Quick Guide to MLA Documentation Style


Disclaimer: This handout is not a complete guide to using MLA format for a research paper. You can find a copy of the *MLA Style Manual* in the J.D. Williams library or consult these web resources:

- OWL at Purdue: http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/557/01/
- Diana Hacker’s MLA Guide: http://www.dianahacker.com/resdoc/p04_c08_o.html
- Son of Citation Machine: http://citationmachine.net/

MLA format follows an author-page style for in-text citation. The author's name and page numbers of quotations or paraphrases you use must be in the text, matching a reference in your Works Cited. The author can appear in the sentence or in parentheses after a quotation or paraphrase, but the page numbers should always be in parentheses:

American Indian literary criticism creates both a feeling of self and "an evocation of place" (Dreese 183).

Critic Donelle Dreese asserts that American Indian literary criticism crafts a unique sense of self and place (183).

Note that there's no comma between the author and the page, and that citation is needed for a direct quote and a simple paraphrase.

**Works Cited Pages**

Any work you cite in-text must have a matching entry on the Works Cited page at the end of your paper. URL's are optional for websites but should be included if your source is not easily locatable. Note that the second (and following) lines are indented, not the first. Here are examples of some common kinds of works cited entries:

**Book by One Author**

**Book by Two or Three Authors**

**Book with Editor(s)**

**Journal**

**Webpage with Known Author**

**Webpage with No or Unknown Author**