



WRITING CENTER

MLA FORMAT GUIDEBOOK



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Getting to Know the Desktop:

When you sit at a Writing Center computer, the desktop below will be displayed:



1. Double click on the icon (picture) of the program you wish to use.
2. When you double click on the browser icons for **Google Chrome** or **Firefox**, the homepage for Allan Hancock College will appear on the screen.

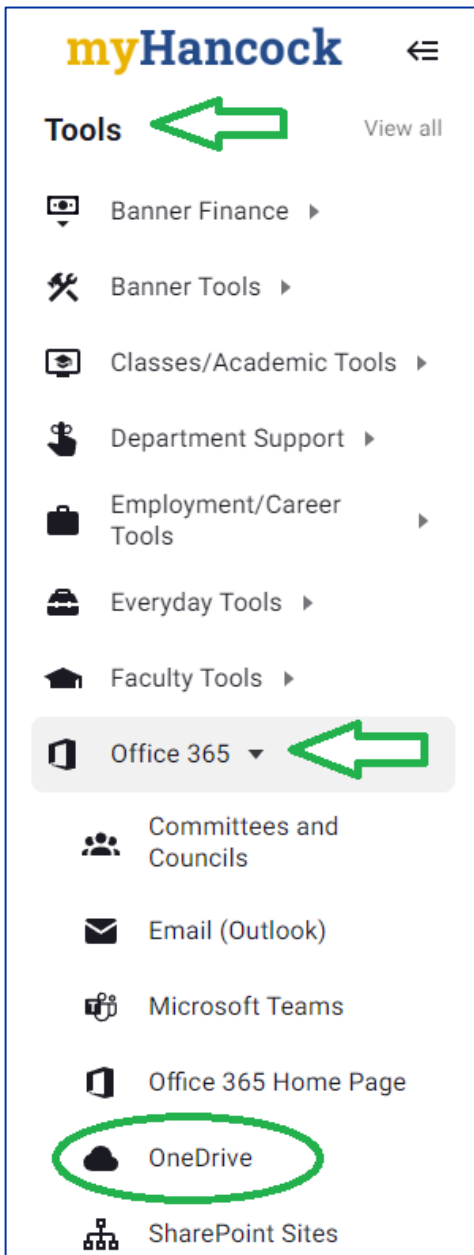
Pro Tip

Google Chrome is the recommended browser for ease of access in most Allan Hancock College programs (such as *Canvas*, the myHancock portal, and more).

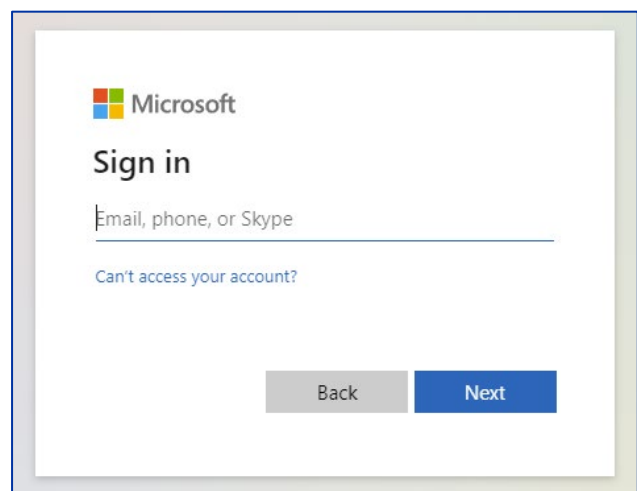


How to Access Office 365 from the myHancock Portal:

The best way to access **Word** and other **Office 365** programs is through **OneDrive** on a web browser (like **Google Chrome**). Working from a web browser ensures that work does not get lost or deleted. **OneDrive** automatically saves the work, so flashdrives are no longer need (instructions for **OneDrive** on p. 3).



