full-time enrollment, an inclusive approach to remediation, and incorporation of peer mentors at every turning point for students. In 2012, Guttman Community College opened its doors to their inaugural class of 300 students (“About,” Guttman Community College Official Website)....

Many community colleges have implemented peer mentoring programs to support student success. Guttman’s system is unique and has achieved remarkable success through its comprehensiveness, multidimensionality, and the way it is spread across the entire student experience. Andrew Bennett, Assistant Director of Mentoring, says that the program is a non-traditional one. *“Mentors are infused strategically throughout the college.” He goes on to explain that the mentors are there intentionally to cover the many “touch points” throughout a student’s academic career (A. Bennett, personal communication, May 3 2018).*

ARGUMENT SOURCE

BACKGROUND SOURCE

The writer introduces data from this source to help the reader understand the context in which the program she will discuss directly was developed.

BACKGROUND SOURCE

EXHIBIT SOURCE

The writer uses this source, a personal communication, in order to shed light on Guttman’s innovative program, which the writer is discussing and analyzing directly to support a claim.

A look at Guttman’s website reveals that the college utilizes peer mentors in four main ways, meeting a variety of student needs across the timespan of a student’s tenure at the college. *First, there are “Admissions and Access” peer mentors, who “guide prospective students and families through Guttman’s unique admissions process.” Their role is to assist students with the transition from high school to college. All incoming students are required to have at least one individual meeting and one group meeting with a peer mentor. Mentors are in charge of organizing all admissions events including information sessions and campus tours. They also participate in the Guttman Summer Bridge program. Second, the “First Year Experience” mentors [...] Third, the “Meet Up” peer mentors attend specific academic courses and facilitate group work and co-facilitate class lessons. [...] Lastly, the “Transfer” peer mentors facilitate workshops for those students who are ready to graduate and transfer to a 4-year institution. [...] Peer mentors are made available to communicate Monday through Friday from 8:00AM to 8:00PM through a system called Direct Connect (“Peer Mentoring,” Guttman Community College Official Website).*

EXHIBIT SOURCE

The heavy reliance on peer mentors to communicate such critical information to students and facilitate the transition to college **clearly calls upon the “peer” benefit of sharing a common perspective that Collier describes.** As a very high percentage of Guttman students are first generation college students who cannot obtain direct guidance from trusted family members, the payoff of disseminating important information through peer conduits whom students are likely to trust, identify with, and bond with socially, has enormous potential. This thorough “infusion” of mentorship throughout the college experience means that students are never left alone to navigate the system independently or expected to rely solely on the advisement and support of individuals whom students might be less likely to fully trust or feel understood by, such as faculty and administrators....

ARGUMENT SOURCE

While it’s difficult to single out the effects of one aspect of Guttman’s unique approach to the community college experience, the overall success of Guttman’s new model suggests that the comprehensive peer mentor system is effective. *Between the fall of 2012 and the fall of 2015, Guttman’s two-year graduation rate ranged from about 28 percent to about 31 percent; the three-year graduation rates during these years ranged from about 44 percent to about 50 percent. The average for CUNY’s other community colleges for the same years range between 6 and 9 percent for two years, and 21 and 23 percent for the three-year mark (Hilliard, 2017)....*

EXHIBIT SOURCE

Excerpt 2: The following is excerpted from a capstone project titled “The Lottery’s Draw: Allocating Scarce Affordability in New York City’s Housing Market.” Refer to the following key and the above definitions for examples of source incorporation using summary, paraphrase, and quotations.

Summary
Paraphrase
Quotation

The dearth of affordable, livable New York City housing is the primary issue on the minds of New York metro-area residents. According to a survey of more than 1,500 residents of the metro area in 2015, the high cost of living and the high cost of housing were rated as the most serious problems they face. This response was shared across age groups, incomes, or whether living in New York City or the suburbs (Public Agenda, 2015).

High costs of living and shelter are a visible problem: some 127,000 men, women, and children slept in shelters in 2016. This is an increase from the prior year, despite the city’s efforts to move 38,000 people from shelters to more permanent forms of housing (Greenberg, 2017). Though these figures show, on a conservative measure, that 1.49 percent of New York City’s 8.52 million residents face the reality of not knowing where they will sleep at night, it does not describe the many households doubled up in already overcrowded apartments or those that are rent burdened because they spend more than 30 percent of their annual income on housing (or the severely rent burdened, who spend more than 50 percent of their annual income on housing) (Housing New York, 2015).

