

# Guide to Writing a Research Paper

---



**GERMANNA**  
ACADEMIC CENTER  
FOR EXCELLENCE

Fredericksburg Area Campus: (540) 891-3017 • Locust Grove Campus: (540) 423-9148

Barbara J. Fried Center: (540) 834-1993 *Updated October 2024*

## Table of Contents

<b>What is a Research Paper?</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Selecting a Topic</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Conducting Preliminary Research</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Developing a Working Thesis Statement</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Locating Additional Research Materials</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Preparing a Working Bibliography</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Writing the Paper</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Avoiding Plagiarism</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Citing Sources</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>MLA Guidelines</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>APA Guidelines</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>CMS Guidelines</b>	<b>32</b>
<b>ACE Writing Center</b>	<b>40</b>
<b>Useful Online Resources</b>	<b>41</b>

## What is a Research Paper?

Simply stated, a research paper is a gathering of information from a number of different sources. There are two different types of research papers, the informative report and the researched argument. The instructor who assigns the paper will usually specify which type of research paper he or she expects.

In the *informative report*, the student describes, explains, or sheds new light on a specific subject, selecting what seems particularly significant or interesting and assimilating this information into a focused and original presentation.

In the *researched argument*, the student uses evidence to support an original argument, using his or her research to arrive at a judgment and then defending that argument before a reader.

A very important thing to remember about research papers is that you must cite the source of all direct quotations, paraphrased text, as well as any ideas that are not your own. Citing sources is discussed in a separate section of this booklet.



## Selecting a Topic

The most important step to writing a research paper is selecting a topic. It may be necessary to do some preliminary research on a variety of topics before refining your choice. It is helpful to select a topic that is of interest to you, and there are many electronic sources that you can use to help you choose a scholarly topic.

Articles on the World Wide Web may provide you with some ideas on how you might approach a subject. However, for best results search one of the library's 100+ databases. *Academic Search Complete* offers the largest collection with an option to choose other EBSCO databases in the search.

You also want to make sure that your topic is not so wide in scope that you will have difficulty discussing it in one paper. You may need to narrow down your topic. For example, you may find too much information on the topic of "cancer," so you may decide to narrow the topic to "lung cancer." You may then decide to narrow the subject even further to study the high incidence of lung cancer in individuals who have been exposed to asbestos.

Here is a website for researching ideas:

- The Old Dominion University Library's "Idea Generator," <http://guides.lib.odu.edu/ideagenerator>

## Conducting Preliminary Research

Once you have selected a general topic, you will need to do some exploratory reading in reference books, periodicals and Internet articles. As you go through this process, you should pay close attention to the *quality* of reference materials you use. For example, if you are writing an article on lung cancer, more credible information would probably be found in medical journals, rather than in popular magazines. Don't regard your preliminary research as a waste of time. The reference materials that you unearth during this initial process can still be used for your final product.

Conducting preliminary research may produce the following outcomes:

- You may find that there is not sufficient information on your topic.
- You may find a similar topic that is of more interest to you.
- You may find that there is too much information available on your topic, and you may need to narrow your focus.
- You may find that your topic is too difficult to understand.
- You may decide that the topic is too controversial.



## Developing a Working Thesis Statement

The thesis statement will state the main idea of the research paper. It will always be included in the introductory paragraph of your paper; however, your instructor may provide you with specific instructions on where it should be placed within that paragraph. The thesis statement should meet the following criteria:

- It must be general enough so that all of the paragraphs in the paper will relate to it.
- It must give direction to your paper.
- It should be specific enough to be clear and interesting.
- It will indicate the specific argument or opinion you wish to make in your paper.
- The final conclusion in your paper should relate back to your thesis statement.

It is important to take the time to create an effective thesis statement. This one sentence will be the central tenet for your paper, and it should be capable of provoking an academic discussion of your topic.

### Tips for Writing a Thesis Statement:

- **Don't** simply make an announcement: *This paper will discuss higher education for women in the 1890's.*
- **Don't** simply make a factual statement: *Higher education for women was quite limited in the nineteenth century.*
- **Don't** state your thesis in vague, general, or sweeping terms: *Gender is an interesting concept in the history of higher education.*
- **Do** state your limited subject and indicate the specific point or argument you wish to make about your topic: *Attitudes toward higher education for women in the 1890's hampered the intellectual development of women.*
- **Don't** get stuck on your thesis. You can always revise the thesis statement later.

Once you start writing the first draft of your paper, you may discover some feelings, thoughts, or ideas that contradict your working thesis. Don't resist these new directions! They may help you move toward a clearer statement of your main point.