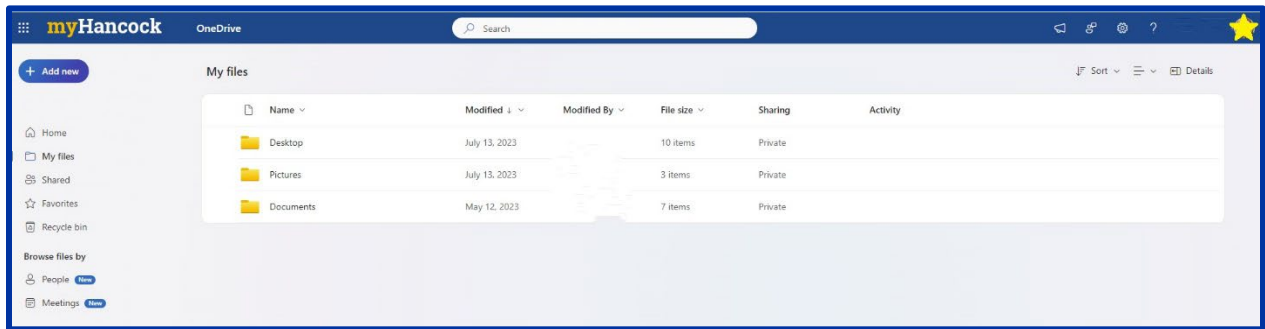
1. To access **Office 365** (Outlook email, Word, PowerPoint, OneDrive, etc.), log in to the **myHancock** portal.
2. On the left-hand side of the myHancock dashboard in the portal, there is a side menu. Scroll through the menu options, find “Tools.” Under “Tools,” open the “Office 365” drop-down menu, and select “OneDrive.”
3. A screen will appear to sign in to **Microsoft**. The sign-in is your Hancock username/ email: **user.name@my.hancockcollege.edu**



Getting to Know OneDrive:

OneDrive is an internet-based (cloud) storage platform for anyone with a Microsoft account. Users can save and edit **Microsoft Suite 365** files such as Word, Excel, PowerPoint, and more. When working through **OneDrive**, files are automatically saved. This account can be accessed across multiple devices.

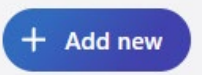
Once opened through the myHancock portal (see p. 2), the **OneDrive** landing page will look something like this:



Features on the left-hand side:



The “App launcher” icon provides access to Microsoft 365 apps such as Word, PowerPoint, Excel, Outlook email, and more.



The “Add new” button can be used to access existing OneDrive folders, start new documents, and upload files from devices.

Features on the right-hand side:



The top right should show your name and profile picture.



The functions next to your name allow you to personalize settings, access Microsoft support, and ask for help.

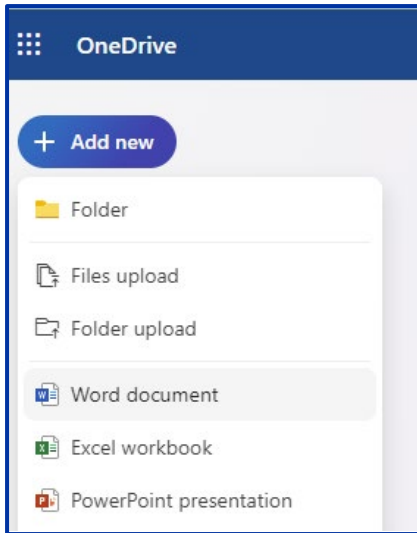
Other features to note:



The search bar along the top allows you to quickly locate files and folders.

The middle dashboard in OneDrive shows recently edited files for quick access.

Creating a Word Document from OneDrive

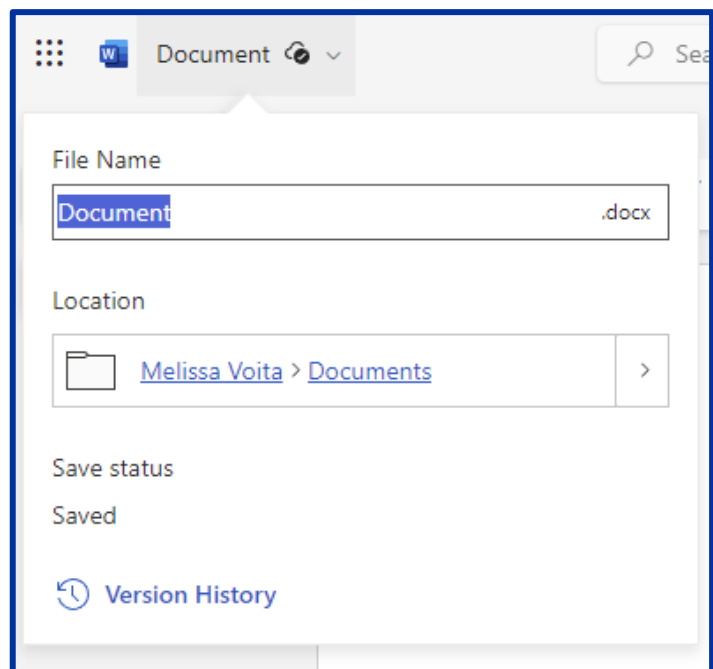
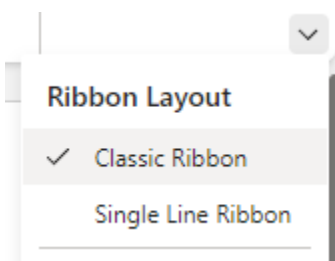


