

One of the most important basic elements of research is finding out about existing knowledge on a topic. In addition to learning about prior research and writing on a particular subject, conducting bibliographic research and reviewing the body of literature relevant to your topic improves your ability to understand, analyze, critique, and expand on ideas, arguments, and datasets already exist. It is very important that you find sources that are recent and current, as well as relevant and pertinent. Research from the 1940s may be very interesting, inspiring, and informative, but you need to supplement it with subsequent work that may challenge prior assumptions and conclusions, or open new avenues for thought. Your bibliographic work must be thorough! This type of work is usually called a “literature review” and it is a mandatory part of all scientific and scholarly research and writing. The Annotated Bibliography is a step in the direction of completing a full literature review.

The goal of the Annotated Bibliography assignment is twofold: (1) exposure to existing knowledge relevant to your research topic; and (2) analysis of that knowledge. The Annotated Bib is not a literature review *per se*, but is a step toward your literature review that will make it easier for you to develop an appropriate and adequate literature review as a component of your final poster. The Annotated Bib will make it easier for you to begin organizing your understanding of some basic elements of scientific writing and for the preparation of your final poster and presentation.

The first step, which you undertook in your Preliminary Bibliography assignment, is to identify scholarly materials that are relevant to your project. After you identify these materials, your next step is to actively engage with them. Active engagement means not just reading, but reading with a purpose. You should imagine yourself having a conversation with the text and the author as you read, and question throughout. Take notes, and lots of them! Don’t rely on your memory. Take notes on: what is written; what you think is left out; on ideas that occur to you as you read; *et cetera*. Always make sure that your notes are clearly connected to particular readings: author, title, publication date, page number. These should be a normal component of your research process, and for this class, you will be recording these notes, inspirations, objections, criticisms, questions, etc. in your Research Journals.

The Annotated Bib should give an alphabetical list (by author’s last name) of the full citations of each source you plan to use (those in your Preliminary Bib plus sources you have added since), as well as a brief summary of the research reported on in each source. Your annotation should be between 150 – 250 words in length, and should be both descriptive and evaluative: that is, you must include the purpose of the research reported, the type of data involved, the author’s research questions, the author’s assumptions and conclusions, and your brief evaluation of the work and writing. Cornell University’s library has a very useful breakdown of how to write an annotated bib. If you would like to see it, go here: <http://www.library.cornell.edu/olinuris/ref/research/skill28.htm>. The UF libraries have dedicated staff who have substantive disciplinary commitments (e.g. anthropology) and can provide you with help locating materials. Don’t hesitate to seek them out.

Each student is to submit their own Annotated Bibliography. You may collaborate with your partner, but I want individual Annotations from each of you. Partners should not submit the same Annotated Bib, in other words. You should plan on 15 – 20 sources, plus annotations, which will likely require between 6 – 10 pages.