

Adapted from: *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*, 7th ed., and the MLA Website (<http://www.mla.org>)

When instructors assign a research paper asking you to use MLA (Modern Language Association) style, they are referring to the *mechanics* of writing, such as citation of sources, punctuation, quotation, documentation, line spacing, etc. MLA style provides specific guidelines for formatting your paper and for citing your sources. Most importantly, the use of MLA style can protect writers from accusations of plagiarism. If you are asked to use MLA format, be sure to consult the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*, 7th edition, for in-depth information.

TIPS FOR USING MLA STYLE

1. Type on white, 8.5 x 11" paper.
2. Double-space everything.
3. Use a standard font size, such as Times New Roman, 12 pt. font.
4. Punctuation marks, such as a colon, a comma, and a semicolon, should always be followed by one space.
5. Set margins at 1 inch for the top, bottom, right and left on every page.
6. Use the flush-left style that leaves the right margin uneven, or jagged.
7. Do not use the hyphenation function to break words at the end of lines.
8. Indent the first line of every paragraph five spaces or ½ inch using the tab key.
9. Number all pages consecutively in the upper right hand corner, one-half inch from the top and flush with the right margin.
10. MLA Style calls for *Works Cited* rather than a Bibliography. The list of works cited appears at the end of the paper. Begin the list on a new page and number each page, continuing from the page numbers of the text.
11. Double space and list works cited alphabetically by the author's last name. For each reference, the first line is flush with the left margin, and any additional lines are indented as a group five spaces or ½ inch. This is called a hanging indent.
12. Follow the guidelines closely for in-text citations and the works-cited list. Pay special attention to punctuation and spaces.

Formatting the First Page for MLA

- No title page.
- Double space everything.
- In the upper, left corner of the first page list: your name, your instructor's name, the course, and the date.
- Center the paper's title using upper and lower case letters (no underlining, no italics, no quotation marks, and no bolding).
- Create a header in the upper, right corner a half-inch from the top and one-inch from the right margin. Include your last name and insert automatic page numbering. This header will appear on all pages of your paper, and automatic page numbering will calculate the appropriate page number. (See a library staff member if you need help.)

The following three (3) pages include a sample MLA formatted paper with a Works Cited page. MLA format does not need a title page.

If your instructor requires a title page, format it according to the instructions given by your instructor.

Always consult the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*, 7th edition, for in-depth information.

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Professor Wilson

English 101

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Financial Management Skills of College Students with Credit Cards

Waves of undergraduate students attending college for the first time will undoubtedly leave home with more than their backpacks and college textbooks this year. As parents look for ways to provide financial support for their child's expenses away from home while instilling some financial responsibility, credit card companies are eager to provide the solution. Is credit card use a predictor of a college student's financial management skills? College students' credit card spending habits, parental involvement, and credit card debt will be reviewed to see how well undergraduate students manage their plastic and new financial responsibility.

According to an undergraduate study on credit card use by Sallie Mae, a college financing company, credit card usage by college students has risen in all key areas since the last study conducted in fall 2004 (3). "Nine in 10 undergraduates reported paying for direct education expenses with credit cards—and the average amount they charged more than doubled since the last study" (Sallie Mae 3). Kalman Chany, a college funding adviser and president of Campus Consultants said, "credit cards are the 'lender of last resort'. If (students) can't get private loans, they turn to credit cards." (qtd. in Chu 01b).

If the past is a forerunner for the future, national recession patterns dating back from the 1970s indicate public college tuition tends to increase as state-supported funding for higher education decreases (Hauptman A36). As families face hard economic times, more students may turn to credit cards to help pay college expenses. The undergraduate study confirms:

Nearly one-third (30%) put tuition on their credit card, an increase from 24 percent in the previous study. The most common education expenses charged were textbooks (76%), school supplies (75%), and commuter costs (54%). Food (84%), clothing (70%), and cosmetics (69%) ranked at the top of other expenses charged. (Sallie Mae 3).

Credit cards are not simply a matter of convenience, but have enabled students to live within and beyond their means without parental control. For many students, their initial credit card is their first exposure to financial responsibility.

Works Cited

Chu, Kathy. "College students using plastic more." *USA Today* 13 Apr. 2009: 01b. *Academic Search Premier*. Web. 28 Sept. 2009.

Hauptman, Arthur M. "Congress can't simply shame colleges into limiting tuition increases." *Chronicle of Higher Education*, 54.19 (2008): A36. *Academic Search Premier*, Web. 28 Sept. 2009.

Sallie Mae. *How undergraduate students use credit cards: Sallie Mae's national study of usage rates and trends*. April 2009. Web. 29 Sept. 2009.

EXAMPLE



MLA IN –TEXT CITATION EXAMPLES

The MLA in-text citation includes *signal phrases* and *parenthetical citations*. It connects the information in the text with a source listed on the Works Cited list.

SIGNAL PHRASES

- A ***signal phrase*** lets the reader know the source of the information. It indicates that something taken from a source (a quotation, summary, paraphrase, or fact) is about to be used; generally the signal phrase includes the author's name.
- Any source information that you provide in-text must correspond to the source information on the Works Cited page. More specifically, whatever **signal author or phrase** you provide to the reader in the text must be the first thing that appears on the left-hand margin of the corresponding entry in the Works Cited List.

