

Claudia Q. Sample

Professor Noname

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A Sample Paper for Correct Formatting in *MLA-9*

The Modern Language Association (MLA) has updated its style handbook to provide substantially more clarity than the previous version with the release of the *MLA Handbook Ninth Edition (MLA-9)*. As in the prior edition, MLA repeatedly refers to professors' rights to establish unique formatting requirements for their students within the *MLA-9* (1, 3, 13, 290; see also "MLA Style Center"). However, in order to achieve uniformity and consistency in all courses and programs of study requiring MLA formatting, the administrators of Liberty University have established the formatting rules and standards within this sample paper that students and professors are to follow for all Liberty University class assignments. The *MLA-9* is available online at [mlahandbookplus.org](http://mlahandbookplus.org)

A significant change in *MLA-9* is the recommendation for using internal headings and subheadings paper to help organize and structure one's paper (4-5). Headings are not recommended or required for short essays, however. If you do choose to include headings, be sure to include two or more headings of the level(s) you choose to use, since *MLA-9* forbids stand-alone heading levels. Three levels are set forth in the *MLA-9*, with all three presented flush-left (at the left margin):

**Heading Level 1**

Heading Level 2

*Heading Level 3*

This sample paper contains more headings than would typically be used in an academic paper so that students can readily search for specific topics as necessary for their particular needs. Below is a list of the available headings in this paper for ease of search-ability; this would never be included in an academic paper:

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### **Paper Set Up (Font, Margins, Left-justified, Line Spacing, Punctuation)**

The *MLA-9* itself provides basic directives on how to set up or lay out the format of the pages in a research paper. Margins on all four sides of the page must be 1”, for example, with everything double-spaced (including quotes and the works-cited entries). *MLA-9* recommends “an easily readable typeface [e.g., Times New Roman] ... in which the regular type style contrasts clearly with the italic” between 11- and 13-point size (1). For the sake of consistency and uniformity, **Liberty University requires Times New Romans 12-point font for all class assignments**. Papers should be “left-justified” (i.e., only the left margin would line up, and the right margin would have a ragged edge, as shown throughout this paper). Paragraphs should be indented ½” from the left margin. Only one space should be added after closing punctuation before beginning the next sentence (2). Students should be sure that their word processing program is not set to automatically hyphenate words that are too long to appear on one line (“[MLA Style Center](#)”).

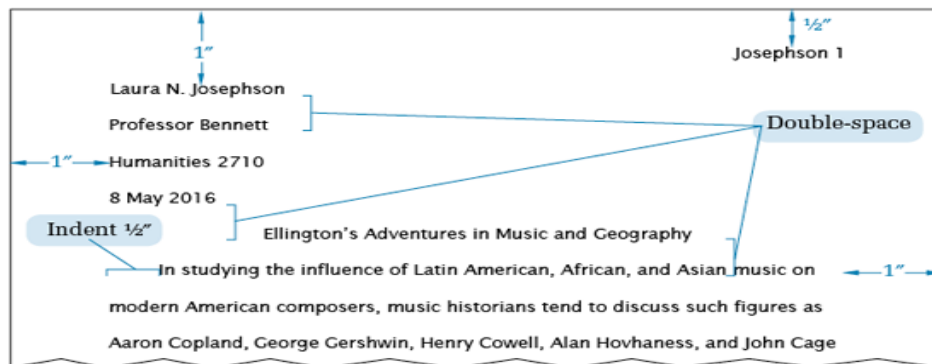
### **Title Page Format**

An individual student’s research paper in *MLA-9* format does not include a separate title page (2). Group projects, however, do require a title page that lists all of the student authors’ names (*MLA-9* 3).<sup>1</sup> All pages of the essay or paper must include the author’s last name (all last names in the case of a group paper), followed by one space and the page number in the header at

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<sup>1</sup> See the template provided for group papers in our [MLA Quick Guide](#).

the right margin (see top right corner of this page). The first page of the essay or paper itself should always begin with number 1; if you have a separate title page for a group project, it should not be numbered. As shown in the figure below from [style.mla.org](http://style.mla.org) (and in this sample paper itself), the first page of any individual student's paper in *MLA-9* format must include separate lines at the left margin with the student's name, the instructor's name, the course number, and the date of completion, in day-month-year format (2):



### Title of Paper

The title of your paper goes on the line of the first page of the body, under the four lines of student/professor details (*MLA-9*); it should be centered, with no bolding or italics, and in title case (all major words should begin with a capital letter).

