A UNIVERSITY WRITING CENTER MINI-COURSE

MLA – Research Documentation

The information for this handout has been taken from the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers, 7th* ed. (New York: Modern Language Association, 2009). This publication may be found in the University Writing Center and at Hunter Library Reference Desk, and should be consulted for more detailed information.

**Formatting Your Works Cited List**

- Your Works Cited list provides complete addresses for identifying and retrieving all the sources you have used in your research paper. Crafting these entries according to MLA guidelines can be tedious and time-consuming, but investing your time and energy demonstrates your skill, integrity, and thoroughness as a researcher.
- Center the title Works Cited at the top of the list, and then **double-space** to start your first entry. Double-space each entry.
- Entries appear on the Works Cited list in alphabetical order by the author’s last name, or if there is no author, by the first letter of the first meaningful word in the title.
- The first line of each entry is flush with the left margin. The second line and any subsequent lines are indented ½ inch. Use the MS Word Format Paragraph function to create hanging indentations.
- **New with the 7th edition**, every entry includes the publication medium, for example, Print, DVD, and Web. Pay attention to its placement, especially in electronic entries.
- **Also new**, titles are now italicized rather than underlined.
- Only one letter space follows periods.
- **Every** entry ends with a period, including electronic entries.

**Documentation within Your Paper**

- Documentation within your research paper gives parenthetical credit for ALL direct quotations, paraphrases, and summaries of facts, ideas or opinions. What appears inside the parentheses (called an in-text citation) functions as a short, specific address that corresponds to the complete address on the Works Cited list. The position of the in-text citation, usually at the end of the pertinent sentence, shows your reader exactly what information has come from the source and from which page, or its alternative.
- An in-text citation includes the last name(s) of the author(s) and page number(s), or the alternative(s), from which a quotation, paraphrase, or summary is taken.
- If there is no author, use a shortened version of the title. Article titles and titles of other short works should be in quotation marks. Book, journal, and Web site titles should be italicized.
- If you are referring to an entire source, or if a source has only one page, page numbers are unnecessary. If you are using a selection within a larger Web site with no page numbers, choose an alternative such as section name/number or designated paragraph number (do not count unnumbered paragraphs). See **Electronic Sources with Authors** and **Electronic Sources without Authors**.
- Once you have cited a source, if you refer to that source again without citing any other source, you may simply put page number(s) in parentheses. This guideline applies only to consecutive citations of one source.
• If you are using more than one work by an author, include the title of the work, or a shortened version of a longer title in parentheses.

• If you introduce an author/title within a sentence, you need to include only the page number(s) in parentheses. See Author Mentioned in Text and Pages in Parentheses.

• Page numbers, or their alternative, are always provided parenthetically.

NOTE: Not citing information, even if it is in your own words, is considered plagiarism!

Examples of MLA in-text citations appear below. Refer to your writer’s handbook for guidelines on how to make any changes to direct quotations or visit the University Writing Center (227-7197) for help.

Examples of MLA Citations

Author and pages in parentheses

• This point has already been argued (Tannen 178-85).

Author, shortened title, and pages in parentheses

• One’s death is not a unique experience, for "every moment we have lived through we have also died out of into another order" (Frye, Double Vision 85).

NOTE: MLA includes the title, or a shortened version of it, to identify the exact work by Frye when Frye has two or more works in the Works Cited.

Author mentioned in text and pages in parentheses

• It may be true, as Robertson maintains, that "in the appreciation of medieval art the attitude of the observer is of primary importance" (136).

• In the late Renaissance, Machiavelli contended that human beings were by nature “ungrateful” and “mutable” (1240), and Montaigne thought them “miserable and puny” (1343).

• In his Autobiography, Benjamin Franklin states that he prepared a list of thirteen virtues (135-37).

Two or three authors or editors

• “Poetry, like any art, requires practice” (Behn and Twichell xi).

• The idea of a writing center is worth debating, analyzing, and reflecting upon (DeCiccio, Rossi, and Cain 26-27).

More than three authors or editors

• “In cultures whose religion, unlike Christianity, offers no promise of an afterlife, a name that will live on after one’s death serves as the closest substitute for immortality” (Abrams et al. 3).
No author, only title available

- International espionage was as prevalent as ever in the 1990s (“Decade”).

- A presidential commission reported in 1970 that recent campus protests had focused on “racial injustice, war, and the university itself” (Report 3).

Work by a corporate author

- By 1992, it was apparent that the American healthcare system, though impressive in many ways, needed “to be fixed and perhaps radically modified” (Public Agenda Foundation 4).