PARENTHETICAL CITATIONS

- The ***parenthetical reference*** comes after the cited material and normally includes at least a page number.
- The source information required in a parenthetical citation depends on: (a) the source medium (e.g. Print, Web, DVD, etc.) and (b) the source's entry on the Works Cited page.

IN-TEXT CITATION EXAMPLES

Single author – named in a signal phrase (in-text citation)

According to an undergraduate study on credit card use by Sallie Mae, a college financing company, credit card usage by college students has risen in all key areas since the last study conducted in fall 2004 (3).

The signal phrase - *According to an undergraduate study on credit card use by Sallie Mae a college financing company* – names the single corporate author; the parenthetical citation gives the page number where the cited information may be found.



Basics of MLA Style for Students

Single author – named in Parentheses (in-text citation)

Nine in 10 undergraduates reported paying for direct education expenses with credit cards—and the average amount they charged more than doubled since the last study” (Sallie Mae 3).

If a signal phrase does not name the author, put the author’s last name in parentheses along with the page number. Use no punctuation between the name and the page number. This is a parenthetical reference.

Two or more authors – named in Parentheses (in-text citation)

Certain literacy theorists have gone so far as to declare that “The most significant elements of human culture are undoubtedly channeled through words, and reside in the particular range of meanings and attitudes which members of any society attach to their verbal symbols” (Goody and Watt 323).

No Author or Editor – named in Parentheses (in-text citation)

A *New York Times* editorial called Ralph Ellison “a writer of universal reach” (“Death” A18).

Journal Article from an Online Database – named in Parenthesis (in-text citation)

If the past is a forerunner for the future, national recession patterns dating back from the 1970s indicate public college tuition tends to increase as state-supported funding for higher education decreases (Hauptman A36).

Secondary Sources – quoted material (in-text citation)

Secondary source of a quotation (someone quoted within the text of another author).

Kalman Chany, a college funding adviser and president of Campus Consultants said, “credit cards are the “lender of last resort”. If (students can’t get private loans, they turn to credit cards” (qtd. in Chu 01b).

Web page (in-text citation)

President Lincoln’s birthplace was designated as a National Historical Site in 1959 (National Park Service).

Note: Personal or corporate author and page number should be given if they exist on the web site.

MLA WORKS CITED ENTRY EXAMPLES

Book, One Author

Wilson, Frank R. *The Hand: How Its Use Shapes the Brain, Language, and Human Culture*. New York: Pantheon, 1998. Print.

Book, Two or More Authors

Ulrich, Dave, Jack Zenger, and Norm Smallwood. *Results-Based Leadership*. Boston: Harvard Business School Press, 1999. Print.

Book with an Editor

Tannen, Deborah, ed. *Gender and Conversational Interaction*. New York: Oxford UP, 1993. Print.

Book, Corporate Author

National Research Council. *Beyond Six Billion: Forecasting the World's Population*. Washington: National Academies Press, 2000. Print.

Book, No Author or Editor

A Guide to Our Federal Lands. Washington: National Geographic Society, 1984. Print.

Book Anonymous

New York Public Library American History Desk Reference. New York: Macmillan, 1997. Print.

Anthology

Melville, Herman. "Bartleby the Scrivener." 1853. *An Anthology of American Literature*. Ed. Thomas M. Davis and Willoughby Johnson. New York: Bobbs-Merrill Co., Inc. 1966. Print.

Journal Article

David, Craig R. "A Perfect Marriage on the Rocks: Geoffrey and Phillipa Chaucer, and the Franklin's Tale." *Chaucer Review* 37.2 (2002): 129-144. Print.

Magazine Article

Bordewich, Fergus M. "Day of Reckoning." *Smithsonian* Oct. 2009: 62-69. Print.

Newspaper Article

Gopnik, Blake. "Art and Design Bringing Fresh Ideas to the Table." *Washington Post* 21 Apr. 2002: G1
Print.

Video recordings

The Heart is a Lonely Hunter. Dir. Robert Ellis Miller. Perf. Alan Arkin and Sondra Locke. 1968. Warner
Home Video, 2008. DVD.

An Article from an Online Article Database

Chaitlin, Julia and Dan Bar-on. "Emotional Memories of Family Relationships during the Holocaust."
Journal of Loss and Trauma 7.4 (2002): 299-326. *Academic Search Premier*. Web. 16 Sept.
2009.

An Article from an Online Newspaper or News Service

Bohn, Kevin. "One Company's Innovative Healthcare Approach." *CNN.com*. Cable News Network, 31 Jul
2009. Web. 24 Sept. 2009.

An Online Book (E-Book)

Eisen, Arnold M. *The Chosen People in America: a Study in Jewish Religious Ideology*. Bloomington:
Indiana UP, 1983. 27 Apr. 2006 *NetLibrary*. Web. 16 Sep. 2009.

Personal Site

Lancashire, Ian. *Home page*. 23 Jan. 2005. 15 May 2006 <http://www.chass.utoronto.ca/~ian/>.

NOTE: Omit URL citations of material in databases. In other citations, the URL is optional – include only if the reader could not locate the source without it or if your instructor requires it.