### Notable Changes from Prior Editions

In addition to inclusion of headings and a separate title page for group projects (both mentioned above), *MLA-9* has a few other notable changes. Footnotes are now permitted, sparingly, to clarify or add supplemental details. Though *MLA-9* authorizes placement of footnote content either at the bottom of the page (as in this sample paper) or on a separate page after the reference list (290), **Liberty University recommends that student place them, when used, at the bottom of the page**, as shown throughout this paper. Indent the first line of footnotes 1/2" from the left margin.

Citations are also now required for every sentence that includes content derived from another source (rather than just at the end of a paragraph). *MLA-9* allows writers to omit the author's name for subsequent citations in the same paragraph, however, provided there is no intervening content between those sentences, and it is clear to the reader where the content originated. Location numbers can be presented alone in parentheses in such cases. *MLA-9* is also twice the number of total pages than the previous version was; those pages include significantly expanded explanations of mechanics rules (e.g., punctuation, bulleting, etc.) and examples of works-cited entries.

### **Basic Rules of Scholarly Writing**

Most beginning students have difficulty learning how to write papers and also format papers correctly using the ninth edition of the MLA manual. However, the mission of the Liberty University "[Online Writing Center](#)" (OWC) includes helping students learn how to be autonomous, proficient writers. The OWC also provides students with templates to help them with basic formatting elements, but this sample paper is designed to help graduate and doctoral students learn to master MLA rules and formatting on their own, which will prove helpful as they progress in their studies and work toward future publication in scholarly journals.

For the purpose of instruction, this paper will use second person (you, your), but third person (this author) must be used in most student papers. First person (I, me, we, us, our) is not generally permitted in academic papers. Students should refrain from using first or second person in college courses unless the assignment instructions clearly permit such (as in the case of personal reflection sections or life histories). If in doubt, students should clarify with their professors.

## **Mechanics of Scholarly Prose**

Chapter 2 of the *MLA-9* is dedicated to the mechanics of prose. This section in the *MLA-9* is extensive and spans 73 pages, which is almost half of the number of total pages (including forematter and index) in the entire previous edition. Topics covered in Chapter 2 include rules on spelling, punctuation, italics, hyphenation, capitalization, names, titles, and numbers. Because there are many individual rules about specific applications, students are encouraged to consult their own copy of the *MLA-9* for detailed rules; these largely follow standard grammar and mechanics rules of scholarly writing and are not necessarily specific to just *MLA-9*.

## **Works Cited Introduction and Summary of Formatting**

*MLA-9* is almost identical to previous editions in regard to formatting and parenthetical citations, but the *MLA-9* expands and enhances the examples of works-cited entries to include virtually every type of resource an author would ever cite. MLA defines the core elements of the works-cited list as including the author(s), title of the source, title of its container, other contributors, version, number, publisher, publication date, and location (20), in that order. These elements are discussed in more detail in the paragraphs that follow and demonstrated visually in the works cited entries themselves.

## **Crediting Your Sources**

Chapter 6 of the *MLA-9* provides a thorough discussion of in-text citations. *MLA-9*'s goal regarding in-text citations is to provide "brief, unobtrusive references that direct readers to the works-cited list entries for the sources you consulted and, where relevant, to the location in the source being cited" (227). In-text citations usually require the author's name and page number for both direct quotes and paraphrases. If you are just generally referring to a source but not quoting or paraphrasing its content specifically, you can cite only the author and omit the page

number. When the author is unknown, name the title, in quotation marks, as it appears in the title place in the works-cited entry. “MLA Style Center” is an example throughout this sample paper. No punctuation is required between the author and page number. The author may be named in the text of the sentence itself, or in parentheses after the cited content. For example, Owen studies children with emotional and behavioral disturbances (12); or children adopted from trauma often suffer with emotional and behavioral disturbances (Owen 12). In subsequent direct quotes or paraphrased content from the same author in the same paragraph, and where it is clear to the reader that you are still referring to that other source, use just the page number in the citation (262). For example: She believes that attachment difficulties have spiritual implications (12).

#### Paraphrasing and Direct Quotes

Paraphrasing is rephrasing another’s idea in one’s own words by changing the wording sufficiently without altering the meaning (remember not to just change a word here or there or rearrange the order of the original source’s wording). Quoting is using another’s exact words. Both need to be cited; failure to do so constitutes plagiarism.

#### *Paraphrasing*

Only use quotes when the original text cannot be said as well in your own words or changing the original wording would change the author’s meaning. You cannot simply change one word and omit a second; if you paraphrase, the wording must be substantially different, but with the same meaning. Regardless, you would need to cite the resource you took that information from. For example, Maryse Benoit and others wrote that “although, a link between attachment and posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) symptoms has been established, the mechanisms involved in this link have not yet been identified” (101). A paraphrase for that quote



might be: A link between dysfunctional attachment and the development of PTSD has been made, though there is insufficient data to determine exactly how this mechanism works (Benoit et al. 101).