For more information on the creation of a thesis statement, please see the [Creating a Thesis Statement](#) handout. The handout is available at both our Fredericksburg Area Campus and the Locust Grove Campus, or you can visit our website at [www.germann.edu/academic-center-for-excellence](http://www.germann.edu/academic-center-for-excellence)



## Locating Additional Research Materials

A good research paper is written by utilizing a variety of credible sources. It is important to find out whether your instructor would like you to use a minimum number of sources and what kind of sources they should be. Primary sources consist of original documents or pieces of writing and secondary sources are opinions or interpretations of others on a particular topic. Most instructors will want you to select a significant number of primary sources in order to allow you the opportunity to come to your own conclusions about your research.

### Credible Sources:

A credible source is more scholarly in nature. The author is usually an expert in the field, and the author's credentials are always provided alongside the article. Less credible sources are usually found in popular magazines where staff writers author articles on a variety of subjects.

Scholarly articles are usually reviewed by peer experts in the field, whereas popular articles are not subject to scrutiny by a board of reviewers. Finally, credible sources will include a bibliography or works cited page, whereas popular articles will not usually cite more than a few names or references within the article.

You can access a wide variety of reference sources, periodical indexes and databases, electronic journals, and catalogs on the Internet. Consult the Germanna library's numerous databases and journal articles. *Academic Search Complete* offers the largest general collection with an option to choose other EBSCO databases. Sources can be accessed from any computer on campus or from home; however, you must use your Germanna Community College username and password to access some resources. It is helpful to enter the databases from a campus computer to ensure that you are able to access the resources. In addition, you should consider doing some original research yourself, an interview or a survey.

Lastly, obtaining a library card from the Germanna Library will give you access to a wide variety of print resources as well.



## Reference Works:

Search online versions of traditional reference sources such as Encyclopedia Britannica; The Oxford English Dictionary; full-text American poetry, African-American poetry, and British poetry and drama databases; statistical information; style manuals; and history, science, and international affairs resources.

- **Periodical Indexes and Databases:** Search dozens of online periodical indexes and full text databases to find citations, abstracts, and articles from hundreds of journals, magazines, and newspapers
- **Electronic Journals Online:** Find electronic versions of many journals online either through the Germanna online catalog or through the full text journal search feature.
- **Books and eBooks:** Search for books and electronic books by selecting the Germanna Community College online catalog. The catalog provides a list of resource material located at any of the Germanna Community College libraries as well as e-books available through the Virginia Community College library system.

Also, the greatest resource that all Germanna students have when conducting research is the librarians. They will not only help you navigate the databases, but they will also help you obtain resources from other libraries.

## GCC Library Services:

Scholarly resources can be accessed online through the Germanna Community College Library’s website. For example, the page below can be found from the Germanna homepage by clicking on the “Student Services” tab and selecting “Libraries.” This page provides links to the various types of research available to Germanna students.

For additional resources, please visit the Germanna Community College Library Services homepage at <https://germanna.libguides.com/library>

It is recommended that you utilize the Germanna Community College Library Services’ tutorial to familiarize yourself with research best practices.

The screenshot shows the Germanna Community College Libraries website. At the top left is the logo for Germanna Community College. To the right is the title "GERMANNA LIBRARIES" and three navigation buttons: "LIBRARY HOME", "MYGCC", and "GCC HOME". Below this are three main sections: "BEST BET DATABASES" with a list of links including Academic Search Complete, Oposing Viewpoints, Gale Ebooks, CQ Researcher, and More Databases...; "QUICKSEARCH" with a search box containing "Search 150,000+ books & e-books" and a green "Search" button; and "LIBRARY HELP 24/7" with a chat interface. Below these are four dark blue buttons: "ASK A LIBRARIAN", "RESEARCH HELP & TIPS", "HOURS & LOCATIONS", and "HOW DO I...?". At the bottom are four more dark blue buttons: "DATABASES BY SUBJECT", "DATABASES A-Z", "DATABASES BY TYPE", and "ABOUT US". A banner at the very bottom features a bookshelf on the left, the text "WHERE ARE ALL THE" in a blue box, and a person's shoulder on the right.

## Preparing a Working Bibliography

As you begin your preliminary research, you will discover reference materials that you will eventually want to use to write your final paper. It is important to document the various sources so that you can use them later as you narrow down your topic and begin to take notes for your final paper. As you begin to read books and articles, you will find that they will lead you to other sources of information. The working bibliography will contain all of the references that you consulted during your research. Once you finalize your topic and determine which sources you want to utilize for your final paper, you can create a bibliography or works-cited list.

