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ENGL 135-C  
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September 19, 2002

### Writing Papers in MLA Style

Papers that follow MLA style usually do not have a title page. Instead, they include a heading on the first page (like the one on this page). The title of the paper follows the heading, and it is centered on the next line. Do not underline, italicize, bold, enlarge, or do anything different to the title. The first paragraph of the paper starts on the following line. The entire paper—everything—is double-spaced, and all pages have one-inch margins. Page numbers appear at the right margin, one-half inch from the top of the page, and are preceded by your last name. (This process can be accomplished easily by placing your name and the “Insert Page Number” command in a header.)

### Parenthetical Citations

Any time you use information from a source, whether you paraphrase, summarize, or quote it, you must document the source. The MLA style of documentation involves two components: parenthetical (also called in-text) citations and a Works Cited list. The **parenthetical citations** appear in the body of the paper and refer the reader to the Works Cited page, where complete source information appears. Citations usually include the author’s last name and the page number(s) on which the source information is found. The author’s name may be in the text sentence, or it may be in the parentheses following the paraphrase, summary, or quote; but the page number(s) will always be in the parentheses.

Examples:

Wordsworth stated that Romantic poetry was marked by a "spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings" (263).

Romantic poetry is characterized by the "spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings" (Wordsworth 263).

Wordsworth extensively explored the role of emotion in the creative process (263).

If a source has no author, use the words that begin the entry on the Works Cited.

Example:

Romantic poets explored the role of emotion in the creative process ("Heartfelt Writings" 893).

Sometimes you may have to use an indirect quotation, that is, a quotation that you found in another source that was quoting from the original. For such indirect quotations, use "qtd. in" to indicate the source:

Example:

Ravitch argues that high schools are pressured to act as "social service centers, and they don't do that well" (qtd.in Weisman 259).

Sometimes more information is necessary to identify the source from which a quotation is taken. For instance, if two or more authors have the same last name, provide both authors' first initials (or even her or his full name if different authors share initials) in your citation. If you cite more than one work by a particular author, include a shortened title for the particular work from which you are quoting to distinguish it from the other works by that same person.

Examples:

**Two authors with the same last name:**

Although some medical ethicists claim that cloning will lead to designer children (R. Miller 12), others note that the advantages for medical research outweigh this consideration (A. Miller 46).

**Two works by the same author:**

Lightenor has argued that computers are not useful tools for small children ("Too Soon" 38), though he has acknowledged that early exposure to computer games does lead to better small motor skill development in a child's second and third year ("Hand-Eye Development" 17).

**Short Quotations**

To indicate short quotations (fewer than four typed lines of prose or three lines of verse) in your text, enclose the quotation within double quotation marks and incorporate it into your text. Provide the author and specific page citation (in the case of verse, provide line numbers) in the text, and include a complete reference in the works-cited list. Punctuation marks such as periods, commas, and semicolons should appear after the parenthetical citation. Question marks and exclamation points should appear within the quotation marks if they are a part of the quoted passage but after the parenthetical citation if they are a part of your text.

Examples:

According to some, dreams express "profound aspects of personality" (Foulkes 184), though others disagree.

According to Foulkes's study, dreams may express "profound aspects of personality" (184).

Is it possible that dreams may express "profound aspects of personality" (Foulkes 184)?

## Long Quotations

Place quotations longer than four typed lines in a freestanding block of typewritten lines, and omit quotation marks. Start the quotation on a new line, indented one inch from the left margin, and maintain double-spacing. Your parenthetical citation should come after the closing punctuation mark. When quoting verse, maintain original line breaks.

Example:

Nelly Dean treats Heathcliff poorly and dehumanizes him throughout her narration:

They entirely refused to have it in bed with them, or even in their room, and I had no more sense, so, I put it on the landing of the stairs, hoping it would be gone on the morrow. By chance, or else attracted by hearing his voice, it crept to Mr. Earnshaw's door, and there he found it on quitting his chamber. Inquiries were made as to how it got there; I was obliged to confess, and in recompense for my cowardice and inhumanity was sent out of the house. (Bronte 78)

## Adding or Omitting Words In Quotations

If you add a word or words in a quotation, you should put brackets around the words to indicate that they are not part of the original text.

