Format the Research Paper

** Your instructor may have specific formatting requirements. Be sure to double-check that you have fulfilled these requirements before submitting your work. **

Margins

Set to one inch for the top, bottom, left, and right of each page.

Text Formatting

- MLA recommends the use of Times New Roman, point size 12.
- Left-align your paper (the four alignment options appear directly in the toolbar in Word).
- Use double-spacing throughout, including in your list of works cited.
- Leave only one space between sentences.
- Indent the first line of every paragraph one-half inch from the left margin (use the Tab key).

Running Head

The following are step-by-step instructions on how to format your Running head:

1. Click on the “Insert” tab.
2. Locate the “Page Number” option; select “Top of Page” and then “Plain Number 3” (or “Top Right”). The number will appear.
3. To the left of the number, type out your last name and press the spacebar one time.
4. You will need to change the header to Times New Roman, point size 12.
**Heading and Title**

You do not need to insert a separate title page (*unless your instructor requires one – see below*). Instead, beginning one inch from the top of the first page and flush with the left margin, type your name, your instructor’s name, the course number, and the date (on separate lines and double-spaced). **On a new line**, center the title. Titles are **neither** bolded **nor** underlined. *Italicize* only the words that you would in your paper (as in a book title, e.g., *The Attitude toward Violence in A Clockwork Orange*). Ensure that there is a double space between the title and the first line of your introduction.

If your instructor **does** require a title page, use the following format (according to the 8th edition):
Pronoun Use

Indefinite Pronouns

The indefinite pronouns *anyone, anybody, everyone, everybody, someone, somebody, no one, nobody, everything, either, and neither* are **singular**. They are known as indefinite because they do not refer to any specific person, thing, or amount. The verbs that accompany indefinite pronouns must also be singular. To help you remember this rule, try dividing the pronoun you want to use into two parts; for example, “anybody” implies “any body” (“body” being a singular
noun), “someone” implies “some one” (“one” being a singular noun), and “everything” implies “every thing” (“thing” being a singular noun). “Neither” implies “not the one or the other.” For example: “Neither of the players is trying.”

Inclusivity

You may find that singular, gender-specific pronouns (she, he, hers, his) are insufficient for your work, given that many people do not identify as a particular gender. As a matter of practice, you should always employ the personal pronoun choices of the individuals you write about. For example: Kai is a nonbinary person. They attend university in their home state of Michigan and are majoring in chemistry. Kai’s friend River is a transgender woman. She attends the same university and is majoring in physics. While Kai prefers the singular “they” and “their,” River prefers the feminine singular pronoun “she” (Gender-Neutral). When you do not know what an author’s inclinations are, adopting the plural pronouns they, them, and their is often the best and most inclusive solution. Note that when “they” is the subject of a sentence (as in, “They attend university …”), “they” will always take a plural verb.

There are several approaches you can take to ensure that your writing is both inclusive and grammatically correct.

The following are only four examples:

• “A person should be able to take vacations.”

• “A vacation should be an enjoyable time.” (Gender-Neutral).

• “Students are expected to choose the topic of their research paper before they take the midterm.”

• “Each student is expected to choose a research topic before taking the midterm” (Style).
Impartiality

Academic writing should be impartial. When you rely on the second person point-of-view (*you, your, yours*), you weaken your argument. This is because the second person implies that you are offering your readers subjective advice, as opposed to objective information. There are ways to rework, however, without sacrificing your argument.