### *Short Quotes*

As the direct quote in the previous section demonstrates, the closing punctuation in a sentence with a short quote falls after the closing parentheses.

### *Block Quotes*

Quotes that are “more than four lines in your prose” (254) must be blocked<sup>2</sup>, with the left margin of the entire quote indented ½ inch. Maintain double-spacing of block quotes. MLA prefers that you introduce quotes but note that the punctuation falls at the end of the direct quote itself, with the page number outside of that (which is contrary to punctuation for non-blocked quotes). For example, Alone claims:<sup>3</sup>

Half of a peanut butter sandwich contains as much bacteria as the wisp of the planet Mars. Thus, practicality requires that Mrs. Spotiker nibble one bit at a time until she is assured that she will not perish from ingesting it too quickly. (13)

For block quotations in which the parenthetical citation does not fit on the same line as the direct quote itself, drop the citation to the next line and right-justify it:

Wishing upon a star and then some, of which riches there are,  
Brightest light, still shining through the delight of a winter storm,

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<sup>2</sup> Note that block quotes are required for “more than three lines in the source” for poetry (MLA-9 256).

<sup>3</sup> Note that there are no quotation marks for block quotes, as shown in the example.

Prettier than the fireflies that twinkle in the summer months,  
 Ne'er before has the halo of the moon and sun and star burned more amber.

(Burgeot, sonnet 21)

Usually quotes within quotes use single quotation marks; however, use double quotation marks for quotes within blocked quotes, since there are no other quotation marks involved. Also understand that direct quotes should be used sparingly in scholarly writing; paraphrasing is much preferred in scholarly writing, as it demonstrates that you read, understood, and assimilated other writers' content into one cohesive whole.

#### Author Names of Cited Content

##### *Single Author*

If you name an author in the text of your sentence itself (called a narrative citation), include both the author's first and last names. For example, according to Christy Owen, "foxes can fly" (17).

##### *Two Authors*

When naming two authors in a narrative citation, use the word "and" to connect them (and use both their first and last names the first time you mention them, as for a single author). In subsequent or parenthetical citations, use just their last names. For example, Aubrey Perigogn and Pauline Brazel contemplated that . . . or (Perigogn and Brazel).

##### *Three or More Authors*

Narrative citations of resources with three or more authors follow the same rule of giving the first author's full name, plus either the phrase "and others" or "and colleagues" (*MLA-9* 232). Parenthetical citations of sources that have three or more authors, include the first author's last name followed by the words *et al.* (without italics; *MLA-9* 232). *Et al.* is a Latin abbreviation for

*et alli*, meaning “and others,” which is why the word “al.” has a period, whereas “et” does not. For example, Abram Alone and colleagues stipulated that peacocks strut. Every single time I refer to their material thereafter, I would apply *MLA-9*’s rule of last-name-only plus the appropriate descriptor: Alone and others, Alone and colleagues, or (Alone et al.).

#### *Unknown Author*

Resources without a known author will name the title in the author’s position (*MLA-9* 237); note that presentation of such titles should mirror the italics and quotation marks around these titles as presented in the works-cited list.

#### *Abbreviations of Corporate Author Names and Titles within the Body of the Paper*

When a corporate author is named parenthetically, “shorten the name to the shortest noun phrase” (*MLA-9* 233) but do not abbreviate any of the words. This rule also applies to titles of sources cited in the body of a paper (237). For example, *Owen’s Northern Lights* would be spelled out fully each time, since it is comprised solely of a noun and two modifiers; whereas *Owen’s Lights of the North* can be shortened to *Owen’s Lights*, since “of the North” is a prepositional phrase that is not part of a noun phrase.

#### *Citing Sources Multiple Times in-Text*

If the same source is cited more than once in a paragraph, with no intervening resources cited between, *MLA-9* authorizes a full citation in the first sentence citing that source, and then only the location number include for other content deriving from that same source in the same paragraph (262). This is a difference from the previous version of MLA and has been demonstrated throughout this sample paper, including in the previous paragraph. Anytime there is any content between cited content in a paragraph, a new citation is required for the sake of clarity.

### Secondary or Indirect Sources; used for Direct Quotes Published in Other Sources

*MLA-9* also addresses rules on secondary or indirect sources on pages 284-285. It favors finding the original source whenever possible, but details how to incorporate an indirect source when the original source is not available. For example, Bhabha believes that boundaries are created when critics insist upon bearing “witness to the unequal and uneven forces of cultural representation” (qtd. in Bartels 46).

