Formatting Your Research Paper Using MLA Style

This handout will show you what your paper should look like and what to do in Word to correctly add all the elements. Always keep in mind that your instructor is the final authority: if they say to do it differently… do it!

**Title:**
Home tab → Paragraph: Center align

*Do NOT italicize, underline, boldface, quote, or capitalize all the letters in the title. NO period at the end.

**Header:**
Insert tab → Page Number: Top of page-Plain Number 3.
Add your name in front of the number. Make sure to use Times New Roman at font size 12.
E.g. Smith 1

**Heading**
TEXT Home → Font
Font: Times New Roman
Size: 12 points
Home tab → Paragraph: Left align

Open Paragraph dialog
Box → Spacing: Double Space

Include your name, the instructor’s name, the course number and the date (in day Month year format).
E.g. Sarah Smith
Professor Thompson
Library Science 101
28 January 2013

Leave the margins at the default setting: one inch on all sides
Body of Text

TEXT Home → Font
Font: Times New Roman
Size: 12 points

LAYOUT Home → Paragraph
Align: Left align, except the title
Indent: Open Paragraph dialog
Box → Special: First line
(or hit Tab key once at start of each new paragraph)
Spacing: Open Paragraph dialog box → Spacing: Double Space

Parenthetical Citation
(Author’s last name and page number)
E.g. (Gibaldi 31).

Works Cited

Insert tab → Page Break to start on a new page

LAYOUT Home → Paragraph
Align: Left align, except the title
Indent: Open Paragraph dialog Box → Special: Hanging
Spacing: Open Paragraph dialog Box → Spacing: Double Space

On a new page, you will list in ALPHABETICAL order the sources cited in your paper.

You can automatically rearrange your citations by highlighting them all, then go to Home → Paragraph to click on the button to sort.

Refer to the MLA guide to properly format the source information, available in paper form in the library or online, LoneStar.edu/UP-Library.htm.