Use Specific Nouns

Original: “You can prepare for any exam by reviewing all course materials daily.”
Revision: “All undergraduate students enrolled in *HOSP 1001* can prepare …”

Omit All Pronouns

To achieve clarity in your writing, try to avoid excessive pronoun use. Original: “After reading this paper, your understanding …” Revision: “The following paper will describe …”
Original: “You need to read the statistics on the suicide rate among victims of bullying.”
Revision: “The statistics *highlighted* in several *reports* indicate that …”

Verb Tense

The Present Tense

In MLA, it is customary to adopt the present tense when discussing a text or describing the actions of individuals and/or the movement of plot; the rationale is that most texts “exist” in the present just as they did in the past (e.g., with ten chapters, five acts, etc.). This principle applies to other works as well, including literary analyses, films, and websites (*Style*). For example:

- The themes of *Othello* include racism, love, jealousy, and betrayal.
- As Yousafzai *points* out, “90% of refugees are hosted by developing countries” (10).
• In “The Story of an Hour,” Mrs. Mallard whispers, “free, free, free!” after learning of her husband’s alleged death (3).

• Through this anecdote, Richter illustrates common misconceptions about native religion and clarifies why missionary efforts in the 19th century were less than successful (Studio).

**The Present Perfect Tense**

It is customary to adopt the present perfect tense when citing research and/or data; as it is a present tense verb, it indicates that the research being discussed is still relevant. For example:

To date, only a few studies have focused on the reading trajectories of children who have yet to enter preschool; moreover, there is little consistency among the studies that do exist with regard to their conclusions (e.g., Scarborough 1990, 1991). (GMU)

**Acceptable Use of the Past Tense**

When you are discussing the historical context of a work, adopt the past tense. For example:

• By identifying Othello as a Moor, Shakespeare introduced both racial and religious issues to early modern theatergoers.

• Combination of past and present: Annie Dillard wrote Pilgrim at Tinker Creek when she lived in Virginia’s Blue Ridge Mountains. In the chapter titled “Seeing,” Dillard contends that “vision is a deliberate gift, the revelation of a dancer who for my eyes only flings away her seven veils” (17).

In the above example, both “wrote” and “lived” are in the past tense, as they refer to Dillard’s life. However, the writer adopts the present tense (“contends”) when discussing the author’s nonfiction narrative book (Richmond).
Mechanics

Names and Credentials

For more information on properly citing names and titles in MLA, please refer to The Purdue OWL.

Titles of Works

Italics

In general, italicize the names of books, anthologies, novellas, periodicals (journals, magazines, and newspapers), websites, films, and television series.

Quotation Marks

Use quotation marks around the titles of essays, short stories, and poems; journal, newspaper, magazine, and website articles; and specific television episodes.

Exceptions

The following categories are capitalized, like titles, but are neither italicized nor enclosed in quotation marks: scripture (e.g., The Bible; The Koran); laws, acts, and similar political documents (e.g., The Declaration of Independence; The Paris Agreement); series (e.g., Critical American Studies); seminars, workshops, and courses (e.g., Anthropology 102; International Symposium on Cultural Diplomacy; MLA Annual Convention); and musical compositions identified by form, number, and key (e.g., Beethoven’s Symphony no. 5 in C minor, op. 67) (Scribbr).

Titles within Titles

In certain instances, a second title may be incorporated into the first (or main) title; for example, the title of an article about a novel might include the name of that novel. Refer to the following table for more information.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Format</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Longer works (e.g., novels, anthologies, and films) discussed within shorter works (e.g., literary analyses, journal articles, and specific television episodes)</td>
<td>Refer to MLA guidelines.</td>
<td>“The Great Gatsby and the Cacophony of the American Dream” (novel discussed within a literary analysis)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shorter works discussed within shorter works</td>
<td>When a title that requires quotation marks (1) appears within another (main) title that also requires quotation marks (2), that first title (1) is then placed in single quotation marks.</td>
<td>(1) A Good Man is Hard to Find&lt;br&gt;(2) The Uncanny Theology&lt;br&gt;→ “The Uncanny Theology of ‘A Good Man is Hard to Find’”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shorter works discussed within longer works</td>
<td>Enclose the shorter work in quotation marks; italicize the entire title.</td>
<td>Shorter work: The Garden Party&lt;br&gt;Longer work: The Garden Party &amp; Other Stories&lt;br&gt;→ “The Garden Party” &amp; Other Stories</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Longer works discussed within longer works</td>
<td>When a normally italicized title (1) appears within another (main) title that also</td>
<td>(1) Richard II and Henry V</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
requires italics (2), that first title (1) is neither italicized nor enclosed by quotation marks.

