This handout will help you prepare a document in accordance with the guidelines of the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers 7th Edition*. Instructions assume you are using Microsoft Word 2010.

Topics covered include:

- changing font face and size
- changing margins
- double-spacing
- indenting
- adding page numbers & the author’s name
- first page
- list of works cited
- printing

**Font**

The default font and font size meet MLA guidelines (*MLA 4.2*). Use this unless your instructor requires a different font. To change the font or font size:

1. Select the text you wish to change.
2. Go to the *Home* ribbon then use the drop down boxes highlighted below to select your desired font and font size.

**Margins**

Use one inch margins at the top, bottom, left side, and right side of your paper (*MLA 4.1*). This is the default setting in Word 2010. To change margin sizes:

1. Go to the *Page Layout* ribbon then click on the *Margins* button, as highlighted in the image below.
2. Select your desired margin size or click on *Custom Margins* at the bottom to choose another setting.
Double-spacing
MLA requires that your paper be double-spaced (MLA 4.2).

1. Go to the Home ribbon and click on the line spacing button.
2. Choose 2.0 for double-spacing.
3. You should also select Remove Space After Paragraph to prevent Word from inserting an extra line between each paragraph.

Indentation
Indent the first line of each paragraph one-half inch from the left margin (MLA 4.1). Indent block quotations one inch from the left. Use the ruler to format these lines:

1. Go to the View ribbon and check the Ruler box.
2. The ruler should appear, as highlighted below, at the top of your document view.
3. Click on and drag the top triangle to change the indentation for the first line of the paragraph, the bottom triangle for all other lines of a paragraph, and the bottom rectangle for an entire paragraph or block quotation (refer to the image below).
Page numbers & author's name
The author’s last name followed by the page number should appear in the upper right corner of each page, flush with the right margin (MLA 4.4). To add this header:

1. Go to the *Insert* ribbon and click on the *Header* button as highlighted in the picture below.
2. This will bring up a menu. At the bottom of the menu, click on *Edit Header*.

This takes you to the *Header & Footer Tools* ribbon, as shown in the image below. You will also see the document header across the top of your paper. To insert the page number and your last name:

1. Click on the *Page Number* option.
2. Select the *Top of Page* option.
3. Choose *Plain Number 3*. The page number will be inserted, aligned to the right side of your paper. *Word will automatically update the page numbers as you edit and revise your paper.*
4. Now you must add your last name. Place your cursor to the left of the page number and type your last name followed by a space.

Your header will now meet MLA guidelines. If your instructor wants your page numbers to start on the second page of your paper, follow these steps:

1. Select *Different First Page* on the *Header & Footer Tools* ribbon, as shown in the image above.
2. Position your cursor in the first page header. You will now be able to edit it without affecting the header in the subsequent pages of your document.

**First page**

MLA does not require a title page (MLA 4.3). You should not use one unless your instructor specifies you should have one. Otherwise, the first page of the document is to begin with the following information, flush with the top and left margins: your name, the instructor’s name, the course number, and the date. Each piece of information should be on its own line and the text should be double-spaced.

Following the date line, double-space again and type the title of your paper, again on its own line. The title should not be bolded, underlined, in quotes, or all in capital letters. Italicize only words you would italicize in your paper. Then center the title horizontally between the left and right margins:

1. Select the text of title.

2. Go to the Home ribbon and click on the center alignment button.

**Works Cited page**

Place the works-cited list at the end of your paper (MLA 5.3.2). Begin it on a new page (press CTRL+ENTER on the computer keyboard to force a new page). Type the title, *Works Cited*, at the top of the page and center it, just as you centered the title of your paper on the first page. Then double-space and begin typing your list.

Double-space between and within each entry in the list. If an entry continues onto more than one line the subsequent lines must be indented one-half inch from the left margin (*hanging indent*). To do this:

1. Go to the Home or Page Layout ribbons and click the Paragraph Dialog Box launcher.

2. Select Hanging in the Special box and change By: to 0.5."
Printing

To print your paper, select *File* then *Print*, as shown in the image below. MLA guidelines state that your document should be printed on white, 8-½ -by-11 inch paper using a high quality printer (*MLA 4.6*). By default MCC’s printers print double-sided. Your instructor may prefer that you print your paper single-sided. A staff member can show you how to override the default setting.