GUIDE TO THE PRESENTATION OF THE MINOR ASSIGNMENT
WRITTEN FOR LEAH BURNS

The purpose of this guide is to provide advice to students on the treatment of quotations, tables, figures and bibliographies in their assignments. Conformity to this is expected as a basic standard for all students. The advantage of having such a set of conventions is that it is convenient and time-saving. Once a few simple rules and forms have been mastered, the treatment of quotations and bibliographical information will cease to present problems, releasing valuable time and energy for the really important aspects of a report or essay: the thought that has gone into it, its substantive content, the arrangement of its argument, and the polishing of its expression. This guide says nothing about such matters, not because they are unimportant, but because they are not reducible to rules. To achieve brevity, only the most common situations have been covered. For further assistance and other examples, students are recommended to seek advice from their supervisor.

1. **Before** writing an assignment, think about the purpose, and the audience. Read carefully any notes on the assessment item, referring to length, content and so on. You are advised to plan your sections before writing a full draft.

2. Assignments should be **clearly typed**, and should always be carefully checked and **proof-read**. They should have ample **margins** (at least 2.5 cm). **Double spacing** is required. Pages should be **numbered** consecutively and each assignment should be accompanied by a **title page** stating your name, the subject, the title of the work and the name of the person to whom it is submitted. You should always keep a **copy** of your work. Backup your computer files and save regularly! Excuses relating to computer or printer malfunctions are not acceptable as grounds for an extension.

3. We recommend that your **spelling** follow the conventions of *The Macquarie Dictionary*. Do not use contractions, such as it’s, don’t, I’m, won’t, and so on. These are not acceptable in formal essay writing.

4. In your written expression you should avoid using **sexist language**, such as ‘man’ when you mean ‘human’ or ‘people’. Use plural nouns, such as ‘researchers’, to obviate the need to use ‘he or she’ or ‘his or her’. Alternatively, use ‘s/he’ when not referring to one specific gender.

5. Assignments will almost always contain **quotations** (both direct and indirect) which should support or illustrate your argument. A direct quotation is where the material is presented exactly the same in your assignment as in the original work. An indirect quotation is where you paraphrase or reword the material used. Quotations must not be used merely for decoration or padding. Lengthy quotations should be avoided. Quotations of more than about twenty words are seldom justified, except where the quotation is the subject of detailed analysis. Short quotations up to three lines should be run into the text and placed within double, inverted commas. Quotes longer than three lines should be inset, single spaced and without quotation marks. The sources of all quotations, both direct and indirect, must be acknowledged. There are several ways of doing this, but the most usual method in sociology and anthropology is to include the author's name, date of publication, and page number(s) in the text. Full details of the publications would then be found in your Bibliography. This is known as the Harvard system. Further information about the Harvard system of referencing can be found at www.lisweb.curtin.edu/referencing/harvard.html

   e.g., As pointed out by Broome (2001:286), “ Aboriginal policy is now at a cross-roads, …”.
   or: It is the responsibility of Indigenous leaders to “seek changes that sustain not weaken Aboriginal culture” (Broome 2001:287).
   or: … hence Aboriginal land rights is a hot political issue in the Northern Territory: The Northern Territory government's bid for statehood is producing contradictory statements from the government on Aboriginal land rights. As part of its statehood proposals, the territory wants the power to make its own laws to replace the strong
federal legislation developed by the Whitlam government and implemented by the Fraser government (Dodson, 1987:28).

6. Information gleaned from a specific source but not presented as a quotation must be acknowledged in the same way.
   *e.g.* The relationship between multiculturalism and Australian society has been explored by Brawley (2003) and other authors (for example, Strattin 1998 and Zevallos 2003).

7. Your assignment may contain a **table** of data, a **map** or other **figure**. The source of these must be acknowledged on the table, map or figure, if they are not your own work. They must be referred to in the text. Tables, figures and maps must be numbered consecutively.

8. Your **bibliography** must contain all relevant information about the sources quoted or referred to in your report or essay. These should be arranged in alphabetical order, by author.
   
   **Book**

   **Article in a Journal**

   **Chapter in an edited Book**

   **Article in a Magazine**

   **Papers from the Internet**
   The basic element to remember is to include the URL so it can be easily located on the WWW. You must also include the date you accessed the site.

9. **Appendices** may be included at the end of your assignment. The appendix can be used to provide material that is relevant, but not central to the argument presented. The appendix must be referred to in the body of the assignment. Irrelevant material, included in an appendix to 'pad out' an assignment, will harm your assessment results. For example, a questionnaire used in the gathering of data, could be attached as an appendix to a report on that subject. Similarly, a paper describing Sammi land tenure, would normally have, as an appendix, (a) map(s) showing the location of the Saami.

10. A **footnote** may be presented at the bottom of a page (and indicated by a matching superscript number or symbol in text). Footnotes present additional information that is relevant but not central to the argument being presented.

11. Be careful to avoid **plagiarism**. Plagiarism occurs when a student submits, as if it is his or her own work, an assignment which is derived, in part or in whole, from some other source (published or unpublished). Plagiarism includes copying out large or small sections from published sources and submitting them with no reference or inadequate or misleading references so that the reader of the assignment is left with the impression that the work is entirely that of the students or has been derived from sources other than those actually used. Plagiarism also involves submitting, in part or in whole, the work of other students,
including assignments written for previous offerings of the same or different courses. Although while at high school you may have been set projects where you were permitted to copy sections out of books and encyclopedias without penalty and without the need to provide proper referencing, you are not allowed to do such things at University. Plagiarism can easily be avoided by proper citation, acknowledgment, quotation, or other indication of the source of the ideas, statements or information concerned. Please note that:

(i) students are expected to express themselves and to sustain an argument in their own prose;
(ii) you should avoid excessive quotation of the work of others;
(iii) work containing improperly acknowledged transcription will be failed.

If you do not understand the University regulations concerning plagiarism you should consult the relevant University web pages.

12. **Presentation** is important! A well presented assignment will generally receive a better grade than if the same data and arguments are poorly presented. There are different conventions followed in different academic disciplines. Those suggested in this paper are one way. If in doubt about how to present a reference, consult a reputable journal in the subject area, or ask your lecturer. Whatever presentation method is adopted, it is important to be consistent!