### Locations of Cited Content in Original Sources

Include the author(s) and location as applicable for paraphrases, and the author(s) and location (e.g., page, paragraph, line number, or timestamp) for direct quotes. Page numbers should be used for any printed material (books, articles, etc.), and paragraph numbers should be used in the absence of page numbers (online articles, webpages, etc.). Inclusion of page numbers are required for all citations to a paginated book, including both direct quotes and paraphrases (MLA-9 99-100, 242). Do not use any labels or punctuation before page numbers in your citations. For example: (Perigogn and Brazel 12–13). However, you must include a label for other locations, such as par. for paragraph in a webpage or line/lines for lines in poetry (e.g., Liberty University par. 8).

### Placement of Citation in Sentence

Writers are encouraged to name the author in the beginning, middle, or end of the sentence. The following three sentences exemplified each option, with coloring to separate them and the author’s name underlined in each solely for visual demonstrations here; students would never underline any authors’ names or add highlighting or coloring in their papers:

Eachwort et al. stressed the importance of eating a wholesome breakfast to start one’s day (12).

In “The Squirrel Poem,” Joanna Smith detailed the antics of squirrels.

“The Destructors” foretells the cruel and macabre plot of the Wormsley Common Gang to deconstruct Old Misery’s home from the inside-out (Greene 3).

#### Arranging the Order of Resources in Your Citations

If the material you cited was referred to in multiple resources, include a footnote and separate the different sets of authors and locations with semicolons, arranged in whatever order seems logical (*MLA-9* 287). These can be arranged alphabetically as they appear in the works-cited list or prioritized with the most prominent or relevant for that content placed first. Do not include parentheses, but format them as if for parenthetical citations (using only last names and et al. as appropriate).<sup>4</sup>

#### Two Works by the Same Author in Same Year Cited in the Body of the Paper

Authors with more than one work published in the same year are distinguished by adding a title to the citation so the reader can easily identify which resource each citation refers to (*MLA-9* 235). For example, this sample paper refers to two resources written by Charles Double in 2008. In “Arranged Alphabetically,” Charles Double details the rules for writing (11). Double also elaborates on subsequent publications (“The Second” 6).

#### Two Works by Two Different Authors with the Same Last Name Cited in the Body of the Paper

If you have two or more resources authored by individuals with the same last name in the same year, include those authors’ first names in every narrative citation (not just the first one in each paragraph). In parenthetical citations to such resources, include the author’s first initial and last name, with the title, separated by a comma. For example, James Brown wrote about anteaters and Marilyn Brown discussed verb forms. Anteaters have long snouts (J. Brown, “Anteaters” par. 3). Capricious means “whimsical” (M. Brown, “Capricious” par. 2).

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<sup>4</sup> Owen, figure 1; see also Rackley, 8; De Vries et al., 17; Fried and Polyakova, table 3.

## Number of Authors in the Works Cited List

The same rules apply to the number of authors named in the works cited list as with in-text citations. Resources with only one or two authors will name all of those authors in every citation; resources with three or more authors will only name the first author and add the phrase et al.

## Dictionaries

*MLA-9* advises writers to use just one dictionary for the sake of consistency, such as the *Merriam-Webster* dictionary (15), which can be accessed at [www.merriam-webster.com](http://www.merriam-webster.com). Writers should consult that dictionary resource often to check for non-standard plurals (16), determine whether a term requires a hyphen (28, 31), clarify foreign language terms in literary periods and cultural movements (52), determine whether items in a numbered series should be spelled out or enumerated (84), check for offensive terms (93), clarify variant spellings of an author's name (115), and discern whether and how to properly abbreviate a term (293). Terms and phrases that have not been adopted into the English language should be italicized in the text of a paper; *mise en abyme* is an example of this.

When citing a dictionary entry, name the word searched in quotation marks. For example, “heuristic” is defined by *Merriam-Webster* as “involving or serving as an aid to learning, discovery, or problem-solving by experimental and especially trial-and-error methods.” This sample paper strives to help students avoid learning *MLA-9* formatting through heuristic methods. In the works cited entry, include the form of the word (e.g., N. for noun; Adj. for

adjective) and the definition number, if more than one entry for that form of that word (see the works cited entry for “heuristic”).

### **Abbreviations**

The *MLA-9* includes an extensive list of accepted abbreviations in its first appendix, including all of the books of the Bible, as well as some other classical works (295-301). The Bible abbreviations are attached to this sample paper in the appendix herein, since Liberty University will likely use those in each class.