\[
\text{(2) Shakespeare’s History Plays: Richard II to Henry V, the Making of a King} \\
\rightarrow \text{Shakespeare’s History Plays: Richard II to Henry V, the Making of a King}
\]

\[
\text{(1) The Lodger and The Lady Vanishes} \\
\text{(2) From The Lodger to The Lady Vanishes: Hitchcock’s Classic British Thrillers} \\
\rightarrow \text{From The Lodger to The Lady Vanishes: Hitchcock’s Classic British Thrillers}
\]

\text{(Scribbr)}

\text{Capitalization}

In all titles and subtitles, capitalize the first and last word, as well as any other principal words. Refer to the following table for more information.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What to Capitalize</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Part of Speech</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nouns</td>
<td>A Wrinkle in Time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pronouns</strong></td>
<td>The Fault in Our Stars</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verbs</td>
<td>Man’s Search for Meaning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Adjectives</strong></td>
<td>The Diary of a Young Girl</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Adverbs</strong></td>
<td>The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Subordinating Conjunctions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Part of Speech</strong></th>
<th><strong>Example</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Articles (<em>a, an, the</em>)</td>
<td><em>On the Road</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prepositions (e.g., <em>against, as, between, of, to</em>)</td>
<td><em>Out of Africa</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coordinating Conjunctions (<em>and, but, for, nor, or, so, yet</em>)</td>
<td><em>Charlie and the Chocolate Factory</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The “<em>to</em>” in infinitive phrases</td>
<td><em>Born to Run</em> (“<em>to run</em>” is the infinitive phrase)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### What *not* to Capitalize

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Part of Speech</strong></th>
<th><strong>Example</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Articles (<em>a, an, the</em>)</td>
<td><em>On the Road</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prepositions (e.g., <em>against, as, between, of, to</em>)</td>
<td><em>Out of Africa</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Introductions, Prefaces, Forewords, and Afterwords

Descriptive terms such as “introduction,” “preface,” “foreword,” and “afterword” are capitalized when documented in an in-text citation but are lowercase when referenced in the essay or paper itself. If there is a unique title for one of the above, include that title in quotation marks, directly before the descriptive term, in your list of works cited. For example: (Bronte, Preface). In the body of an essay: In her preface, which was added to a later edition of the publication, Brontë debates the morality of creating scandalous characters such as those featured in *Wuthering Heights*. Unique title documented in the list of works cited: “All’s Well,” Preface (Scribbr).

### Abbreviated Titles

The first time you discuss a work, be sure to reference its full title. If you refer to the work often, you may subsequently use an abbreviation (e.g., “Nightingale” for “Ode to a Nightingale;” *Huckleberry Finn* for *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*).
**Documenting**

Each statement you make that is built on the arguments of an outside source requires a citation.

**In-Text Citations**

In-text (or parenthetical) citations are one means of documenting your use of outside sources. Regardless of whether you paraphrase or directly quote from the works of others in your own text, you must incorporate relevant information about those works each time you reference them. If you do not embed citations, you have plagiarized (see the Student Handbook for more information). **ALL statements** built on or inspired by the **ideas of others** require their own citations.

**Paraphrasing**

To paraphrase means to *rephrase* the major arguments/theories of a source – to provide readers with the “gist” – in a way that makes sense to you (but not to alter the *meaning* of those arguments/theories). An effective paraphrase always preserves the organization and emphasis of the original material but allows you more flexibility with sentence structure. However, it should never interfere with your *own* assertions. In academic work, paraphrasing is *preferred* over direct quoting, as doing so will illustrate to your readers that you understand and can appropriately condense the material you incorporate. Because paraphrasing involves interpreting your sources for your readers and rephrasing their major arguments/theories (and, thus, omitting quotation marks), it is important that you *establish* that you are paraphrasing. To do so, for *every* paraphrase you integrate into your work, you must give credit to the original source’s author/title – via either a **signal phrase** or an **in-text citation** (that must also document the page number where the material appears, when it is provided). Do note that all data (figures, statistics, dates)
are considered unique and while you may paraphrase the larger point made by the original source, you cannot do the same with data. Several examples now follow.