1. Once logged into **OneDrive**, select the “Add New” button on the top left and choose “Word Document.” This will open a new tab in the browser, which will show a blank document in **Microsoft Word**.
2. Give your document a name, so that you can easily locate it within the **OneDrive** later. This feature is located on the top left-hand corner of the Word browser application.

Pro Tip

Using the Word browser application does take some getting used to, but it still has many of the same functions.

The top bar used to change font sizes, etc. is known as the “**ribbon**.” Users can change their ribbon preference on the far right, via a drop-down arrow. The “**Classic Ribbon**” expands user options.



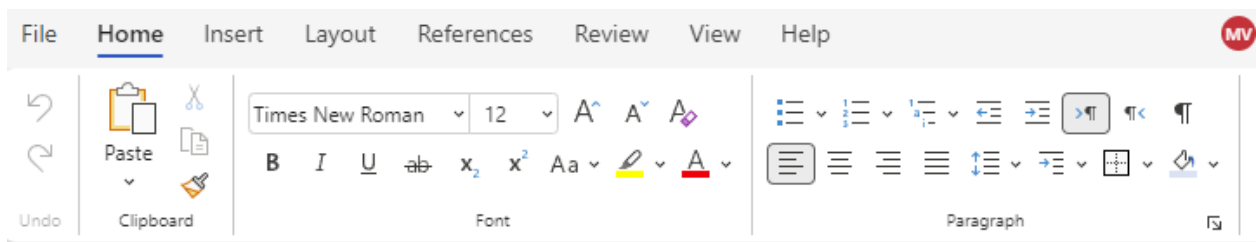
3. Take some time to familiarize yourself with the Word browser application. Feel free to click through the menus, or even watch a video on *YouTube* that goes over the basic functions. As always, Writing Center staff are happy to assist you with any questions.

MLA Format: Font & Margins

Note:

MLA format is the required formatting style for most AHC English professors, as well as other college-level courses. Always check the assignment requirements from your professor to identify correct formatting expectations. For a “Sample Page in MLA Format,” see page 15.

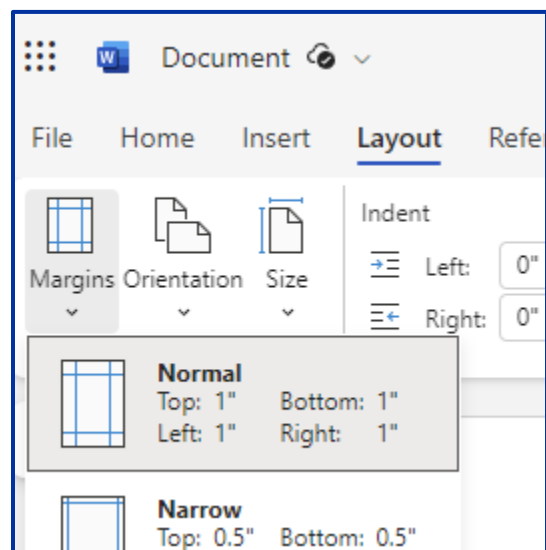
1. In the Word browser application, use the “Home” tab to access regular word formatting functions. MLA format requires **Times New Roman** style font in **size 12**. Use the drop-down menus to change your font to MLA standards.



2. Next, use the “Layout” tab to access additional formatting functions. In this case, we need to make sure margins are set to MLA standards, which is **one-inch margins** all around.