The easiest way to document which references you have used is to complete a separate note card for each source. On the back of each card you can make brief notes about the source. If you record any passages directly from an author, you should make sure that you use quotation marks, so you don't accidentally plagiarize an author's words when you write your paper. Cards can be sorted in a number of useful ways. For example, when you are ready to prepare your paper's concluding bibliography, you can simply remove cards for the sources not used in the paper, alphabetize the remaining cards, and type the bibliographic entries directly from the cards.

On the front of each card, you should record all the pertinent information about the source that you might need eventually for your bibliography. Otherwise, you will find yourself trekking back to the library at the last minute to look up a missing year of publication or to double check an illegibly written author's name. Inevitably, this usually happens on a Sunday night when the library is closed!

Your instructor will specify whether you should document your sources according to MLA, APA, or Chicago Manual Style guidelines. Tutoring Services has guides for each writing style in the reference racks outside the offices in Fredericksburg and Locust Grove. Also, each guide may be downloaded and printed from the ACE website. More citation information is discussed further on in this booklet.

### **Taking Notes:**

After you have compiled your working bibliography, you are ready to examine your sources more carefully and take notes. An excellent online video tutorial on how to take effective notes may be found on the Academic Center for Excellence’s “Online Tutorials and Modules” webpage. It can be accessed here: [Note Taking Workshop](#).

You should keep the following suggestions in mind as you decide what information to commit to note cards:

- A good note makes a clear point.
- A good note captures the essence of an author’s argument, restates the author’s main point, or indicates his or her biases.
- A good note presents specific information – facts places, descriptions, examples, statistics, case histories.



## How to Record Notes:

It is best to take notes on separate index cards, four by six inches or larger, so you will have the information readily available when you are ready to write. Writing from note cards will more likely produce an original synthesis of ideas, as you will not have the original sources before you and will not be tempted to record the author's text verbatim. Each note card must be self-contained and should include three pieces of information:

- **A reference to your sources:** Key each note card to a bibliography card. For example, you might write the author's last name at the top of each note card. Remember to be careful if two authors share the same last name!
- **A clear, complete note:** Be certain that each note you put on a card is sufficiently complete to make sense to you when you no longer have the source in front of you.
- **The page number:** Take care to ensure that the page number of the source from which you recorded the note appear on the note card because you will need to cite the page number in your final paper.

## Types of Notes:

There are four different types of notes, and each note card may contain just one or a combination of all four types.

- **Direct Quotation:** Sometimes you will find a writer who states his or her point so forcefully or succinctly that you want to quote the author's own phrasing in your paper. You must cite its source in your paper. You are not free to omit or add words, or to change punctuation or spelling. If you add a word or phrase for clarity, you must enclose the added material in square brackets like this: [ ]. If you wish to delete a part of a long quotation, you must show the deletion with three spaced periods (...) called ellipses. Otherwise, be certain that everything within the quotation marks is exactly as it appears in the original quotation.

- **Paraphrase:** A paraphrase is a restatement of another writer’s ideas in words that are entirely your own. Be sure you do not simply replace some of the words in another writer’s sentence with your own. Instead, the very structure of your sentence should be different from that of your source (see the section on “Avoiding Plagiarism”).
- **Summary:** Occasionally you will need to note all the particulars of a passage, and sometimes you can simply summarize the passage in a sentence or two. A summary should reduce the work of note taking without sacrificing important information.

### Helpful Hints:

Your research will prompt ideas, associations, and responses. Because you can’t expect to remember all the peripheral ideas that occur to you as you do your research, write them down as they come to mind. This type of note is similar to a note you might make in the margin of a book. Later, when you review your cards in preparation for outlining your paper, you will appreciate the clarifying, explanatory, or suggestive notes that you made to yourself while you were deeply engaged in the research. They will prove invaluable catalysts to thought in the writing stage of your work.



## Writing the Paper



Before you actually put your pen to your paper, you should take a little time to stand back, look at your notes, and assess your objectives.

- Are there connections between your sources?
- If so, where do your different sources intersect?
- Are there different views and interpretations of the same issue?

Think about the key points your research might cover and how these might be organized. Consider how you can use your notes to support your thesis.

### **Sort Note Cards:**

Take advantage of notes written on cards. Sort them into groups that pertain to the various issues your paper might cover. You will most likely have a “miscellaneous” group where you can place notes that don’t fit neatly into any category. Often you will find a place for some of information from this assortment as you write your paper. Or, as your paper becomes more focused, you may end up discarding some notes that do not contribute to your work.

### **Make an Outline:**

After you sort your note cards, draft an outline of your main points and include as many supporting details as you can from your note cards. The purpose of an outline is to organize your ideas and provide a guide for your writing. Unless a formal outline is a required component of your research paper, create the outline informally, just for you. An outline helps you move from idea to idea logically and coherently, so whatever form it takes is fine as long as it works for you.

