MLA Checklist for Research Papers

General Format Specifications for all Pages of the Paper

- ☐ Double spaced
- ☐ One inch margins
- ☐ 10 – 12 pt. font, Times New Roman or Courier New
- ☐ Last name & page number in upper right hand corner of all pages

Page One of the Paper

- ☐ Author's name is in the header on the left hand side of the first page.
- ☐ Instructor's name appears as the second line of the header on the left margin of the first page.
- ☐ The name of the course appears as the third line of the header on the left margin of the paper.
- ☐ The date, in MLA format, appears as the fourth line of the header on the left margin of the paper.
- ☐ The title of the paper appears centered above the text. The text of the title should not be underlined, italicized, in bold, or in quotation marks.

MLA Citations

- ☐ Every source cited in the text must be documented in a Works Cited page at the end of the paper.
- ☐ The author's name (or a key word from the title) is located in a parenthetical citation or in an introduction to the borrowed material (IBM).
- ☐ Page number(s) (if applicable) are placed in the parenthetical citation.
- ☐ Parenthetical citations at the end of the sentence are followed by the appropriate punctuation mark (comma or period). [Unless you indent the entire quotation]

Works Cited Page

- ☐ Works Cited is centered at the top of the page.
- ☐ The Works Cited page is a separate page at the end of the paper.
- ☐ The Works Cited page is double-spaced.
- ☐ The first line of the first entry is typed flush with the left-hand margin.
- ☐ The second and all following lines of the entry are indented one-half inch.
- ☐ The Works Cited page contains entries that are listed in alphabetical order by the first word in each entry.
- ☐ Each entry provides correct and complete bibliographic information.
- ☐ The Works Cited page **ONLY** contains references that are actually cited in the paper.

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(OPTIONAL CONTENT SECTION)
Specifications for Content
_____ Thesis is clearly stated in the introduction to the paper.
_____ Topic sentences are evident in each paragraph of the paper.
_____ The focus of the paper synthesizes your sources. It is an essay, not a report.
_____ Your original thought is evident and separated from the borrowed material with appropriate citations and quotations.
_____ You form arguments and ideas into paragraphs of your own creation. You DO NOT simply cut and paste evidence.
_____ Thesis is clearly restated in the conclusion of the paper.
_____ The minimum number of required sources are included on the "Works Cited" page.
_____ ALL borrowed material is cited.

Punctuation
_____ Quotations of four or fewer lines are placed within double quotation marks.
_____ Quotations of more than four lines are indented ten spaces [1 inch] from the left margin. The text is double spaced. Use a comma or a colon after the last word in the text to mark the beginning of the quotation. The parenthetical citation for longer quotations follows the punctuation at the end of the last sentence of the quoted material.
_____ Verse of three lines or less is placed in double quotation marks within the text. Separate lines of verse which appear in a single line of text by a slash (/) with a space before and after the slash.
_____ Periods and commas are ALWAYS placed inside quotation marks if there is no parenthetical reference.
_____ Question marks and exclamation marks not originally in the quotation go outside the quotation marks.
_____ If a parenthetical reference ends a sentence, place the period after the reference.
_____ Use single quotation marks to set off a quotation within a quotation.
_____ An ellipsis (…) is used when omitting words, phrases or sentences from quoted material. Be sure that the omission of content does not substantially change the meaning

General Format Specifications
_____ Spell numbers of one or two words. [three, five million]
_____ Use numerals for numbers of more than two words. [3.56 2,456 1,489 602]