- A study prepared by the United States Department of State defined terrorism as “premeditated, politically motivated violence against noncombatant targets by subnational groups or clandestine agents, usually intended to influence an audience” (lines 14-16).

Electronic sources with authors: The author’s name is usually sufficient, but if the source provides additional cues such as section headings/numbers, internal page numbers, or paragraph numbers, also make use of those.

- William J. Mitchell's City of Bits discusses architecture and urban life in the context of the digital telecommunications revolution.

- Beethoven has been called the "first politically motivated composer," for he was "caught up in the whole ferment of ideas that came out of the French Revolution" (Gardiner, screens 2-3).

- “The debut of Julius Caesar,” according to Sohmer, “proclaimed Shakespeare’s Globe a theater of courage and ideas, a place where an audience must observe with the inner eye, with the inner ear” (par. 44).

Electronic sources without authors: Use a shortened version of the title. If two sources have the same title, include additional information to distinguish them. See “Snowy Owl” example below:

- In fresco painting, “the pigments are completely fused with a damp plaster ground to become an integral part of the wall surface” (“Fresco Painting”).

- In winter the snowy owl feeds primarily on small rodents (“Snowy Owl,” Hinterland), but in spring it also feeds on the eggs of much larger waterfowl, such as geese and swans (“Snowy Owl,” Arctic).

Literary and religious sources: For prose sources such as novels and plays, cite the page number, if available, from the edition you are using but also include other pertinent identifiers that would be consistent for all editions, such as a chapter and/or section. For religious verses, verse plays and poetry, omit the page number and cite by appropriate division(s) and line.

- In A Vindication of the Rights of Women, Mary Wollstonecraft points out how “women who, not led by degrees to proper studies, and not permitted to choose for themselves, have indeed been overgrown children” (185; ch.13, sec. 2).
• A Biblical passage that demonstrates the mythical quality of prophetic visions comes from Ezekiel, who describes “four living creatures,” one with the face of a man, a second with the face of a lion, the third with the face of an ox, and the fourth with the face of an eagle (New Jerusalem Bible, Ezek. 1.5-10).

**Long quotations:** More than four typed lines of quoted prose are indented one inch or ten letter spaces from the left-hand margin as a double-spaced block. No quotation marks are used.

Margaret Wheatley describes how the new physics is changing our perceptions of the world:

> Something strange is happening in the quantum world. No longer is there a lonely void. Space everywhere is now thought to be filled with fields, invisible, non-material structures that are the basic substance of the universe. We cannot see these fields, but we do observe their effects. They have become a useful construct for explaining action-at-a-distance, for helping us understand why change occurs without the direct exertion of material "shoving" across space. (48)

**NOTE:** In a long quotation, parentheses stand outside the final period.

### Works Cited Entries

#### Books (print)

**Books by a Single Author**


**Books by Two or Three Authors**


**Books by More Than Three Authors**

OR


Two or More Books by the Same Author


**NOTE**: Works by the same author are arranged alphabetically by title (excluding *A* or *The*).

Books by Corporate/Non-Profit Authors


**NOTE**: Corporate authors are organizations. Omit any *A*, *An*, or *The* from the name. If the corporate author is also the publisher, in place of a publisher’s name write Author.

Anonymous Books, Including the Bible


Later Editions of Book


Edited Book with Selections by Different Authors (to cite editor or compiler)


**NOTE**: You will use this entry only if you are citing the editor or compiler (comp.). If you are citing an individual author within an edited anthology, use work in collection of writings by different authors below.
Work in Collection of Writings by Different Authors (to cite an author)


NOTE: The editor/compiler’s name is included but after the title of the anthology. A translator’s name comes after the title of the piece.

Books in a Series


A Multivolume Work


Parts of Books by a Single Author


Article in Encyclopedia or Other Reference Work


Author’s Work Translated or Edited by Another


Periodical Articles

Article in Journal with Volume and Issue Number (applies to most scholarly journals)


**NOTE:** "50.4" indicates the volume and issue numbers of the journal in which the article is found.

Article in Journal with Issue Number Only


Signed Article in Monthly or Weekly Magazine


Anonymous Article in Monthly or Weekly Magazine


Signed Article in Daily Newspaper


**NOTE:** The plus (+) sign indicates that the article continues on subsequent pages.

**Anonymous Article in Daily Newspaper**


**Editorial or Letter to the Editor in Daily Newspaper**


**Film Review**


**Government Publications**


**NOTE:** In the Senate entry, each set of three hyphens followed by a period (---.) stands in for the name in the previous entry, in this case, United States and Cong. GPO stands for Government Printing Office, the publisher of many government documents.
Non-Print Sources and Unusual Print Sources

Television or Radio


Sound Recording or Individual Song


Film or Video Recording


Performance


Musical Score or Libretto


**Painting, Sculpture, or Photograph**


**NOTE:** N.d. indicates there is no date available.

**Interview**


Hudson, Michael. Personal interview. 20 Apr. 2009.