### **Divide and Conquer:**

Now you are ready to write, but the task before you may seem overwhelming. Try to make your work more manageable by dividing the paper into sections, concentrating only on one section during each composing session. For instance, during one session, you might decide to concentrate on writing the background section of your paper.

### **Write the First Draft:**

Writing in this first stage is creative and relaxed. Remember, your goal at this point is to create a bare-bones document that will give you a starting point. Let ideas dominate this phase of writing and save concerns with style and grammar for later. However, when you include the words or ideas of another, be sure you mark the material for citation (see the sections on “Avoiding Plagiarism” and “Citing Sources”).



## Avoiding Plagiarism

When writing a research paper, it is important to distinguish between your own words and the original words and ideas of others. Representing the words or ideas of another as your own is a serious violation known as plagiarism. The Germanna Community College Student Handbook clearly states the College's policy in the section on academic honesty. In order to avoid plagiarism when you are writing a paper, you must give credit whenever you use:

- Another's person's original idea, theory, or words
- Facts or statistics from a source that are not commonly known
- Graphs or illustrations
- Papers from a previous class
- Content obtained from Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI)

### **Direct Quotations:**

Use quotation marks to enclose direct quotations. A direct quote must present the words exactly as they appear in the source unless you use ellipsis marks (...) or brackets [...] to indicate you have made changes in the text. All direct quotations must be cited (see the sections on MLA, APA and Chicago Style citations). The citation below is an example of MLA style.

*Example:*

Great Britain implemented the Tea Act of 1773 because the East India Company “was failing either to return a profit to its shareholders” (Countryman 46).

### **Indirect Quotations:**

Do not use quotation marks to enclose indirect quotations; however, you must cite the source of the quote. The citation below is an example of APA style.

*Example:*

Genetic engineering is the manipulation of genetic material where it is removed from one section of DNA and reattached to another section

*Provided by the Academic Center for Excellence 18*

## Paraphrasing

To paraphrase means to express exactly the same idea in different words and in a different structure than that of the source. You cannot just change a few words in a source sentence and call the sentence your own. Even if you use several words in succession from a source, you are quoting, not paraphrasing. You *must* cite your source.

As a paraphrased idea belongs to another, it must be cited unless it is considered common knowledge. An idea is considered common knowledge if it is found in many different sources rather than one, or if it would be familiar to an average educated person. Whenever you are in doubt, cite the source of the idea.

### *Examples:*

**Source:** That whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it and to institute new Government, laying its foundation on such principles and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to affect their Safety and Happiness (Thomas Jefferson, *Declaration of Independence*).

**Unacceptable Paraphrase:** Whenever government becomes destructive of the rights of the people, the people have the right to alter or abolish it, and to form a new government on such principles and organization of powers as seem most likely to bring them safety and happiness.

**Acceptable Paraphrase:** The people have the right to change or do away with any government that violates their basic human rights and to form a new government founded on precepts they feel will afford them these rights.

### **Online Plagiarism Resource:**

Please watch an online module entitled “Understanding Plagiarism” located on the Academic Center for Excellence’s “Online Tutorials and Modules” page. You can also access it here: [Understanding Plagiarism](#).

## **Incorporating Research:**

Writing an effective research paper includes incorporating researched sources into your paper. Although the importance of research cannot be understated, it is more important that the paper remains *your* paper. This means that the sources that you will use help enhance your argument or analysis, but they do not overshadow your thoughts or analysis. Here are tips that will help you incorporate sources into your paper:

- **Introduce:** Briefly introduce your source, or if you are using a quote, the context surrounding the quote. Never use a quote as its own sentence.
- **Use and Cite:** Now that you have introduced the source, use it. Make sure to use the proper in-text citation after using the source.
- **Analyze:** After you use the source, you must analyze it. The next sentence or two should be an explanation as to why the information used is important to your argument or analysis.

## **Revise:**

After your first draft, read through the paper to see if ideas flow together logically to support your thesis. You might decide to rearrange some sections of the paper, change some wording, introduce a new idea or include a quote. Good writers usually spend the greater part of their composing time revising their material to make it more effective. It is not unusual for a writer to produce many drafts as he or she refines a paper.

**Edit:**

When your paper is revised to your satisfaction, it is time to edit. This is the final part of the writing process, the time to look at the paper from a grammatical perspective. Check the paper for spelling, sentence structure, paragraphing, punctuation, and grammar. Also check to make sure all quotes and paraphrases are properly cited. Lastly, make sure that the format of the paper follows the requirements of the assignment. This includes margins and the spacing between lines and paragraphs.

