APA Format for Annotated Bibliographies

Definition

A bibliography is a list of sources (books, journals, websites, periodicals, etc.) one has used for researching a topic. A bibliography usually just includes the bibliographic information (i.e., the author, title, publisher, etc.).

An annotation is a summary and/or evaluation.

An annotated bibliography includes a summary and/or evaluation of each of the sources. For an annotated bibliography, use standard APA format for the citations, then add a brief abstract for each entry, including:
- 2 to 4 sentences to summarize the main idea(s) of the item, and
- 1 or 2 sentences to relate the material to your research topic and/or to evaluate the material.

Basic APA Style Format

Format your citations in the same manner as for a typical reference list, then follow these instructions for adding an annotation.

1. Double space the entire bibliography, including within the citations and annotations.
2. Hanging Indents are required for citations in the bibliography, as shown below. That means that the first line of the citation starts at the left margin. Subsequent lines (lines that follow the first line) of the citation are indented.
3. At the end of the citation, press the Enter Key to drop down to the next line (double spaced). Do not add an extra blank line.
4. The annotation is indented 2 additional spaces as a block.
5. The right margin is the normal right margin of your document.

Sample Annotated Bibliography


Ongoing continuous attempts to transform the American health care system have been motivated by the goals of preserving the excellence of patient care, improving the overall population's health, and decreasing costs. The Affordable Care Act brings these three goals together, but will likely depend on a global acceptance and implementation of an integrated
electronic record system. This article does a good job of connecting electronic health records to the success of the ACA.


This editorial by a university professor discusses a student that motivated and inspired him, despite his poor study habits, because he enjoyed learning. He compares this student to many of his other students, who are apathetic, uninterested, and just want to get through the course. It is interesting to hear how professors view their students and how much they want their students to succeed.


To be successful when attending college, it is important to be organized and know how to prioritize your work. Setting aside time each day for studying helps you avoid the panic and careless work that can result if you procrastinate. This article provides a short and usable list of good study habits that would benefit any student.


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