Data:

- There are actually 69,436,660 registered Catholics in the United States, 22% of the population, according to the 2013 *American Bishops’ Official Catholic Directory* (45).

Quoting particular phrases:

- In *Democracy Matters*, for example, West advocates revisiting the foundation of the U.S. Constitution to recognize and counter “free market fundamentalism” which he believes, among other policies, has undercut the document’s intention (9).

In the above example, the phrase “free market fundamentalism” is unique to West’s work and must be recognized as such through the use of quotation marks (*Lumen*).

Explaining a quote before presenting it:

- Thousands of years ago, Gautama Buddha was offering teachings on how not to hold on to hostilities, advising: “You will not be punished for your anger, you will be punished by your anger.” This is by no means a new problem … (*Lumen*).

Longer example:

Original text (from Nancy Woloch’s *Women and the American Experience: A Concise History*)

- “The feminization of clerical work and teaching by the turn of the century reflected the growth of business and public education. It also reflected limited opportunities elsewhere. Throughout the nineteenth century, stereotyping of work by sex had restricted women’s employment. Job options were limited; any field that admitted women attracted a surplus of applicants willing to work for less pay than men would have received. The entry of women into such fields – whether grammar school teaching or office work – drove down wages.”
Paraphrased version

• According to Nancy Woloch, the “feminization” of jobs in the nineteenth century had two major effects: a lack of employment opportunities for women and inadequate compensation for positions that were available. Thus, while clerical and teaching jobs indicated a boom in these sectors, women were forced to apply for jobs that would pay them less than male workers were paid (70). (Ashford)

“According to Nancy Woloch” is the signal phrase.

Two authors:

• Best and Marcus argue that one should read a text for what it says on its surface, rather than looking for some hidden meaning (9).

“Best and Marcus argue” is the signal phrase.

**Direct Quoting**

Place quotation marks around the entire quote (but not the citation), including any commas, colons, or semicolons that you insert or that are used by the original source. Remember that only essential information should be directly quoted. Such information includes data, visuals, and any definition unique to the author/source (e.g., if “corporate responsibility” is defined in a way that is different from common textbook definitions).

**General Formatting**

*** The following phrases are only bolded for the sake of emphasis. ***

*Print Source: Known Author*

Introduce direct quotations with a signal phrase (the source’s author, or title if the author is unknown, and an active, descriptive, present-tense verb); conclude with an in-text citation that contains the page number where the quote is located in the original source.
Zinn insists that the “concept of race in America is a tangled web brought on by the complex forward movement of history” (45).

* Note that the closing period is placed after the parentheses.

**Source with 3-5 Authors**

List only the first author’s last name, followed by the phrase et al.

According to Franck et al., “Current agricultural policies in the U.S. are contributing to the poor health of Americans” (327).

* Note that there is no comma between Franck and et al.

**Corporate Author**

Use the name of the corporation followed by the page number (if provided; they are typically not featured on websites). Use abbreviations where appropriate within the parenthetical citation only (e.g., nat’l for national).

(Nat’l Energy Committee 12).

(Starbucks).

In the case of a webpage created by an unknown author, use the name of the webpage itself or the organization that owns or runs it. See below for more information.

**Print Source: Unknown Author**

If the title of a source is longer than four words, abbreviate it and place it in quotation marks (the full title should appear in the list of works cited). If it is four words or less, simply place it in quotation marks. Books and entire websites (i.e., longer titles) are italicized. In either case, always provide the page number.