If you decide to do some additional writing composition during this stage, make sure that you go back and edit the revised sections. Follow some of these tips on editing your paper:

- Have a classmate edit your paper.
- Read your own paper out loud; you can often catch your own grammatical errors this way.
- Look for sentence fragments and run-on sentences.
- Check to see if there is a smooth transition of thought between paragraphs.
- Eliminate sentences that do not promote the thesis of your paper.
- Try to keep the verb tenses consistent throughout the paper.
- Utilize a rich selection of vocabulary.
- Use the one [College Writer's Checklists](#) (depending on the citation style you're using) They are available on the Academic Center for Excellence's Writing Center webpage.

**Conclusion:**

Many students make the mistake of summarizing their research in the conclusion of their paper. This is neither appropriate nor necessary. However, it is important to address the thesis of your paper in the conclusion. You should refer back to the thesis statement in the introduction of your paper. You might indicate that your research supports the thesis of your paper, or you might state that your research dispels the thesis. You should also draw inferences from your research and state your findings in the conclusion. Finally, you may also decide to make suggestions for further research in the conclusion.

## Citing Sources

The last section of the handbook discussed when it is appropriate to cite the source of your material. This section will cover how to cite your sources. There are actually several different methods of citing sources. If you are new to citation styles, it may take some time to become familiar with the different styles. It is very important to understand the function of in-text citations: to point the reader to the source from which information was borrowed. The source is listed at the end of the paper within a “Work Cited” or “Reference” list. The information from the “Work Cited” or “Reference” list should direct the reader to the original source.

It is important to find out which method your instructor would like you to use. The Modern Language Association (MLA) system of documentation is widely used, particularly in English and the humanities. The American Psychological Association (APA) style of documentation was originally designed to guide psychologists in the preparation of scholarly papers. Today it is the standard for professional publication throughout the social sciences. History and several other disciplines in the fine arts use Chicago Manual Style (CMS). The best approach is to follow closely whatever model your instructor suggests. Your instructor may want you to have experience utilizing all of these documentation styles.

This handbook will provide some general guidelines for citing sources according to MLA, APA, and CMS rules. However, there are far too many rules to include in a limited space. Please refer to the following references for specific details. Try to use the most recent publications of these texts, as the older versions do not contain sufficient information on citing electronic sources.

- MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers (9th edition), by Joseph Gibaldi or visit the website <http://www.mla.org/>
- Principles of Writing Research Papers, by James D. Lester and James D. Lester, Jr.
- Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (7<sup>th</sup> edition) or visit the website <http://www.apastyle.org>
- The Chicago Manual Style (17th edition)  
<http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org>
- For more information on the three citation styles visit the website <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/>



# MLA Guidelines

## Paper Format:

- Your essay should be typed in number 12 font, double-spaced, on standard-sized paper (8.5 x 11 inches), with margins of one inch on all sides.
- Unless requested by your instructor, a title page is unnecessary.
- Provide a double-spaced entry in the top left corner of the first page that lists your name, your instructor's name, the course number, and the date.
- Create a header (look under "Insert" in Microsoft Word) for your paper that will list all page numbers consecutively in the upper right-hand corner of your page, one-half inch from the top. *Some instructors do not like to have the first page numbered.*
- Center the title of your paper on the line below the header with your name.
- Begin your paper on the line beneath the title.
- Your "Works Cited" page should be typed on a separate sheet of paper, following your essay. Double space all entries, but do not place any spaces between entries.

## Parenthetical Documentation:

- References in your paper must clearly identify the origin of the idea.
- All internal citations should be included on the Works Cited page.
- The MLA citation includes the author's last name and the page number of the source.

### *Example:*

Anytime that information is borrowed from an outside source, it must be cited (Perez 204).

Germannanna 1

Jean Germanna

Dr. Tough Grader

English 111

25 December 2013

How to Write a Research Paper

Simply stated, a research paper is a gathering of in-

### Works Cited List:

- Place the author's last name first, followed by the first name. If a work has more than one author, invert the first and last name of only the first author listed.
- If a work does not include an author's name, alphabetize by the title.
- Use quotation marks around the titles of articles in journals, magazines, and newspapers.
- Italicize the titles of books, journals, magazines, and newspapers.
- Specify the source's location. The location will change depending on source type; for example, include a URL or DOI when creating a citation for online sources or a page range for print sources.
- The first line of each Works Cited entry is flush with the left margin. Subsequent lines should be indented one-half inch. This is called a "hanging indentation."

#### *Examples:*

Adichie, Chimamanda Ngozi. "On Monday of Last Week." *The Thing around Your Neck*, Alfred A. Knopf, 2009, pp. 74-94.

