

# ANTHROPOLOGY WRITING GUIDE

Dr. Cherriethel (Cherry) Emerson  
Front Range Community College – Boulder

## ABSTRACT

*Anthropology Writing Guide* is prepared for students at FRCC as part of a cross-discipline Writing Across the Curriculum project during the 2008-09 year. This writing guide is intended to give the guidance needed for FRCC students in the Anthropology classes to submit written work to their professors in a format that follows the Chicago style with a few noted exceptions. MLA is also an acceptable format for submissions at FRCC, however, students should check with their professors before submission. Chicago style is preferred because it is the format for submission to the *American Anthropologist*, the official journal of American Association of Anthropologists and most sub-discipline journals. Suggestions for emphasis of submitted materials for the four sub-disciplines, linguistics, physical-biological, cultural and archaeology are discussed. [writing guide] [anthropology] [FRCC] [Chicago style] [MLA style][writing lab]

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I was asked to prepare a writing guide for the discipline of anthropology for the FRCC Writing Lab to have available for students in the anthropology classes. I remember a professor of mine saying that, "Anthropology is like a river a mile wide and an inch deep." (Hunter 1974) He meant that we cover all aspects of cultures and all times in history. Thus, American anthropology has four distinct sub-disciplines and they are: linguistics, physical-biological, cultural and archaeology. All disciplines have their own journals as well as varying requirements for submissions in these sub-disciplines depending on the publication requirements. It is best to look at the organization with the most members for guidance, the American Association of Anthropologists.

The *American Anthropologist* is the official journal of the AAA. They require their submissions to be in the **Chicago** style (Staff 2003). They have a webpage with a style guide that is available to download in PDF format. (American Association of Anthropologists 2008) This is a useful site because it does follow the **Chicago** style with a few ". . . modifications, most notably in the reference section." (American Anthropologist September, 2001) . A hard copy of this guide is available in the FRCC Writing Lab and it may also be printed from the web page as it is in PDF format.

While anthropologists may use different styles in some publications, the AAA is the largest and as well as being the umbrella organization for all anthropologists in the United States.

Anthropologists don't have a formal credentialing organization like the American Medical Association (AMA) and we can join or not join any organization. Our educational degrees are our credentials. We are an independent-minded and diverse group—or maybe we just never got that organized – if you saw most of our work spaces you would understand.

However, the use of the **Chicago** style is mirrored in the majority of the sub-disciplines journals including the *High Plains Society for Applied Anthropology*, *American Archaeology*, *Cultural Anthropology*, *American Journal of Physical Anthropology* and *Anthropological Linguistics*..

There are exceptions to the use of the **Chicago** style among anthropological publications. Most notably is the use of **Oxford** style for publications in the United Kingdom and the UK also considers archaeology a separate discipline. **MLA** (Gibaldi 2008) is used by several journals.

**Here at FRCC, MLA is the preferred style and is supported in the FRCC Writing Lab.**

Your professor may prefer submissions in a style other than **Chicago** or **MLA** so clarify their style preference before you start preparing your submission. However, remember, no matter what style you choose, you must use that style consistently in the submission. Don't mix the styles within your submission. Period. In my own classes I would prefer **Chicago** style but will accept **MLA**.

If you choose to follow the **Chicago** style as outlined by the American Anthropologist, the following list of guidelines should help you with your initial formatting. There are some exceptions for submissions submitted at FRCC and they are noted. There is a difference in submitting for editing and publication and as a classroom assignment and the exceptions make it easier for you as a student:

