Easy-To-Use Guide for…
INTEGRATING QUOTATIONS INTO YOUR WRITING

Keep in mind your goals when using source material:

• Your argument and voice should dominate the essay—don't let your sources take over.
• You want to use sources to back up and illustrate your claims—they're your evidence.
• You want to analyze and synthesize ideas—not just summarize or repeat someone else's thoughts.
• You want to show off your understanding of a variety of sources.

General Strategies for Using Quotations:

Π**Never let a quote stand alone**, without your own commentary or explanation introducing the quote. Instead, use your commentary to alert your readers to the point you're emphasizing in the quote. Stand-alone quotations lead to choppy writing, and take control away from the author, forcing the readers to make sense of the quoted material.

> **Stand-alone quote (avoid):** GCC is the best community college in Virginia. "The school has a low faculty to student ratio and many student activities" (343). That's why so many students want to go to Germanna Community College.

> **Better:** Germanna is the best community college in Virginia. Ben Jones of the *Washington Post*, for instance, highlights two of GCC's selling points when he declares that "The school has a low faculty to student ratio and many student activities" (343).

• Quote only essential words and ideas.
• Use block quotations very sparingly.
• Introduce texts, authors, and credentials clearly (see the example above).
• Never quote something just because it sounds good.
• Never quote something that you find difficult or impossible to understand.

Specific Strategies for Using Quotations:

• **Introduce a quote with a colon:**
  As Susan Lassiter notes, protection of the environment is critical to economic success: "Without the environment, commerce as we know it will cease to function. When the environment dies, the economies dies. And both are nearly impossible to raise from the ashes" (432).

  *Note: You only use a colon when the introductory phrase is a complete sentence.

• **Introduce a quote with a comma:**
  Similarly impressed with the city of Cincinnati, Kerri Jordan asserts, "I know of no other airport in America where a traveler can enjoy 40 minutes so thoroughly" (234).
  *Note: You use a comma when the introductory phrase is an incomplete sentence.

• **Introduce a quote using *that*:**
  Explaining the benefits of exercise, David Miller asserts that "the reason aerobics is so popular is because no one realizes that they're getting healthy while listening to all the music" (221).
  *Note: You don't need to use any punctuation at all when the quotation is preceded by *that*.

Specific Strategies for Using Quotations, cont.:

- **Introduce a quote using *as . . . said*:**
  Blueberries are the fruit of choice for many Americans, for as Lee Harding has said, "I can't go a day without eating a blueberry" (322).

- **Use a quote at the beginning of your sentence:**
  "Remember to wash your hair," Patricia tells Julie, just before the main character is hit by the car (342).

- **Use a quote in the middle of your sentence:**
  Peterson begins and ends his speech with a plea for "tolerance, harmony, and love" (34)—a conviction so strong that he repeats these words to anyone he meets.

- **Use a quote at the end of your sentence:**
  In *The Simpsons*, Bart always tells Lisa, "Stop being such a nerd!"

- **Use ellipses for omitting unnecessary information (the sentence must remain grammatically correct):**
  More specifically, Patrick Malcovich is described in the opening chapter of the novel as "war-torn, abused . . . and forever ruined" (343).

- **Use signal phrases to let readers know that the words or ideas that follow come from another source:***

acknowledges	denies	points out
admits	emphasizes	refutes
agrees	endorses	reports
argues	finds	reveals
asserts	grants	says
believes	illustrates	shows
claims	implies	states
comments	insists	suggests
concedes	maintains	thinks
concludes	notes	writes
declares	observes	

(*from Toby Fulwiler, *The Working Writer*, 3rd edition, 2002)