Malcor, Linda. "Merlin and the Pendragon: King Arthur's Draconarius." *Arthuriana*, vol. 10, no.1, Spring 2000, pp. 3-13. *Project Muse*, doi:10.1353/art.2000.0005.



For more information on MLA, please see the following handouts: [Modern Language Association \(MLA\) Format Guide, 9th Edition](#) , the [Instructions for Formatting MLA Style Papers in Microsoft Word 2021](#), and the [MLA Sample Paper](#). These handouts are available by visiting the Academic Center for Excellence in Fredericksburg, Locust Grove, or Stafford, or you can visit our website at <https://www.germannanna.edu/academic-center-for-excellence/>



## APA Guidelines

### Paper Format:

- Your essay should be typed, double-spaced, on standard-sized paper (8.5 x 11 inches), with margins of one inch on all sides. Acceptable fonts include: Arial 11 pt., Calibri 11 pt., Times New Roman 12 pt., Lucida Sans Unicode 10 pt., and Georgia 11 pt.
- In the header, the page number will be placed in the top righthand corner.
- For student papers, a running head is not required unless requested by the instructor.
- The title page will also include the title of the paper, your name, the name of your educational institution, course information, instructor, and due date.

1

**The Full Title: The Full Subtitle**

Student Name

Name of Institution or College

Course Information

Instructor's Name

Assignment Due Date

Your paper may include the following items in the order listed below. Your instructor will indicate the specific requirements for the assignment.

- Title page
- Abstract
- Text
- References
- Appendixes
- Author note
- Footnotes/Endnotes
- Tables
- Figure captions
- Figures
- Reference List

3

### **Full Title: Full Subtitle**

The title is a Level 1 heading. Level 1 headings are used to introduce main sections and points within the paper.

### **Level 2 Heading**

Level 2 headings are used to introduce subsections and sub-points within a Level 1 section.

### **Level 3 Heading**

Level 3 headings are used to introduce key points that provide details to the information discussed within the Level 2 heading.

## Parenthetical Citations

- The APA citation includes the author’s name and the year of publication of the source. Elements in an APA citation are separated by commas and p. and pp. are used to note page numbers.
- See the section on “Avoiding Plagiarism” to see when you should cite your sources.
- Quotations longer than 40 words are typed in a block style, indented 1/2 inch from the left margin, and are formatted without quotation marks.
- The parenthetical citation in the text comes after the closing quotation marks and before end punctuation.

*Examples:*

### **Source with one author:**

“Editors know they can get pictures like the ones they have already published” (Alexander, 1994, p. 296).

### **Source with two authors:**

“The Virginia system has recently struggled to fund programs that assist children maturing out of foster care” (Graziani & Perez, 2017, p. 3).

### **Source without an author or page number:**

“Although this instance was an isolated issue on the west coast, the practice is common in Virginia” (“Virginia,” 2019).

## Reference List

- In APA format, the sources used in the paper are listed alphabetically on a final page, with the heading “**References**” centered and bolded at the top of the page.
- The page is double spaced.
- Place the author’s last name first, followed by the first initial of the author’s first name and middle name. If a work has more than one author, list each author in the same format and use the ampersand symbol “&” before the last author’s name.
- If a work does not include an author’s name, alphabetize by the title.
- Do not use quotation marks around the titles of articles in journals, magazines, newspapers, and websites as well as book chapters.
- Capitalize only the first letter of the first word of the title, the first word of the subtitle, and any proper nouns within the title.
- Italicize the titles of sources (i.e. books, journals, newspapers, etc.). The italics continue through commas and periods. The issue number of periodicals is not italicized.
- For books and other print resources, the location of publication (i.e. city and state) is not required.
- The first line of each entry should be flush with the left margin. Subsequent lines should be indented one-half inch. This is called a hanging indentation.

### *Example:*

Andrew, J. A., Capelin, D., Foster, S. L., & Hops, H. (2000). Adolescent and family predictors of physical aggression, communication, and satisfaction in young adult couples: A prospective analysis. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, 68, 195. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-006X.68.2.195>

For more information about APA, please see the following handouts: [APA Format Guide](#), the [Instructions for Formatting APA Style Papers in Microsoft Word 2021](#), and the [APA Sample Paper](#). These handouts are available by visiting the Academic Center for Excellence in Fredericksburg, Locust Grove, or Stafford, or you can visit our website at <https://www.germann.edu/academic-center-for-excellence/>



## CMS Note and Bibliography Style Guidelines

### Paper Format:

- Your essay should be typed in a readable font, such as Times New Roman or Palatino, on standard-sized paper (8.5 X 11 inches). The font size should be between 10 and 12 points. Also, the text of the paper should be double spaced with the margins between 1 inch and 1.5 inches.
- Page numbers begin on the first page of text. Page numbers are located in the upper right-hand corner.
- CMS includes a title page with the following information: the title and subtitle of the paper, the student's name, the class information, the professor's name, and the date.
- The title and subtitle are centered and located at the top third of the title page while the student's name, class information, professor's name, and date are centered and located at the bottom two thirds of the title page.