Example:

Jan Harold Brunvand, in an essay on urban legends, states: "some individuals [who retell urban legends] make a point of learning every rumor or tale" (78).

If you omit a word or words from a quotation, you should indicate the deleted word or word by using ellipsis marks surrounded by brackets.

Example:

In an essay on urban legends, Jan Harold Brunvand notes that "some individuals make a point of learning every recent rumor or tale [...] and in a short time a lively exchange of details occurs" (78).

Note: If there are ellipsis marks in the quoted author's work, do not put brackets around them; only use brackets around ellipsis marks to distinguish them from ellipsis marks in the quoted author's work.

### **Works Cited**

The second component of MLA style documentation is the **Works Cited** list. Although the Works Cited goes on the last page(s) of the paper (Page 15 of this document contains a sample Works Cited page.), it should be prepared first so that you can easily see what information goes in your parenthetical citations (generally the name or title that begins the entry). As its name indicates, the Works Cited list contains all the sources (and only the sources) that you use, and therefore cite, in your paper.

Consider the following points when preparing your Works Cited list.

- Works Cited pages are numbered as part of the whole paper. If the text of your paper ends on page 8, the Works Cited begins on page 9.
- The words "Works Cited" are centered on the first line, with no quotation marks, underline, bold, italics, increased size, or any other special treatment.
- Arrange entries alphabetically by the first word of the entry (other than *a*, *an*, *the*).
- Begin each entry at the left margin and indent subsequent lines one-half inch. (Let the computer do this for you by setting the hanging indentation feature on the ruler to one-half inch.)

- Double-space everything on this page, with no extra lines between entries.
- Authors' names are inverted (last name first).
  - If a work has more than one author, list them in the order given in the source. Invert only the first author's name, follow it with a comma, then continue listing the rest of the authors.
  - If you have cited more than one work by an author, order them alphabetically by title, and use three hyphens in place of the author's name for every entry after the first.
  - When an author appears both as the sole author of a text and as the first author of a group, list solo-author entries first.
- If no author is given for a particular work, alphabetize by the title of the piece and use a shortened version of the title for parenthetical citations.
- Capitalize each word in the titles of articles, books, etc. This rule does not apply to articles (*a, an, the*), short prepositions, or conjunctions unless one is the first word of the title or subtitle.
- Underline or italicize titles of books, journals, magazines, newspapers, and films.
- Use quotation marks around the titles of articles in journals, magazines, and newspapers. Also use quotation marks for the titles of short stories, book chapters, poems, and songs.
- List page numbers efficiently, when needed. If you refer to a journal article that appeared on pages 225 through 250, list the page numbers on your Works Cited page as 225-50.
- When including dates in entries, follow this format: day month year. Use three letter abbreviations for all months except May, June, and July. (Examples: 17 Oct. 2002 or 4 May 2001)

Following is a guide for documenting the most common types of sources, including some specific to DeVry Orlando. If your particular case is not covered here, use the

basic forms to determine the correct format, consult the MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers, or contact the ASC or a professor.

### **Basic Forms for Sources in Print**

#### **A book**

Author(s). Title of Book. Place of Publication: Publisher, Year of Publication.

#### **A book with one author**

Henley, Patricia. The Hummingbird House. Denver: MacMurray, 1999.

#### **Two books by the same author**

(After the first listing of the author's name, use three hyphens and a period for the author's name. List books alphabetically.)

Palmer, William J. Dickens and New Historicism. New York: St. Martin's, 1997.

---. The Films of the Eighties: A Social History. Carbondale: Southern Illinois UP, 1993.

#### **A book with two or three authors**

Gillespie, Paula, and Neal Lerner. The Allyn and Bacon Guide to Peer Tutoring. Boston: Allyn, 2000.

#### **A book with four or more authors**

If there are more than three authors, you may list only the first author followed by the phrase et al. (the abbreviation for the Latin phrase "and

others") in place of the other authors' names, or you may list all the authors in the order in which their names appear on the title page.

**A book with a corporate author**

American Allergy Association. Allergies in Children. New York: Random, 1998.

**A book or article with no author named**

Encyclopedia of Indiana. New York: Somerset, 1993.