...

Median wages for households grew at about 2 percent over the same time period (Furman Center, 2014). New York City’s rent stabilized housing stock has seen an approximate net loss of 151,899 units since 1994, according to the New York City Rent Guidelines Board.

This unsustainable growth in housing prices has put a higher rent burden on the backs of more New York City residents. More than half of New Yorkers are considered rent burdened in that they pay in excess of 30 percent of their income on housing, and about a third of households are considered severely rent burdened (Moskowitz, 2015)

...

Here the writer briefly **summarizes** the most important findings of the 2015 survey.

In this paragraph and the next, the writer **paraphrases** points from several sources to illustrate the severity of the issue.

The writer **paraphrases** these points by putting them into her own words rather than including a direct quotation. Note that both summary and paraphrase still require a citation.

...When new affordable units are in the process of development, New York City's Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD), the primary agency which facilitates city projects with city capital funding, and the Housing Development Corporation (HDC), another financier of city development through the sale of bonds and state subsidy, entrust responsibility of selecting tenants for these development projects to an outside party, typically the developer of the housing project, subsidiaries or affiliates of the developer, or a third-party marketing, leasing, managing, monitoring, or administering agent hired by the developer. The process is commonly known as a lottery and is subject to review and approval from HPD or HDC.

HPD's website describes the aim of the affordable housing lottery as such on the marketing section of its website:

Developers using HDC-financing to construct affordable housing are required to adhere to the marketing and tenant selection policies and procedures. The Marketing Handbook provides developers and designated managing agents with useful information and direction for preparing its marketing plan and developing procedures consistent with HDC's policy objectives.

The primary objective of the marketing, lease-up, and sales effort is to ensure that the process is fair and provides equal opportunity to all applicants, regardless of race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, national origin, age, genetic information, disability, or veteran status. In addition, the process should affirmatively further fair housing by promoting racial, ethnic, income, and geographic diversity among residents and within the neighborhood, and by providing applicants with mobility, vision, or hearing disabilities that require accessible/adaptable units priority for those units (HPD, 2016).

Some have complained about the confusing lottery selection process and lack of transparency to applicants. A recent Politico article which describes Council Member Mark Treyger's bill, which would require HPD to publish data annually on every lottery it administers or contracts out, also describes lotteries as "byzantine" (Skelding, 2017). On October 4, 2016, the city issued an updated Marketing Handbook, which sets the rules for all lotteries run through HPD and HDC. The updates, according to HPD and HDC, are based on recommendations from the city's Housing Ambassadors, a group of community-based service providers who help people prepare and apply for affordable housing, along with other stakeholders in the process, including applicants, developers and marketing agents—third-party companies or nonprofit organizations hired by developers to review applicants and "lease up" (fill) the units.

Here, the writer **quotes** the exact wording from the HPD's marketing page, reproducing their description of the housing lottery system and the way it will help support fair and equitable housing.

The length makes this a **block quotation**, and so quotation marks are not needed in this case.

The use of exact language above builds a contrast between the vision and the lack of transparency applicants experienced.

In this paragraph, the writer directly **quotes** key words and phrases, signaling with **quotation marks**.

Avoiding Plagiarism

You must include a citation for the following:

- specific words and phrases
- paraphrased or summarized ideas
- information that isn't common knowledge

The only time you don't need a citation is when information is common knowledge, but keep in mind that most information you learn about a topic as you're researching will actually come from a source, and if that's the case, that source should be cited. When you're unsure whether a piece of information is common knowledge, it's always best to cite.

Further Resources

Quoting, Paraphrasing, and Summarizing

For more resources on the differences between **quoting, paraphrasing, and summarizing**, and examples of **how to correctly cite material**, please visit:

[Purdue Online Writing Lab – “Quoting, Paraphrasing, and Summarizing”](#)

[Baruch Writing Center – “When to Summarize, Paraphrase, or Quote”](#)

[UConn Writing Center – “Integrating Sources into Your Paper”](#)

Templates for Introducing Sources

For **templates and examples of language to use to introduce and incorporate** sources into your writing, please visit:

[Baruch Writing Center – “Language to Introduce Citations”](#)

[University of Manchester’s Academic Phrasebank - "Referring to Sources"](#)

Citation Style Guides

For APA, MLA & Chicago citation style guides and citation management, please visit:

[Newman Library - Citing and Managing Sources](#)