# MLA TERM PAPER FORMAT

#### **Basics**

- Use 12-point type in Times New Roman (or a similar plain font) for everything in the paper.
- Double-space the entire paper, including block quotations and the works-cited list.
- Indent each paragraph, leaving *no extra space* between paragraphs.

#### **Page Numbering**

Every page must be numbered at the top right. Page numbers, along with your family name, appear in the header space (inside the upper margin, about half an inch from the top of the page).

Click on "Insert" and then "Page Number." Select the option which places the page number at the top right; then type in your surname, separating it from the number by one space.

# **Opening Page**

- In the header space at the right, insert page number 1 and add your surname. Close the header space.
- At the upper left, type your full name, your teacher's name, the course and its number, and the paper's due date double-spaced. Leave one blank space below the date.
   Note that the date is given as day, month, year with no punctuation. The name of the month is written in full.
- Centre your title, double-spacing it if it is long. Leave one blank space below it.
- Indent, and type the text of the paper—double-spaced—adding citations where required.

Professor Johnson  Humanities 103 22 November 2016  Tobacco Advertising:  A Major Cause of Addiction  The actual text of the paper begins here on page 1; there is no separate title page. If your title is long, it is best to divide it so that it will not be mistaken for a line of text. Note that everything in the paper is double-spaced, and, as usual, no		Anderson 1
Humanities 103  22 November 2016  Tobacco Advertising:  A Major Cause of Addiction  The actual text of the paper begins here on page 1; there is no separate title page. If your title is long, it is best to divide it so that it will not be mistaken for a line of text. Note that everything in the paper is double-spaced, and, as usual, no additional spacing is left between one paragraph and the next.	Audrey Anderson	
Tobacco Advertising:  A Major Cause of Addiction  The actual text of the paper begins here on page 1; there is no separate title page. If your title is long, it is best to divide it so that it will not be mistaken for a line of text. Note that everything in the paper is double-spaced, and, as usual, no additional spacing is left between one paragraph and the next.	Professor Johnson	
A Major Cause of Addiction  The actual text of the paper begins here on page 1; there is no separate title page. If your title is long, it is best to divide it so that it will not be mistaken for a line of text. Note that everything in the paper is double-spaced, and, as usual, no additional spacing is left between one paragraph and the next.	Humanities 103	
A Major Cause of Addiction  The actual text of the paper begins here on page 1; there is no separate title page. If your title is long, it is best to divide it so that it will not be mistaken for a line of text. Note that everything in the paper is double-spaced, and, as usual, no additional spacing is left between one paragraph and the next.	22 November 2016	
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	line of text. Note that ev	rerything in the paper is double-spaced, and, as usual, no
Use the tab key to indent each paragraph	additional spacing is left	t between one paragraph and the next.
	Use the tab key to	indent each paragraph
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### **Citations**

In-text citations (in parentheses) have completely replaced the older practice of footnoting. In preparing your citations, see the Skills Centre's handout sheet E1.1 or consult the *MLA Handbook*. Note that *all* research information—whether quoted or summarized in your own words—must be cited.

A typical citation consists of an author's surname and a page number, but not all sources can be identified that way. Citations differ in content, but are always based on *whatever comes first in the works-cited entry*—sometimes a title in quotation marks or in italics. In citations, long titles must be shortened. (See handout E1.1 for MLA citation models and instructions.)

# A Regular Page, Showing Citations and Quotations

- Subheadings are not used unless required by the teacher. Simply begin a new paragraph to make each new point.
- When you finish summarizing or paraphrasing research information, add a citation immediately after it. The period or comma (if any) follows the citation.
- A brief quotation (less than four lines) is given in quotation marks in the body of the paper with a citation following directly. The period or comma (if any) follows the citation.
- Quotations of more than four lines are set off in block form, without quotation marks. They are indented twice the usual distance from the margin (2 tabs). In this case, the citation follows the closing punctuation.

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The text of the entire paper is double-spaced, with no extra space between the paragraphs.

Indent using the tab key when beginning each new paragraph, and remember the importance of topic sentences. When quoting less than four lines from a source, integrate the quotation into the text of your paper "being certain to use quotation marks" (Smith 56). Note that the citation follows the quotation immediately. See the Skills Centre handouts or the current edition of the MIA Handbook for correct citation forms.

When presenting longer quotations—of over four lines—note that they must be set off in block form as shown here:

Block quotations do not require quotation marks since their form and position identify them as quotations. Use the tab key twice to indent block quotations properly, and note that the closing punctuation in this special case—normally a period—comes

When the text of your paper then resumes, you may continue the previous paragraph or indent and start a new one at this point.

It is essential to understand citation procedures in order to to avoid unintentional plagiarism. Visit the Skills Centre if you have any questions.

### **Works-Cited Page**

- This page is numbered like all the others—in the header space at the upper right.
- The heading—Works Cited—appears at the top in the centre, as shown. Capitalize the W and C; do not italicize it, underline it, enlarge it, or use bold type.
- Sources are arranged in alphabetical order by first letter, ignoring "A," "An," or "The" in titles. Don't separate sources by type; arrange them all in one list.
- The first line of each entry begins at the margin; any following lines are indented. (Use the 'Hanging Indent' feature to position these lines properly.)
- Entries are double-spaced with a single blank space between each one.
- Long URLs must be broken to avoid awkward gaps in the entry. Break them after a dash, dot, or slash.

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#### Works Cited

Abrams, Joseph T. A Short History of Television: 1950 – 1970. 4th ed., Gilmore Publishers, 2005.

Bailey, Elizabeth F. Media: Methods and Madness. U of Northampton P, 1987. Google Books, books.google.com/books?isbn=0761941002.

"Culture of Mayhem: Barbarity in the American Media." US MediaWatch.
2006, U of Ohio, www.unoh.edu/usmediawatch.cm/7j6/cm/001.

Feinstein, G. L. "An Essay on Current Trends in Docudrama." The Media and the Audience: An Anthology. Edited by Catherine J. Habberfield, Midwest Press, 1998.

Munching, Phillip H. "Prejudice: Alive and on the Air." Media Journal, vol. 52, no. 8, pp. 112-25. Goldmine Database, www.goldbase.org/ media/phm/stable/0582187.0

Wilson, Melanie. "U.S. Primetime Extremes." Broadcast Media Month, vol. 13, no. 1, Jan. 2004, pp. 51-55.

To prepare a works-cited entry for each of your sources, see the Skills Centre handout sheets E1.3 – E1.8, or consult the current edition of the *MLA Handbook*. The format is different for different types of sources—books, articles, database items, Web site material, etc. Certain standard abbreviations must be used, and the punctuation requires care.