To do this, select “Layout,” then find the “Margins” drop-down menu. Make sure the first option “Normal” is selected, which shows 1” margins.

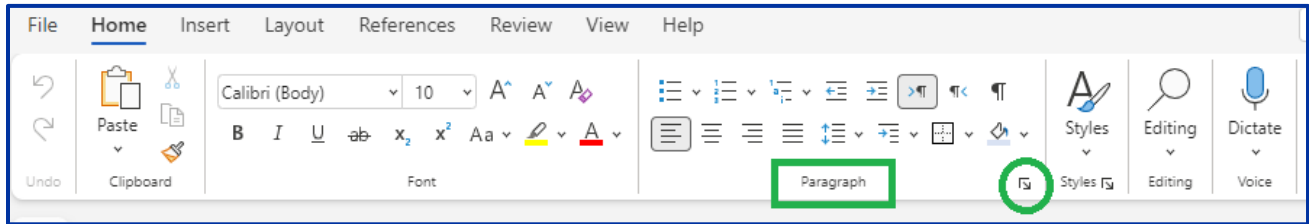
In most cases, the document will already be defaulted to one-inch margins, so it is likely that you will not need to make any changes.



Double-spacing your Word Document

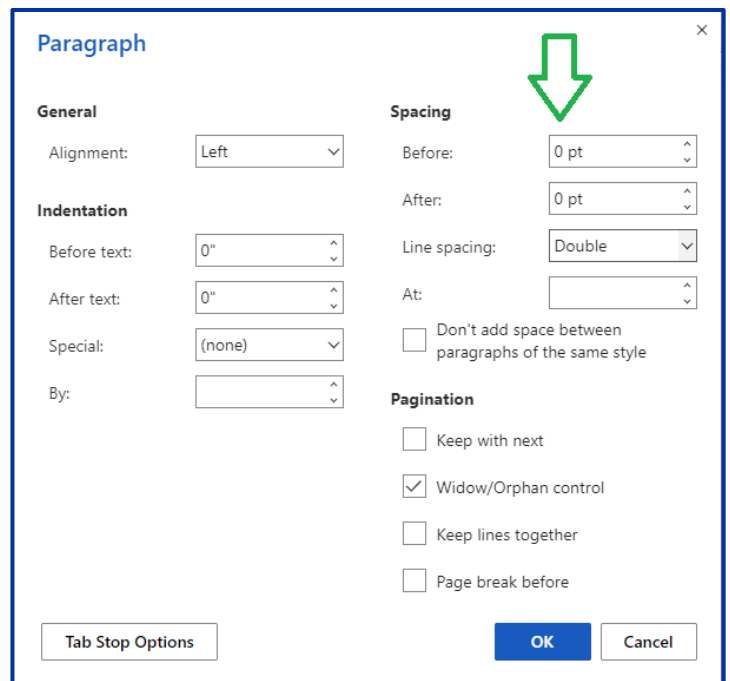
In addition to Times New Roman, size 12 font, and one-inch margins, **MLA format** requires documents to be **double-spaced**.

1. From the “Home Tab” locate the “Paragraph” section, and click on the tiny expansion arrow located on the bottom right corner.*



2. Clicking the tiny expansion arrow will open the “Paragraph” settings window (pictured on the right).
3. In the “Paragraph” window, under “Spacing”, make sure “Before” and “After” are set to “0 pt.” Then, under “Line Spacing,” select “Double.”

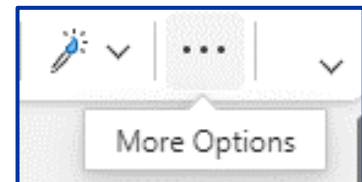
Do not change any of the other settings. The “Paragraph” window should look exactly as pictured. When everything looks correct, click “OK.”



*Pro Tip

The steps above show how to double space in the “Classic Ribbon” layout (see Pro Tip on p. 4).

In the “Single Line” layout, the “Paragraph Options” can be found under the three dots (“More Options”) on the far right-hand side. Once the “Paragraph” window opens, follow step 3 (above.)