Your paper *may* include the following items in the order listed below. Your instructor will indicate the specific requirements for the assignment.

- Title page
- Abstract
- Body
- Footnotes and Endnotes
- Bibliography
- Tables and Figures

<p>Title: Subtitle</p> <p>John Smith HIS 204 Professor Jones May 14, 2013</p>
---

**Formatting Footnotes:**

Unlike MLA and APA, CMS does not use parenthetical citations. Instead, footnotes are used to cite sources.

- Footnotes are in-text citations that are located at the bottom of each page of the paper.
- Begin with the number one and continue consecutively throughout the paper
- Will be located at the end of the sentence to which the footnote is referring
- Be superscripted and follow the sentence punctuation.

*Example:*

Eleanor of Aquitaine was the queen of France, the queen of England, and the Countess of Aquitaine during her lifetime.<sup>1</sup>



- Footnote numbers at the bottom of the page are full-size and followed by a period.
- The first line of the footnote is indented 0.5 inches from the left margin. All other lines of the footnote are flush with the left margin.
- Footnotes are single spaced; however, an extra space is needed between footnotes.
- Create a full footnote citation when citing a source the first time. Use a shortened version of the footnote citation for each subsequent footnote.
- If additional commentary is needed, place the commentary after the documentation. Unless the commentary is placed within parenthesis, the commentary should be separated from the documentation by a period. If the commentary is placed within parenthesis, a period will be placed after the parenthesis.

*Example:*

1. Bernard Jones, “Who Was Eleanor of Aquitaine?”  
*European History Quarterly* 349 (2011): 438.

2. Jones, “Who Was Eleanor of Aquitain?” 427

### **Block Quotes:**

- When using CMS, quotations of five lines or more are block quoted.
- There should be an extra line of space added before and after the block quotation.
- The entire block quote should be single-spaced and indented 0.5 inches from the left margin.
- The footnote is placed at the end of the block quote following the same procedures stated above.

## **Bibliography:**

The Bibliography page for CMS provides the same function as the Works Cited page for MLA and the Reference page for APA.

- Use “Bibliography” as the title of the page, and leave two blank lines between “Bibliography” and the first citation.
- Arrange citations alphabetically by author. If the source includes more than one author/editor, all authors/editors must be listed. List the names in the order that they appear on the title page of the source.
- Within each citation, single space the information; however, between each source, a double-space is needed.
- Do not use the “&” symbol, use the word “and.”

*Example:*

Ward, Geoffrey C., and Ken Burns. *The War: An Intimate History, 1941-1945*. New York: Knopf, 2007.

For more information about CMS, please see the following handouts:

[Chicago-Style Citation Guide](#), [Chicago Manual Style Format: Notes and Bibliography Style](#), or [Chicago Notes and Bibliography Style Sample Paper](#).

These handouts are available by visiting the Academic Center for Excellence at Fredericksburg, Locust Grove, or Stafford, or you can visit our website at <https://www.germannna.edu/academic-center-for-excellence/>

## CMS Author–Date Style Guidelines

### Paper Format:

- Your essay should be typed in a readable font, such as Times New Roman or Palatino, on standard-sized paper (8.5 X 11 inches). The font size should be between 10 and 12 points. Also, the text of the paper should be double spaced with the margins between 1 inch and 1.5 inches.
- Page numbers begin on the first page of text. Page numbers are located in the upper right-hand corner.
- CMS includes a title page with the following information: the title and subtitle of the paper, the student’s name, the class information, the professor’s name, and the date.
- The title and subtitle are centered and located at the top third of the title page while the student’s name, class information, professor’s name, and date are centered and located at the bottom two thirds of the title page.

Your paper *may* include the following items in the order listed below.

Your instructor will indicate the specific requirements for the assignment.

- Title page
- Abstract
- Body
- Footnotes and Endnotes
- Bibliography
- Tables and Figures

<p>Title:</p> <p>Subtitle</p> <p>John Smith</p> <p>HIS 204</p> <p>Professor Jones</p> <p>May 14, 2013</p>
--

**Parenthetical Citations:**

- The CMS citation includes the author’s name, the year of publication of the source, and the page number.
- See the section on “Avoiding Plagiarism” to see when you should cite your sources.
- The parenthetical citation in the text comes after the closing quotation marks and before end punctuation.