"Cigarette Sales Fall 30% as California Tax Rises." New York Times 14 Sept. 1999: A17.

**Anthology or collection**

Peterson, Nancy J., ed. Toni Morrison: Critical and Theoretical Approaches. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1997.

**A part of a book (such as an essay in a collection)**

Author(s). "Title of Article." Title of Collection. Ed. Editor's Name(s). Place of Publication: Publisher, Year. Pages.

**Essay in a collection**

Harris, Muriel. "Talk to Me: Engaging Reluctant Writers."  
A Tutor's Guide: Helping Writers One to One. Ed. Ben Rafoth.  
Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 2000. 24-34.

**Article from a standard encyclopedia**

"Jamaica." Encyclopedia Britannica. 1999 ed.

### **An article in a periodical (such as a newspaper or magazine)**

Author(s). "Title of Article." Title of Source Day Month Year:  
pages.

**Note:** If there is more than one edition available for that date (as in an early and late edition of a newspaper), identify the edition following the date (e.g. 17 May 1987, late ed.).

### **Magazine or newspaper article**

Poniewozik, James. "TV Makes a Too-Close Call." Time 20 Nov. 2000: 70-71.  
Trembacki, Paul. "Brees Hopes to Win Heisman for Team." Purdue Exponent  
5 Dec. 2000: 20.

### **An article in a scholarly journal**

Author(s). "Title of Article." Title of Journal Vol (Year): pages.

**Note:** "Vol" indicates the volume number of the journal. If the journal uses continuous pagination throughout a particular volume, only volume and year are needed, e.g. Modern Fiction Studies 40 (1998): 251-81. If each issue of the journal begins on page 1, however, you must also provide the issue number following the volume, e.g. Mosaic 19.3 (1986): 33-49.

### **Essay in a journal with continuous pagination**

Allen, Emily. "Staging Identity: Frances Burney's Allegory of Genre."  
Eighteenth-Century Studies 31 (1998): 433-51.

### **Essay in a journal that pages each issue separately**

Duvall, John N. "The (Super)Marketplace of Images: Television as  
Unmediated Mediation in DeLillo's White Noise." Arizona Quarterly  
50.3 (1994): 127-53.

## **Basic Forms for Electronic Sources**

**Note:** It is necessary to list your date of access because web postings are often updated, and information available at one date may no longer be available later. Be sure to include the complete address for the site. Also, note the use of angled brackets around the electronic address; MLA requires them for clarity.

### **A web site**

Author(s). Name of Page. Date of Posting/Revision. Name of institution/organization affiliated with the site. Date of Access <electronic address>.

### **Web site example**

Daniels, Geno. Undergraduate Guide to Technology. 18 Jan. 2002. DeVry University. 20 Sep. 2002 <<http://student.cc.devry.edu/daniels/guide.html>>.

### **An article on a web site**

Author(s). "Article Title." Name of web site. Date of posting/revision. Name of institution/organization affiliated with site. Date of access <electronic address>.

### **Article on a web site example**

Poland, Dave. "The Hot Button." Roughcut. 26 Oct. 1998. Turner Network Television. 28 Oct. 1998 <<http://www.roughcut.com>>.

### **An article in an online journal or magazine**

Author(s). "Title of Article." Title of Journal Volume. Issue (Year): Pages/Paragraphs. Date of Access <electronic address>.

**Note:** Some electronic journals and magazines provide paragraph or page numbers; include them if available. This format is also appropriate

to online magazines; as with a print version, you should provide a complete publication date rather than volume and issue number.

### **Online journal article example**

Wheelis, Mark. "Investigating Disease Outbreaks Under a Protocol to the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention." Emerging Infectious Diseases 6.6 (2000): 33 pars. 5 Dec. 2000  
<<http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/eid/vol6no6/wheelis.htm>>.

### **E-mail to you**

Author. "Title of the message (if any)" E-mail to the author. Date of the message.

**Note:** This same format may be used for personal interviews or personal letters. These do not have titles, and the description should be appropriate. Instead of "Email to John Smith," you would have "Personal interview."

### **E-mail to you example**

Kunka, Andrew. "Re: Modernist Literature." E-mail to the author. 15 Nov. 2000.

### **Email communication between two parties, not including the author**

Neyhart, David. "Re: Online Tutoring." E-mail to Joe Barbato. 1 Dec. 2000.