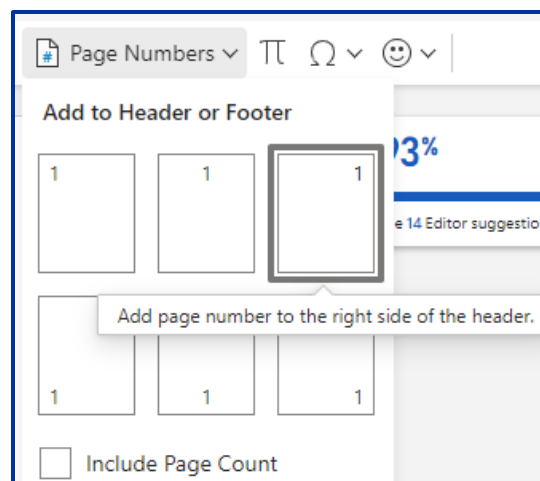


Inserting Page Number in Header

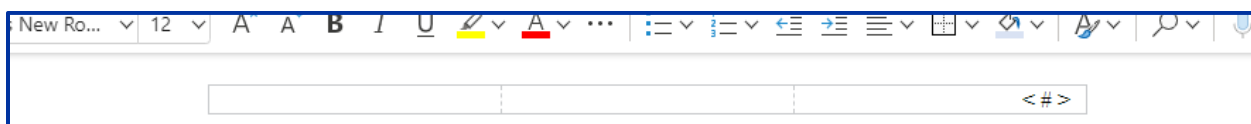
MLA format requires your **last name** and the **page number** to be included on the **top right-hand corner** (the header) of each page in the document. Like so:



1. To insert the page number, select the “Insert” tab along the top of the ribbon.
2. Select the “Page Number” drop-down menu, located on the right-hand side.
3. Choose the option that shows the page number on the top right-hand corner of the page. Once you click this option, it will open the header on your document.



The open header should look like this:



The characters “<#>” are computer-coding to auto-populate the page number with each new page. **Do not delete or change this.**

4. Instead, place your cursor in front of the characters and type your last name only. Remember to include a space after your last name.



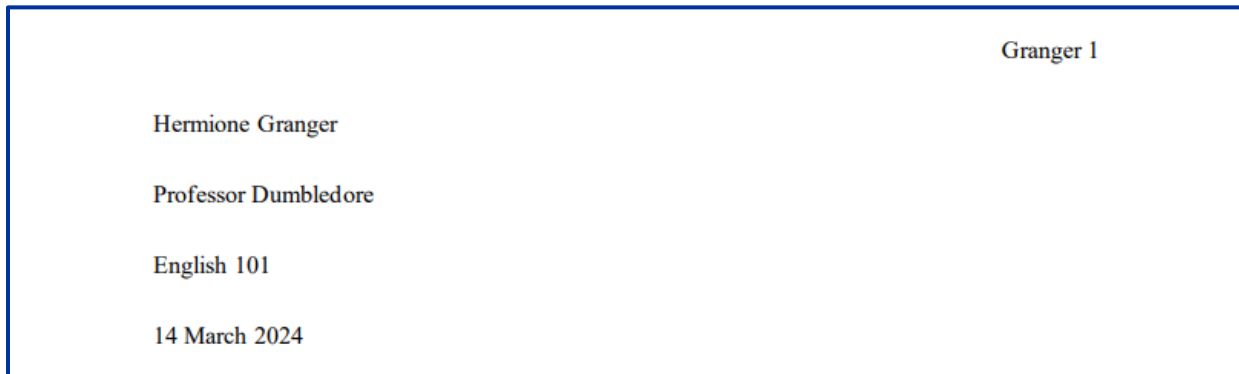
5. Check to make sure the font is still set to **size 12, Times New Roman**. Then, click anywhere in the body of the document to close the header. The header will disappear, but you will see the page number when you print.

Four-lined Heading in MLA Format

Once you have set your document to **MLA standards** (one-inch margins; double-spaced; size 12, Times New Roman font; last name & page number), then you are ready to start typing your **four-lined heading**.