We see so many global warming hotspots in North America, likely because this region
has more “readily accessible climactic data and more comprehensive programs to monitor and study environmental change” (“Impact of Global Warming” 6).

Non-print & Internet Sources

You do not need to cite page/paragraph numbers. Unless you must do so to lead your readers to the appropriate works cited entry, do not cite URLs in the text of your paper.

Website: Unknown author

As in print sources with unknown authors, use the title of the work as part of your parenthetical citation.

(“Literature”).

Multiple Citations

Separate the citations with a semicolon.

... as has been discussed elsewhere (Burke 3; Dewey 21).

The Works Cited Page

All entries in the works cited page must correspond to the works referenced in your main text. Follow these guidelines:

1. Begin your works cited on a separate page at the end of your paper. It should contain the same margins and header as the rest of your paper.

2. Label the page Works Cited. Center the words, but neither bold nor underline them.

3. List sources alphabetically by either the author’s last name or the title of the work.

4. Do not list designations (i.e., Dr., Sir, etc.) or degrees.

5. Double-space all entries.

6. Begin each entry flush left; indent the subsequent lines one-half inch.

7. When available, use the doi (digital object identifier) that accompanies online academic sources; otherwise, cite the URL.
8. End all entries with a period.

9. Unless it is the first word of the title or subtitle, do **not** capitalize the following parts of speech: articles (a, an, the); prepositions (against, as, in, to, etc.); coordinating conjunctions (and, but, or, for, nor, so, yet); and the “to” in infinitives (e.g., “How to Play Chess” and “A Dialogue between the Soul and Body;” and *Save Our Children*).

10. When citing the date, use the day-month-year style (e.g., 12 March 2018).

11. Where you can, abbreviate the names of months (e.g., Jan., Apr., and Sept.).

12. When citing the publisher, omit the words “Company,” “Corporation,” “Incorporated,” and “Limited.” Replace “University Press” with UP and, for example, “University of Chicago Press” with U of Chicago P.

Refer to the following visual for more guidance:
### Examples

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Example</th>
<th>Tips</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Scholarly journal article from the library</td>
<td>Alonso, Alvaro, and Julio A. Camargo. “Toxicity of Nitrite to Three Species of Freshwater</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Database – With doi</td>
<td>Invertebrates.” <em>Environmental Toxicology</em>, vol.2, no. 1, 3 Feb. 2006, pp. 90-94. Wiley Online Library, doi: 10.1002/tox.20155.</td>
<td>Note that the name of the second author appears in first name, last name order. doi’s provide long-lasting links to online articles. Note that “doi” is neither capitalized nor placed in caps lock.</td>
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<td>Type</td>
<td>Citation</td>
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<td>--------------------</td>
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<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Website – No credited author</td>
<td>article/writingliving. Accessed 4 May 2009.</td>
<td>“Accessed” is the date that you printed or otherwise opened or retrieved the webpage.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“Giant Panda.” <em>Smithsonian National Zoological Park,</em> Smithsonian Institute, <a href="http://www.nationalzoo.si.edu/animals/giantpandas/pandafacts">www.nationalzoo.si.edu/animals/giantpandas/pandafacts</a>. Accessed 13 June 2017.</td>
<td>“Smithsonian Institute” is the publisher. If there is no publisher, use n.p.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>General Information on the New York Mets. <em>NYCData,</em> The Weissman Center for International Business Baruch College/CUNY, <a href="http://www.baruch.cuny.edu/nycdata/sports/nymets.htm">www.baruch.cuny.edu/nycdata/sports/nymets.htm</a>. Accessed 14 Feb. 2016.</td>
<td>When there is no page title, it is acceptable to include a description of the page. Do not place this description in italics or quotation marks. Follow with the name of the website.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Email</td>
<td>Kunka, Andrew. “Re: Modernist Literature.” Received by John Watts, 15 Nov. 2017.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If the author and the uploader are the same person, only cite their name one time (as in this example).