*Example:*

“Editors know they can get pictures like the ones they have already published” (Alexander 1994, 296).

## Block Quotes:

- When using CMS, quotations of five lines or more are block quoted.
- There should be an extra line of space added before and after the block quotation.
- The entire block quote should be single-spaced and indented 0.5 inches from the left margin.
- The citation should be placed at the end of the block quote following the final punctuation.

*Example:*

Thomas Jefferson's policies, including the Louisiana Purchase, brought him solid support in the South and the West. Even new Englanders were moving to his side. By 1809, John Quincy Adams, the son of the second president, would become a Republican. Other Federalists panicked. (Tindall and Shi 2010, 355-356)



## **Bibliography:**

The Bibliography page for CMS provides the same function as the Works Cited page for MLA and the Reference page for APA.

- Use “References” as the title of the page, and leave two blank lines between “References” and the first citation.
- Arrange citations alphabetically by author. If the source includes more than one author/editor, all authors/editors must be listed. List the names in the order that they appear on the title page of the source.
- Within each citation, single space the information; however, between each source, a double-space is needed.
- Do not use the “&” symbol, use the word “and.”

*Example:*

Shi, David E. 2018. *America: The Essential Learning Edition*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc.

For more information about CMS, please see the following handouts: [Chicago Manual of Style Citation Guide](#), or [Chicago Manual of Style Author Date Sample Paper](#). These handouts are available by visiting the Academic Center for Excellence at Fredericksburg, Locust Grove, or Stafford, or you can visit our website at <https://www.germannna.edu/academic-center-for-excellence/>

## ACE Writing Center

The Germanna Community College's Academic Center for Excellence's (ACE) staff is here to help answer any questions you may have about college writing.

We invite you to visit our Fredericksburg Writing Center for any college writing that you are assigned at Germanna Community College. Our consultants will not edit your papers; instead, it is our mission to help you become a confident, independent college writer by working with you throughout each step of the writing process.

You may schedule an appointment by calling (540) 891-3017 for the Fredericksburg Area Campus, (540) 423-9148 for the Locust Grove Campus, or (540) 834-1993 for our Stafford Center location. You can also visit [Brainfuse](#) for online assistance.



## Useful Online Resources

To access **Helpful Handouts** including those specifically for writing topics:

<http://www.germannna.edu/academic-center-for-excellence/helpful-handouts/>

For academic links to information on citation styles (MLA/APA/Chicago):

<http://www.germannna.edu/academic-center-for-excellence/academic-links/>

To find academic links to English Grammar and Style sites as well as plagiarism sites:

<https://www.germannna.edu/academic-center-for-excellence/writing-resources/>

To take the “Understanding Plagiarism” online, interactive module:

[https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1wzyEyLDriYCDMCqP-g-qEklRZtuEuhrTWHlyt\\_pdsmU/preview?slide=id.p](https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1wzyEyLDriYCDMCqP-g-qEklRZtuEuhrTWHlyt_pdsmU/preview?slide=id.p)

To take the “How to Paraphrase Effectively” online, interactive module:

[https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1FuPTiL26z0M-v6Bdw8unmS5Gu\\_0CY5BAUUp4M41etQU/preview?slide=id.p](https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1FuPTiL26z0M-v6Bdw8unmS5Gu_0CY5BAUUp4M41etQU/preview?slide=id.p)

To access resources about **Generative AI (GenAI)**:

<https://www.germannna.edu/academic-center-excellence/generative-artificial-intelligence>

To take the “Introduction to Generative AI” interactive module:

[https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1AYWFMi6TCUpzAidy6D8u-h1h4s\\_1TzIR-KhG6viMgTk/preview?rm=minimal&slide=id.g2efca0249e6\\_0\\_462](https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1AYWFMi6TCUpzAidy6D8u-h1h4s_1TzIR-KhG6viMgTk/preview?rm=minimal&slide=id.g2efca0249e6_0_462)



## Works Cited

**This booklet has been adapted from:**

Mulderig, Gerald P. *The Heath Guide to Writing the Research Paper*. Lexington, Mass: Heath, 1992. Print.

**Additional information for this booklet was obtained from:**

Lester, James D. and Lester, James D., Jr. *Principles of Writing Research Papers*. New York, Pearson Education, Inc. 2002. Print.

Sorenson, Sharon. *Webster's New World Student Writing Handbook*. New York: Macmillan, 1997. Print.

Purdue University's Online Writing Laboratory,  
<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/>

Germanna Community College's Library Website,  
<http://www.germanna.edu/library/>