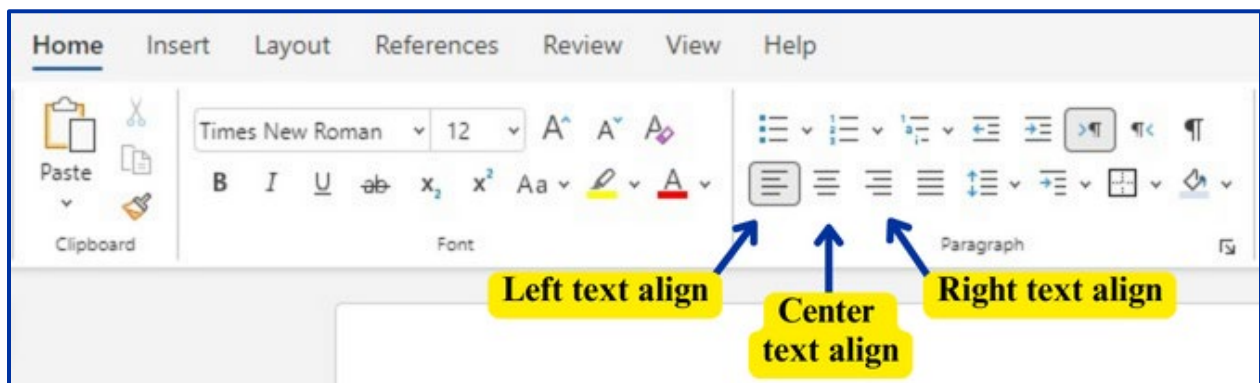
The four-lined heading must be justified on the left-hand side of the page and include the following: Line 1) Your First & Last Name, 2) Your Professor's Name, 3) The Course Number, and 4) The Date.

Here is an example:



Note: MLA orders the date in day, month, and year format, with the month spelled out in its entirety. There are no dashes or punctuation.

1. To align your text, use the “Home” tab. Under the paragraph settings, select the respective symbols:



2. Finally, as you type each line, make sure to **press “Enter” one time** only on the keyboard to go on to the next line.

Formatting Titles

For a “Sample Page in MLA Format,” see page 15 of this MLA guidebook.

Titles:

1. After the fourth line of your heading, press “Enter” one time.
2. Titles are aligned in the center, so adjust the text to be in the center (alignment instructions on the previous page).

Pro Tip

Unless instructed by your professor, ***do not*** title your document after the name of the assignment (such as, “Essay 1” or “Research Essay”).

Titles should be unique and reflect the content of your writing.

If you struggle to come up with a unique title, put a temporary title and come back to it after you’ve finished writing.

Note: Titles should be written in **Title Case (standard capitalization)** and not in all capital letters. Also, unless they are at the beginning of the title, articles (such as “of”, “the”, “and”, etc. should not be capitalized.

Here are some examples of correctly capitalized titles for an MLA paper:

- My Dream for a Brighter Future
- The Rhetorical Genius of Malcolm X
- Magical Realism in *The House on Mango Street*
- Through the Woods: A Story of Survival
- Do You Believe in Global Warming?
- The Effects of Microplastics on Marine Life

Formatting Paragraphs

For a “Sample Page in MLA Format,” see page 15 of this MLA guidebook.

Paragraphs:

1. After the title, press “Enter” one time on the keyboard.
2. Paragraphs are aligned left, so adjust the text to be on the left (alignment instructions on p. 8).
3. Paragraphs must also be indented, so press the “Tab” key one time.

Pro Tip

Do not use the space bar to indent your paragraphs (“tab” key only).

Do not add extra spaces between paragraph. Between paragraphs, you should only press “Enter” one time.

Here is an example of an MLA formatted page with multiple paragraphs:

Granger 2

specifications, please visit the “Writing Resources” webpage on the *Allan Hancock College Writing Center* website or the *Purdue Online Writing Lab*. While MLA format might seem difficult at first, students will find that the process becomes easier with practice. In addition to how the paper looks, another important aspect of MLA format is how research is cited through in-text citations and the accompanying Works Cited page.