- 8 ½ inch by 11 inch white paper.
- Single sided copies, (no double sided submissions).
- A copy on a diskette in RTF is suggested and may be required by some instructors
- Typed, double-spaced, including references, notes and quotations
  - Exception at FRCC [single space references with double-space between references]
  - Exception at FRCC [single space notes with a double-space between notes]
  - Exception at FRCC [quotations within the text that are over five lines should be single spaced and indented from both sides with a double-space above and below them].  
Exception at FRCC [you may use the endnote function of your word processor]
- One-inch margin on all four edges of each page
- 10 or 12 point, Times Roman or Times New Roman. Exception at FRCC [other standard types are permitted, like this one for example, it is Calibri. What is not permitted is any “fancy type” like *freestyle script* or *earwig factory*.
- Page numbering should follow the style (example: Chicago).
- The title of the paper, the author’s name, title [when appropriate], class and date should appear on a separate title page at the front of the submission.
- References should be on a separate page at the end of the submission, that page should have a title of “References” or “References Cited.”
- An abstract of no more than 150 words should accompany the submission
- The abstract should end with 3-5 bracketed key words or phrases. Example: [headhunters]
- Acknowledgements should be included in the Notes section before the first note.
- Figures, slides and photos should be submitted on separate pages [Exception at FRCC, they may be embedded in the body of the submission, but may not have wrap-around text].
- All figures, slides and photos should have resolution of 300 or greater.

#### FURTHER SUGGESTIONS FOR WRITING IN ANTHROPOLOGY SUB-DISCIPLINES

**Linguistics (no classes taught at FRCC).** This sub-discipline, “. . . studies languages in its social and cultural context across time and space.” (Kottak 2008, 14-15) It would help you to know how to document conversations as well as formats for foreign phrases and diacritical markings. It would be good to learn how to reference conversations and recorded media.

**Archaeology.** This sub-discipline “. . . reconstructs, describes, and interprets human behavior and cultural patterns through material remains.” (Kottak 2008, 10) While working with archaeology you will

need to be able to use figures, maps and photos to support what has been found on the site so the format for those is important. Also there are numerous notes and appendix supporting documents.

**Cultural Anthropology.** This sub-discipline “. . . is the study of human society and culture, the subfield that describes, analyses, interprets, and explains social and cultural similarities and differences.” (Kottak 2008, 9) While working in this sub-discipline you may be interviewing people, keeping notes on observations and conversations, documenting kinship and doing other ethnographic work. You need to be a good cross-cultural researcher, but it is important that you know how to document conversations. Media, historical documents, recordings, photos, graphs and figures are also used.

**Physical /Biological.** This sub-discipline studies human evolution, human genetics, human growth and development and the plasticity our bodies have to change and adapt to stress, heat and cold and altitude. It also studies the biology, evolution and social life of monkeys, apes and other non-human primates. (Kottak 2008, 11-12) While working in this sub-discipline you will need to know how to do research, and use of tables, graphs and photos as well as display statistical analysis of findings.

**If you have any questions on style, the FRCC Writing Lab will be of assistance. There are also MLA and Chicago style manuals in the FRCC library as well as in the Writing Lab. This isn't as hard as it sounds, a good way to learn is to go look at a journal and see how the author did all the things you want to do, obviously they did it right or they wouldn't have gotten published!**

Think about it, if you can get your submissions for your first anthropology class in the proper format, then you will have a model for all your future submissions in college. Who knows? You might be asked to submit it to a professional journal. Many journals will accept student submissions.

To get help with formatting and editing your submission is not an admission of failure on your part; it is just making sure that you turn in the best submission possible. Professional anthropologists often have their submissions pre-edited because there is a difference between writing to be understood and putting it into a format that follows a required style guide. My dissertation was professionally edited by two editors before submission (Emerson 1995) and I worked with the FRCC Writing Lab to make sure this *Anthropology Writing Guide* was correct for the Chicago style. (Geary 2008)

Even with all that help we often, more often than not, find editing errors after submission. It is always difficult to see that last needed correction after you have read it so many times. You can decrease these errors with the help of the FRCC Writing Lab. Or as I like to say, “There is always one more bug!”<sup>i</sup>

This *Anthropology Writing Guide* is written in Chicago style.

## REFERENCES

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<sup>i</sup> After my dissertation was published in final form, I opened it up and found a mistake on page one.