ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

What is an Annotated Bibliography?

Some of your courses at Ashford University will require you to write an Annotated Bibliography. An Annotated Bibliography is a working list of references—books, journal articles, online documents, websites, etc.—that you will use for an essay, research paper, or project. However, each reference citation is followed by a short summative and/or evaluative paragraph, which is called an annotation. The purpose of the annotation is to inform the reader of the relevance, accuracy, and quality of the sources cited, and to state how this source will be used in or relevant to the paper or project.

Thus, an Annotated Bibliography has two main parts:

1. the citation of your book, article, webpage, video, or document (in APA style)
2. your annotation

How to create an Annotated Bibliography

1. Research the required number of scholarly sources from the library for your project.
2. Reference each source in APA format. For help on how to format each source, see our sample references list.
3. Write two paragraphs under each source:
   a. The first paragraph is a short summary of the article in your own words. Don’t just cut and paste the abstract of the article.
   b. The second paragraph is a short discussion of how this source supports your paper topic. What does this source provide that reinforces the argument or claim you are making? This support may be statistics, expert testimony, or specific examples that relate to your focused topic.

Sample Annotated Bibliography Entry

Here is a sample entry from an Annotated Bibliography:


This article reviews differing English for Specific Purposes (ESP) trends in practice and in theory. Belcher categorizes the trends into three non-exclusive sects: sociodiscoursal, sociocultural, and sociopolitical.

Sociodiscoursal, she postulates, is difficult to distinguish from genre analysis because many of the major players (e.g., Ann Johns) tend to research and write in favor of both disciplines. Belcher acknowledges the preconceived shortcomings of ESP in general, including its emphasis on “narrowly-defined venues” (p.
165), its tendency to “help learners fit into, rather than contest, existing…structures” (p. 166), and its supposed “cookie-cutter” approach. In response to these common apprehensions about ESP, Belcher cites the New Rhetoric Movement and the Sydney School as two institutions that have influenced progressive changes and given more depth to “genre” (p. 167). She concludes these two schools of thought address the issue of ESP pandering to “monologic” communities. Corpus linguistics is also a discipline that is expanding the knowledge base of ESP practitioners in order to improve instruction in content-specific areas. Ultimately, she agrees with Swales (1996) that most genres that could help ESL learners are “hidden…or poorly taught” (p. 167) and the field of genre is only beginning to grasp the multitude of complexities within this potentially valuable approach to the instruction of language—and in turn, writing.

This article provides examples as well as expert opinion that I can use in my project. This will provide me with evidence to support my claims about the current disciplines in ESL studies.

**Guidelines for Formatting Your Annotated Bibliography**

- Citations should be cited according to APA format.
- Annotations should be indented a half an inch (.5”) so that the author’s last name is the only text that is completely flush left.