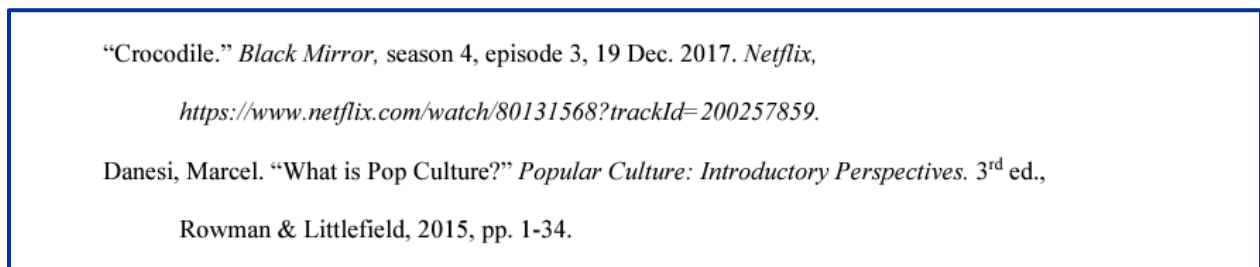
In-text citations in the form of a direct quote is one common example for how research is cited within an MLA formatted paper. Authors must correctly document information that has been borrowed from another source; otherwise, one might be accused of plagiarism. According to the *MLA Handbook*, “plagiarism” is defined as, “...presenting another person’s ideas, words, or entire work as your own,” which is viewed by most academic institutions as an unethical and punishable offense (96). Therefore, the most efficient way to avoid plagiarism and maintain academic integrity is to correctly document sources in your writing.

This paper may be used as a model for how to correctly format in-text citations according to MLA standards. Notice how the source in the paragraph above is accompanied by a “tag,” or introductory phrase, such as, “According to...” Also, take note of how the title of the source is in

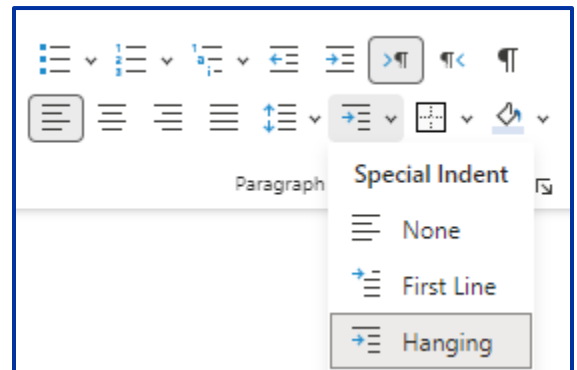
Works Cited: Hanging Indent

Note: “Works Cited” source documentation requires additional MLA formatting standards. Please check the AHC Writing Center webpage or ask Writing Center staff for handouts on formatting sources both in-text and on the Works Cited page (see p. 16 for a full example of Works Cited).

One formatting requirement is that sources are aligned as a **“hanging indent.”** Here is an example of two sources separated by hanging indent:

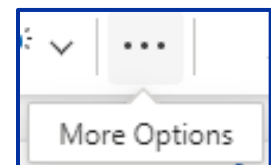


1. Once you have documented your sources on the Works Cited page, use your mouse to select all of your sources at once. **Do not** select the “Work Cited” title, only select the sources.
2. Under the Paragraph setting on the “Home” tab, find the icon labelled “Special Indent” and choose “Hanging.”



Remember the ribbon settings “Pro Tip” on page 4?

The image in steps 1 & 2 shows how to access the hanging indent on the “Classic” ribbon layout. If you are in the “Single Line” ribbon layout, the paragraph settings can be found by selecting the three dots (“More Options”) on the far right-hand side.



Once again, you will select “Special Indent” and choose “Hanging”.

Printing, Saving, & Sharing from OneDrive

Printing your Document:

When you are ready to print, select the “File” tab, choose “Print”, and click “Print this Document.” A window will pop up. Select “Open PDF.” This will open a new tab and automatically launch into the Print window. Select your number of copies, then, click “Print.”

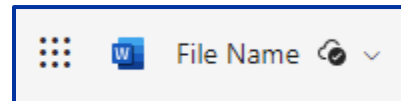
Please ask Writing Center staff if you have difficulties with printing.

Saving your Document:

When working through **Word** on a browser, files are automatically saved to the **OneDrive** (cloud), as long as you have internet connection. If you wish to save a version of the file to your computer or desktop, then select the “File” tab and choose “Save as” to select your options.

If you want to confirm that a file has been saved, look for the little cloud with a checkmark, next to the name of your document.

Any error symbols would indicate that you need to check your internet connection.