If you will use a long term, phrase, or entity name at least three times in the body of your paper, write out the full name the first time you mention it, followed by an abbreviation or acronym in parentheses, and then use the abbreviation throughout the rest of the body of the paper. Spell the entity name out fully in the works-cited list. The abbreviation *MLA-9* is an example of this; see the top of page 1 of this sample paper for how it was introduced. Note that it is italicized because it represents the abbreviation of a book title.

### **Lists**

*MLA-9* allows lists to be woven into the text directly within the paragraph or set vertically (9-13). When integrated into your content, use a colon or the word “include” (with no quotation marks) before beginning your list; your list can be unnumbered or numbered. If you use numbers, add enclose the number in parentheses. For example, lizards like to eat apples, bananas, and cantaloupe. Last year, the most active people groups were: (1) Americanaans, (2) Brazeltonians, (3) Cliffordians, and (4) Driftylons. The same content presented vertically would include that lizards like to eat:

- apples
- bananas

- cantaloupe

Last year, the most active people groups were:

1. Americaunas;
2. Brazeltonians;
3. Cliffordians; and
4. Driftylons.

If your vertical list items are complete sentences, begin each with a capital letter and end with a period; if they are fragments, separate them with semicolons with the word “or” or “and” before the last item, and add a period at the end as demonstrated in the numbered vertical list above.

## Numbers

In *MLA-9* format, when you can use only or two words for a number, spell it out in word format (82); include a dash to combine words for numbers under 100. For example:

three      two hundred      four thousand      two-thirds      sixty-four      eighty-six

Use numbers when three or more words are required to state the number other than percentages or money:

3<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>      106      152      1,112      5,618      8,008

If your sentence includes a combination of numbers from both of the rules state above (i.e., numbers with only one or two words, as well as numbers with three or more words), express all the numbers in that sentence numerically (*MLA-9* 83). For example, only 9 of the 305 students in the graduating class attended the concert. You may combine numerals and words for very large numbers, such as 6.8 million frogs (84).

Amounts of money and percentages are spelled out in word format if you use one to three



words to express them, and written out numerically if you use four or more words (*MLA-9* 83):

six percent	fifty-three percent	forty-one dollars	four hundred dollars
\$4.62	\$936	42.6%	50.3%

For numbered street names, use ordinal numbers (1st, 2nd, 8th) and do not superscript the suffix (st, nd, th); see section 2.219 of your *MLA-9*. When you begin a sentence with a number, spell that number out in word format (84), even if your sentence contains a number that is expressed numerically (85). Add a comma for numbers greater than 999 except for page/line numbers, four-digit years, and street addresses (86).

### **Displaying Titles of Works In-Text**

The names of journals, books, plays, dissertations, films, websites, apps, court cases, and other long works, if mentioned in the body of the paper, are italicized in title case (*MLA-9* 66-69). When you mention a work that is normally italicized (e.g., a play) as well as the larger work it is published in (i.e., a book with collections of plays), italicize both titles in that sentence (69). Titles of journal articles, lectures, essays, poems, chapters in a book, pages on a website, and songs should be in title case, encapsulated by quotation marks (70). Do not add italics or quotation marks to Scripture, laws, titled categories on websites (such as Ask the MLA; 71).<sup>5</sup> Divisions of a work should be presented in lowercase, with no bolding, italics, or quotation marks (72): act 6, appendix, bibliography, canto 8, chapter 12, list of works cited, preface, scene 2, stanza 11.

### **Personal Communications**

In *MLA-9*, relevant details for personal communications include the other person, the type of communication, and you as recipient (124). *MLA-9* allows you to name yourself as the

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<sup>5</sup> <https://style.mla.org/sections/ask-the-mla/>

recipient or use the term “the author” (without quotation marks). For example:

Perrington, Annabelle. E-mail to the author. 8 August 2021.

Perrington, Annabelle. E-mail to Christy Owen. 8 August 2021.

Rousch, Peyton. Telephone interview with the author. 15 July 2020.

Rousch, Peyton. Telephone interview with Christy Owen. 15 July 2020.

In both cases, as with any other type of resource, name the author in your in-text citations (Perrington) or (Rousch).

### **Resources Canonically Numbered Sections (i.e., Bible Verses, Poetry, and Plays)**

Some resources—including Bible verses, poetry, and plays—do not have page or paragraph numbers.