**Map or chart**


**Cartoon**


**Advertisement**


Lecture, speech, address, or reading


NOTE: Choose an appropriate ending descriptor such as Lecture, Keynote Speech, Reading, Address, etc.

Course lecture (adapted using MLA guidelines; see both format and examples below)

Instructor’s last name, instructor’s first name. “Title” (if available). Course prefix, code and section. College or University, location. Date. Course Lecture.


Original manuscript or typescript


NOTE: MS = manuscript, i.e., hand-written; TS = typescript; N.d. = no date available.

Letter, memo, or e-mail


Cahill, Daniel J. Memo to English dept. fac., Brooklyn Technical High School, New York. 1 June 2000. TS.

Harner, James L. Message to the author. 20 Aug. 2002. E-mail.

NOTE: TS = typescript.
Legal source

Consult the most recent edition of *The Bluebook: A Uniform System of Citation* (Cambridge: Harvard Law Rev. Assn.; print), available at the Hunter Library Reference Desk. For help with navigating *The Bluebook*, consult Becky Kornegay, reference librarian who specializes in government documents and law, available at the Reference Desk, kornegay@email.wcu.edu, or 828-227-3417. For help with adapting *The Bluebook* citation format to MLA citation format, contact Barbara Hardie, Writing Center director at bhardie@email.wcu.edu or 828-227-3686, or by visiting Hunter 161.

Pamphlet


**MLA: Electronic Information**

When citing Web sites and other electronic sources, your goal is to provide enough information to help your reader find them. While MLA previously recommended including URLs at the end of all citations, the 2009 guidelines now recommend including a URL only if finding the source requires it or if your instructor requires it. Most Web sources are retrieved more easily by searches using titles and authors’ names, rather than by typing in lengthy http:// addresses. Remember, higher quality Web sites provide more useful information. Further, because Web sources can disappear, always download important Web information to your files for easy retrieval during the research process.

**Basic entry for documents from Web sites**

- Name of author, compiler, director, editor, narrator, performer, or translator
- Title of work (italicized if work is entire and independent; enclosed in quotation marks if work is part of a larger work)
- If pertinent, title of official Web site (italicized), for example CNN.com, *New York Times*, and *Google Maps*
- If pertinent, version or edition, for example Vers. 1.2 and 13th ed.
- If available, publisher or sponsor, for example Cable News Network, *New York Times*, and Google; if not available, use N.p. (Note that a comma follows the publisher; otherwise, all entries end with a period.)
- Date of publication (day, month, and year); if no date, use n.d.
- Medium of publication (Web)
- Date of access (day, month, and year)
- If your instructor requires a URL address, place the complete http:// address within brackets < > and end with a period.

See the following example, which includes the optional URL.

Works without authors


Entire Web sites


Home pages


Articles in online scholarly journals, including editorials and reviews


NOTE: In the entry above, 7.4 stands for the volume number (7) and issue number (4).


NOTE: In the entry above, the Michigan Family Review is published by volume (11) only.

**NOTE:** If no page numbers are available, use n. pag.

Documents from an online database (includes all Hunter Library databases)


**NOTE:** In the entry above, 10.3 stands for the volume number (10) and issue number (3).


**NOTE:** If no page numbers are available, use n. pag.

Online government publications


**NOTE:** Follow the same guidelines as print government publications. However, instead of ending with Print as the publication medium, replace it with the title of the Web site, followed by Web as the publication medium and by date of access.

Articles in online newspapers, magazines, and news networks


**Letter to editor**


**Maps**


**E-mail communications**

Boyle, Anthony T. “Re: Utopia.” E-mail to Daniel J. Cahill. 21 June 1997. E-mail.

Harner, James L. E-mail to the author. 20 Aug. 2002. E-mail.

**Digital file (exists on your computer independently of Web or CD-ROM/ DVD-ROM, for example, PDF file, Microsoft Word file, JPEG file, MP3 file, etc.)**


