Summary vs. Analysis

What do you have to say after reading the course materials and doing research? Use summary and analysis to share your understanding and opinions.

Summary	Analysis
A summary condenses and restates the context of a text in original language. It is sometimes called the "what" of a text because it gives "just the facts."	An analysis breaks a text into smaller pieces in order to examine each piece. It is sometimes called the "how" of a text because it explains how the writing and argument are or aren't effective.
It allows the reader to get the "gist" of the text.	It allows the reader to determine if the text is useful and trustworthy.
To write a summary, you must provide the main points of a text in your own words. *Try dividing the text into sections and writing the main idea of each section in one or two sentences. Write the main idea of the entire text in one or two sentences. Try combining your sentences into a complete paragraph.*	To write an analysis, you must describe a piece of the text in detail and give your interpretation of how that piece is making its point. *Read the text with a critical eye: What is the author arguing for/against? Why are they arguing this? What evidence or solutions does she give, and are they valid? What kind of logical, ethical, or emotional appeals does she use?*
Summaries can be used to help you take notes from class readings, answer exam questions, write abstracts for long essays, and introduce book or literature reviews.	Analysis can be used to help you respond to a text, develop a thesis statement, and select appropriate sources for a research paper.

Example:

Original Work:
"Considering the numerous uncertainties surrounding e-cigarettes…the United Nations organization said it was appropriate to prohibit their use indoors 'until exhaled vapour is proven to be not harmful to bystanders.'" – David Jolly and Katrina Travernise, *The New York Times*, August 26, 2014

Summary:
The United Nations supports a ban on e-cigarettes being used indoors because of a lack of proof about their harmfulness.

Analysis:
In citing "uncertainties" and the need for proof in its judgment of e-cigarette use indoors, the United Nations makes hard data the principal consideration in public health decisions.

Paraphrasing

Paraphrasing is used in both summaries and analyses. A paraphrase presents the general and/or specific ideas and words of another person in your own words. It is usually used to quickly restate information borrowed from a source without using direct quotes, which means that a proper citation is always needed.

Paraphrase Example

Original Work:

Conversely, many universities offer primary and secondary prevention programs for binge drinking, marijuana use, sexual assault, and mental health problems, such as depression. Given this, the college environment may offer a unique opportunity for incorporating NMUPD screening, prevention, and treatment efforts into existing programs. Of particular importance, specific information about NMUPD should be disseminated within these prevention programs to help reduce the risk of NMUPD and related problems. (p. 694)

Set the context:

When discussing the relative merits of using existing structures for the prevention and treatment of NMUPD, McCauley et al. (2011) declare that…

Paraphrase the evidence:

…McCauley et al. (2011) declare that universities are ideally suited to offer information about the recreational use of prescription drugs because information and resources can be easily incorporated into existing support services.
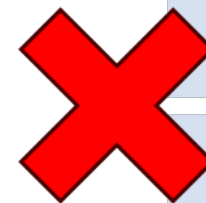
Offer analysis:

This utilization of existing resources is especially helpful when one considers the high incidence of NMUPD that occurs on college campuses.

✓ Read a passage, put it aside for a few minutes, and then return with a fresh perspective to write about the material.

✓ Take notes while you read so you have the main ideas in your words, not the author's words straight from the text.

✓ Cite all of the ideas that are not your own.

✗ Do not simply change the order of words from the original source. This may be considered plagiarism.

✗ Do not state ideas as your own without a proper citation. This is considered plagiarism.

✗ Do not simply substitute synonyms for words from the original source. This may be considered plagiarism.

Final paraphrase:

When discussing the relative merits of using existing structures for the prevention and treatment of NMUPD, McCauley et al. (2011) declare that universities are ideally suited to offer information about the recreational use of prescription drugs because information and resources can be easily incorporated into existing support services. This utilization of existing resources is especially helpful when one considers the high incidence of NMUPD that occurs on college campuses.