#### **Bible / Scripture**

*MLA-9*'s rules on citing scriptural writings are found on page 247. Include a works-cited entry. When mentioned in the text of your paper other than as a citation (discussed in the next paragraph), the general term Bible should not be italicized. Bible verses should designate the chapter and verse as the location. Because Liberty University is a distinctly Christian institution and many of its courses require biblical integration, most if not all of its students will cite the Bible in virtually every course. **For the sake of clarity and consistency, Liberty University has deemed that all named Bible versions will be cited in both the text and the works-cited entries by the full name of the version used, following the term *The Bible*.**

The first time the Bible version is cited in your paper, you must include a citation with the full name of the version from your works-cited entry. For example, in a vivid prophetic vision, Ezekiel saw “figures resembling four living beings”—each with the faces of a man, an ox, a lion, and an eagle (*The Bible*, New American Standard, Ezek. 1.5-10). Later, in the last

book of the Bible, John echoed this passage when describing his own vision (Rev. 4.6-8). Notice that *The Bible* is italicized in the citations since it represents a book title, but the specific version of the Bible named in citations is not italicized. As long as you do not change versions, future citations in the rest of that paper will only include the location (rather than in each paragraph, as for other resource types). If multiple versions are cited in the paper, the version must be cited each time as required for the reader to clearly understand which version was consulted for each citation.

### Poems

When citing poems, include the line(s) as the location, instead of page or paragraph numbers. Spell the word line or lines out (rather than using l. or ll.) so as to avoid confusion with numerals. Shakespeare mourns the relentless passage of time in Sonnet 12: “And nothing ‘gainst Time’s scythe can make defence / Save breed, to brave him when he takes thee hence” (lines 13-14).

### Plays

Locations of content from plays include the act, scene, and line(s), in a single string, separated by periods. For example, (*Hamlet* 1.5.35-37) refers to Act 1 Scene 5, Lines 35-37 of that play.

### **Lectures and PowerPoints**

For purposes of Liberty University course presentations and lectures (which are not readily available to the public), reference each as a video lecture with the URL (if available) for the presentation, naming the presenter(s) in the author’s position. Include the course number, lecture title, and enough details for others to identify it within that course (including the semester and year the course was taken), in a sort of book format, naming Liberty University as publisher.

Peters is an example of this in the works cited list of this paper. If the presenter for a Liberty University class lecture is not named, credit Liberty University as the author; see Liberty University in the works cited list below as an example.

Section 6.79 discusses formatting of PowerPoint slides in *MLA-9* format (285). In such projects, citations should appear on each slide to give credit to the content therein, and there should be a Works Cited list in the last slide. When citing a slide presentation in a class paper, include the slide number as the location.

### **Electronic Sources and Digital Object Identifiers (DOI)**

*MLA-9* requires inclusion of a Digital Object Identifier (DOI) in the references whenever available; if not, then a webpage, if available. In keeping with its unification of resources, *MLA-9* now standardizes all DOIs and URLs to be presented in URL format, with the DOI number itself preceded by <https://doi.org/> — <https://doi.org/10.1177%2F1524838017742386>. If no DOI is available copy and paste the URL directly from the web browser unless it is a static hyperlink (one that requires log-on credentials to access, rather than a direct link that is accessible to everyone). Add a period after the DOI or URL in the works cited entries. *MLA-9* does not require authors to break long URLs with soft returns (hold down the *Shift* key and press the *Enter* key) at forward slashes, periods, or underscores to avoid unsightly spacing gaps, but it may be best to do so in academic papers.

### **Self-Plagiarism**

*MLA-9* recognizes that “many schools’ academic honesty policies prohibit the reuse of one’s prior work in papers” (96-97). Indeed, Liberty University has stringent rules against self-plagiarism, as do many scholarly journals. Because students receive grades for their class papers; those who have received feedback and a grade from a prior professor on a prior paper have an

advantage over their classmates, both in having the benefit of that feedback/grade and in not having to write a whole paper from scratch during the subsequent class. Student papers are also submitted to SafeAssign or Turnitin to deter plagiarism. For these reasons, Liberty University expressly forbids students using significant portions of a prior paper in a subsequent course (either a retake of the same course or a new class altogether). It is conceivable that students who are building their knowledge base in a subject matter—particularly at the graduate and post-graduate levels—would reasonably justify incorporating brief excerpts from past papers into current ones, as *MLA-9* itself also recognizes (97). In such case, Liberty University authorizes students to include brief excerpts of prior class papers in future courses, along with a citation to the prior class paper and a reference entry (i.e., Owen, 2012; Yoo et al., 2016), as with any other source. Such self-references and re-use of content from prior papers should be used sparingly and disclosed fully in the current paper, and that content should not constitute a significant portion of any academic assignment.