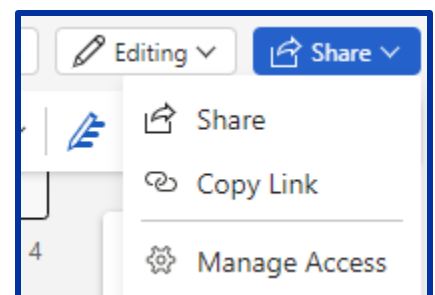


Sharing your Document:

If you need to upload to **Canvas**, then your **OneDrive** account should automatically link through **Canvas** when you go to submit an assignment.

However, if you would like to provide a sharable link (URL) to your document, then select the blue “Share” function on the top right-hand side.

From there, you can choose to share to a specific email, copy the link, and manage accessing permissions.



Keyboard Shortcuts

Shift + F1 Key	Review text formatting.
Shift + F3 Key	Change the case of the selected text.
Ctrl + A	Selects all in the current document.
Ctrl + B	Bold text.
Ctrl + C	Copies the item or text.
Ctrl + E	Switch a paragraph between center and left alignment.
Ctrl + G	Go To dialog box to search for a specific location in the current document.
Ctrl + H	Displays the Replace dialogue box.
Ctrl + I	Italicize text.
Ctrl + J	Switch a paragraph between justified and left alignment.
Ctrl + K	Create a hyperlink.
Ctrl + L	Left align a paragraph.
Ctrl + M	Block quote -- indent a paragraph from the left.
Ctrl + P	Prints a document.
Ctrl + R	Switch the alignment of a paragraph between left and right.
Ctrl + U	Underlines text.
Ctrl + V	Pastes the copied item or text.
Ctrl + X	Cuts the selected item or text.
Ctrl + Y	Redo the last action.
Ctrl + Z	Undo the last action.
Alt + F7	Run spelling and grammar check.

Accent Mark Shortcuts

Alt + 0225	á		Alt + 0218	Ú
Alt + 0193	Á		Alt + 0241	ñ
Alt + 0233	é		Alt + 0209	Ñ
Alt + 0201	É		Alt + 0252	ü
Alt + 0237	í		Alt + 0220	Ü
Alt + 0205	Í		Alt + 0161	ï
Alt + 0243	ó		Alt + 0191	¿
Alt + 0211	Ó		Alt + 0171	«
Alt + 0250	ú		Alt + 0187	»

Hermione Granger

Professor Dumbledore

English 101

20 August 2024

Sample Page in MLA Format

This sample page accurately represents an example of Modern Language Association (MLA) format. This formatting style is required in all English courses at Allan Hancock College, and it is widely used across the college curriculum in many colleges and universities. AHC Writing Center staff and faculty are familiar with MLA requirements, and they are available to support students with any formatting questions. While MLA format might seem difficult at first, students will find that the process becomes easier with practice. For further resources on MLA specifications, please visit the “Writing Resources” webpage on the *Allan Hancock College Writing Center* website or the *Purdue Online Writing Lab*.

From the style of the font to the size of the margins, it is important to notice the way this page is formatted. MLA format uses Times New Roman style font in size twelve, with double-spaced lines, and one-inch margins. On the top, left-hand side of the first page, students include a four-lined heading and a title in the center. Additionally, each page will have its own header along the top, right-hand side, which includes the student’s last name and page number. For each line of text, the spacebar should only be pressed once; there is no additional spacing between headings or body paragraphs in MLA format. In addition to how the paper looks, another important aspect of MLA format is how research is cited through in-text citations and the accompanying Works Cited page...

Works Cited

- Adams, Kathryn. "Parts of a Paragraph." English 101: Freshman Composition, 19 Aug. 2019, Allan Hancock College, Santa Maria. Course Handout.
- Burleigh, Nina. "Would Football without Concussions Still Be Football?" *Patterns for College Writing: A Rhetorical Reader and Guide*, by Laurie G. Kirszner and Stephen R. Mandell, 13th ed., Bedford St. Martin's, 2015, pp. 610-15.
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- Danesi, Marcel. "What is Pop Culture?" *Popular Culture: Introductory Perspectives*. 3rd ed., Rowman & Littlefield, 2015, pp. 1-34.
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- Reynolds, Ryan [@VancityReynolds]. "When I think out loud, it sounds nothing like Morgan Freeman." *Twitter*, 18 June 2015, <https://twitter.com/VancityReynolds/status/611-lang=en>. Accessed 19 Aug. 2023.

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by AHC Writing Center Staff

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