### **A listserv posting**

Author. "Title of Posting." Online posting. Date when material was posted (for example: 14 Mar. 1998). Name of listserv. Date of access <electronic address for retrieval>.

### **Online Posting**

Karper, Erin. "Welcome!" Online posting. 23 Oct. 2000. Professional Writing Bulletin Board. 12 Nov. 2000  
<<http://linnell.english.purdue.edu/ubb/Forum2/HTML/000001.html>>.

### **An electronic database**

Author. "Title of Article." Relevant information for the database. Date of access <electronic address for retrieval>.

**Note:** Provide the bibliographic data for the original source as for any other of its genre, then add the name of the database along with relevant retrieval data (such as version number and/or transcript or abstract number).

### **Article in a reference database on CD-ROM**

"World War II." Encarta. CD-ROM. Seattle: Microsoft, 1999.

### **Article from a periodically published database on CD-ROM**

Reed, William. "Whites and the Entertainment Industry." Tennessee Tribune 25 Dec. 1996: 28. Ethnic NewsWatch. CD-ROM. Data Technologies. Feb. 1997.

### **Article retrieved from the DeVry Orlando Faulkner database**

Brown, Jeremy. "Optical Disk Storage Technology." Faulkner Database. 7 Aug. 2001 <<http://www.faulkner.com/products.faccts/00005785.htm>>.

**Article retrieved from the DeVry Orlando Proquest database**

Giullani, Rudolph. "New York City Shifts View of Ground Zero." *The Wall Street Journal* 7 Sep. 2002: D4. ProQuest Direct. DeVry University Library, Orlando. 20 Sep. 2002  
<<http://proquest.umi.com/pqdweb>>.

**Article retrieved from the DeVry Orlando Ebscohost database**

Sauler, James. "Old Apps Find a New Home on Windows XP." *PC Magazine* 21 July 2001: 75-76. Ebscohost. DeVry University Library, Orlando. 4 Sep. 2002. <<http://web11.epnet.com/>>.

**Other Types of Sources**

**Government publication**

United States Dept. of Health and Human Services. Healthy People 2010: Understanding and Improving Health. Washington: GPO, 2000.

**Pamphlet**

Office of the Dean of Students. Resources for Success: Learning Disabilities and Attention Deficit Disorders. West Lafayette, IN: Purdue University, 2000.

**Interview that you conducted**

DeVry, Herman. Personal Interview. 1 Dec. 2000.

**Advertisement**

Nike. Advertisement. Time 20 Nov. 2000: 151.

**Television or radio program**

"The Blessing Way." The X-Files. Fox. WXIA, Atlanta. 19 Jul. 1998.

**Sound recording**

U2. All That You Can't Leave Behind. Interscope, 2000.

**Film**

The Usual Suspects. Dir. Bryan Singer. Perf. Kevin Spacey,  
Gabriel Byrne, Chazz Palminteri, Stephen Baldwin, and Benecio del  
Toro. Polygram, 1995.

Note: This document was created with the assistance of currently adopted textbooks,  
*MLA Handbook*, and the Purdue OWL.

## Works Cited

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- Giullani, Rudolph. "New York City Shifts View of Ground Zero." *The Wall Street Journal* 7 Sep. 2002: D4. ProQuest Direct. DeVry University Library, Orlando. 20 Sep. 2002 <<http://proquest.umi.com/pqdweb>>.
- Harris, Muriel. "Talk to Me: Engaging Reluctant Writers."  
A Tutor's Guide: Helping Writers One to One. Ed. Ben Rafoth.  
Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 2000. 24-34.
- "Jamaica." Encyclopedia Britannica. 1999 ed.
- Palmer, William J. Dickens and New Historicism. New York: St. Martin's, 1997.
- . The Films of the Eighties: A Social History. Carbondale: Southern Illinois UP, 1993.
- Sauler, James. "Old Apps Find a New Home on Windows XP." *PC Magazine* 21 July 2001: 75-76. Ebscohost. DeVry University Library, Orlando. 4 Sep. 2002. <<http://web11.epnet.com/>>.
- "World War II." Encarta. CD-ROM. Seattle: Microsoft, 1999.