### **Appendices**

Appendices, if any, are attached before the works cited list in an MLA-formatted paper (“[MLA Style Center](#)”). You must refer to them (i.e., “callout”) in the body of your paper so that your reader knows to look there. For example, this sample paper includes a list of abbreviations for the books of the Bible (see appendix). The word “appendix” is singular; use it to refer to individual appendices. If you have more than one appendix, assign a letter to each and denote each by that: “Appendix A” and “Appendix B.”

### **Annotated Bibliographies**

MLA-9 provides parameters for formatting annotated bibliographies in section 5.132 (226). The works-cited entries themselves are to be presented in standard MLA-9 formatting,

with a normal ½” hanging indent. The annotations, however, are to be indented a full 1” from the left margin so that they can easily be identified by the reader. See the [sample annotated bibliography](#). Because of the unique formatting for these assignments, Liberty University provides a separate template for individual student annotated bibliography assignments in the [MLA Quick Guide](#).

### **Final Formatting Tweaks**

The templates provided by Liberty University are already formatted with proper spacing, margins, heading level structure, and hanging indents, as necessary. Papers in MLA format should be double-spaced throughout, with no extra spacing between lines. Academic papers at Liberty University should also be in one of the accepted fonts throughout (recommended: Times New Romans, 12-point font). Sometimes when you format your paper or cut-and-paste material into it, things get skewed. One quick way to ensure that your paper appears correct in these regards is to do a final formatting tweak after you have completed your paper. Hold down the “Ctrl” button and press the “A” key, which selects and highlights all of the text in your paper. Then go to the Home tab in Microsoft Word and make sure that whichever acceptable font/size you choose to use is selected in the Font box. Next, click on the arrow at the bottom of the Paragraph tab. Set your spacing before and after paragraphs to “0 pt.” and click the “double” line spacing.

### **Exhaustive Works Cited Examples**

The works cited list at the end of this paper includes an example of a myriad of different sources and how each is formatted in proper *MLA-9* format. One example of each of the primary types of resources will be included in the works cited list, as cited in the body of this paper. Remember that, for purposes of this paper only, many of the sources cited in the body of the

paper were provided for illustrative purposes only and thus are fictional, so you will not be able to locate them if you searched online. Nevertheless, in keeping with *MLA-9* style, all resources cited in the body of the paper are included in the works cited list and vice versa. Be absolutely sure that every resource cited in the body of your paper is also included in your works cited list (and vice versa).

The works-cited list in this paper is fairly comprehensive and will include a book by one author who also appears as one of many authors in another resource (Alone; Alone et al.); chapters in edited books (Cloivre and James; Perigogn and Brazel); electronic version of book (Cain); edited books with and without a DOI and one or more publishers (Pridham ;Schmid); work in an anthology (Greene); journal articles (Carlisle; McCauley and Christiansen); newspaper article (Goldman; Guarino); online webpages (Liberty University; Prayer); resource with corporate author as publisher (Modern Language Association); resources by two authors with the same last name but different first names in the same year of publication (J. Brown, and M. Brown); two resources by same author in the same year (Double, and Carlisle); two resources by the same author in different years (Second, 2011, 2015); dictionary entries (“heuristic”); Liberty University class lecture using course details (Peters); PowerPoint slides or lecture notes, not including course details (Canan and Vasilev); citing a student’s paper submitted in a prior class, in order to avoid self-plagiarism (Owen); unpublished manuscript with a university cited (Yoo et al.); religious and classical works, including the Bible (*The Bible*, New American Standard; Shakespeare); dissertation or thesis (Rackley); video (Forman); podcast (Peters); recorded webinar (Jarrett); photograph (McCurry); report by a government agency or other organization (United Nations); report by individual authors at a government agency or other

organization (Fried and Polyakova); conference session (Owen.); and webpages (“M LA Style Center;” “Online Writing Center”; U.S. Census Bureau).

### **Additional Helpful Resources**

Below are a few webpages that address critical topics, such as how to avoid plagiarism and how to write a research paper. Be sure to check out Liberty University’s Online Writing Center (<https://www.liberty.edu/online/casas/writing-center/>) for more tips and tools, as well as its Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/LUOWritingCenter>). See also writing a research paper (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zaa-PTexW2E> or <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KNT6w8t3zDY> and avoiding plagiarism (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VeCrUINa6nU>). Remember that these links are only provided for your easy access and reference throughout this sample paper, but web links and URLs should never be included in the body of scholarly papers; just in the reference list.

### **Exceptions Used in Sample Paper for Visualization**

Students would, of course, NOT include any color-coding or footnotes in their works-cited entries. However, for the sake of clarity and ease in identifying what each entry represents, each one that follows in this sample paper is color-coordinated to its corresponding footnote, with a brief description of what each depicts. Also remember that *MLA-9* requires double-spacing, even in notes, but for the sake of readability in this sample paper, each footnote corresponding to the works-cited entries is single-spaced. Always be sure to begin the works-cited list on its own separate page.

### **Conclusion**

The conclusion to your paper should provide your readers with a concise summary of the main points of your paper (though not via cut-and-pasted sentences used above). It is a very



important element, as it frames your whole ideology and gives your readers their last impression of your thoughts. Be careful not to introduce new content in your conclusion.

After your conclusion, if you are not using the template provided by the Online Writing Center, insert a page break at the end of the paper so that the works-cited list begins at the top of a new page. Do this by holding down the “Ctrl” key and then clicking the “Enter” key. You will go to an entirely new page in order to start the reference list. The word “Works Cited” (not in quotation marks) should be centered but not bolded. Items in the works-cited list are presented alphabetically by the first author’s last name and are formatted with hanging indents (the second+ lines of each entry are indented 1/2” from the left margin). MLA authorizes the use of singular “Work Cited” (without quotation marks) if you only have one resource (5).

## Appendix: Abbreviations of the Books of the Bible

**Old Testament**

<u>Name of Book</u>	<u>Abbreviation</u>
Genesis	Gen.
Exodus	Exod.
Leviticus	Lev.
Numbers	Num.
Deuteronomy	Deut.
Joshua	Josh.
Judges	Judg.
Ruth	Ruth
I Samuel	1 Sam.
II Samuel	2 Sam.
I Kings	1 Kings
II Kings	2 Kings
I Chronicles	1 Chron.
II Chronicles	2 Chron.
Ezra	Ezra
Nehemiah	Neh.
Ester	Esth.
Job	Job
Psalms	Ps.
Proverbs	Prov.
Ecclesiastes	Eccles.
Song of Solomon ( <i>also called</i> Song of Songs)	Song of Sol. <i>or</i> Song of Sg.
Isaiah	Isa.
Jeremiah	Jer.
Lamentation	Lam.
Ezekiel	Ezek.
Daniel	Dan.
Hosea	Hos.
Joel	Joel
Amos	Amos
Obadiah	Obad.
Jonah	Jon.
Micah	Mic.
Nahum	Nah.
Habakkuk	Hab.
Zephaniah	Zeph.
Haggai	Hag.
Zechariah	Zech.
Malachi	Mal.

**New Testament**

<u>Name of Book</u>	<u>Abbreviation</u>
Matthew	Matt.
Mark	Mark
Luke	Luke
John	John
Acts	Acts
Romans	Rom.
1 Corinthians	1 Cor.
2 Corinthians	2 Cor.
Galatians	Gal.
Ephesians	Eph.
Philippians	Phil.
Colossians	Col.
1 Thessalonians	1 Thess.
2 Thessalonians	2 Thess.
1 Timothy	1 Tim.
2 Timothy	2 Tim.
Titus	Titus
Philemon	Philem.
Hebrews	Heb.
James	Jas.
1 Peter	1 Pet.
2 Peter	2 Pet.
1 John	1 John
2 John	2 John
3 John	3 John
Jude	Jude
Revelations	Rev.

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<sup>6</sup> Entry in a dictionary, thesaurus, or encyclopedia.

<sup>7</sup> Online webpage with URL.

<sup>8</sup> Entry by author who also appears as one of many authors in another resource (single author appears first in list).

<sup>9</sup> Multiple authors appear after same single-author resource.

<sup>10</sup> Secondary or indirect source where the direct (primary) source is unavailable.

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<sup>11</sup> Resources by two authors with the same last name but different first names in the same year of publication. Arrange alphabetically by the first initials.

<sup>12</sup> Electronic only book.

<sup>13</sup> PowerPoint slides or lecture notes.

<sup>14</sup> Online journal article with a URL and no DOI; also depicts one of two resources by the same author, in which three em-dashes are used to replace the author's name in the second entry.

<sup>15</sup> Chapter in an edited book or essay in an anthology.

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<sup>18</sup> Online resource with no named author. Title of webpage is in the author’s place.

<sup>19</sup> Video.

<sup>20</sup> Report by individual authors at a government agency or other organization.

<sup>21</sup> Online newspaper article.

<sup>22</sup> Short story, with an original publication year included.

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<sup>23</sup> Webpage on a news website.

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<sup>26</sup> Journal article without DOI, from most academic research databases or print version.

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