MLA PARENTHETICAL STYLE OF DOCUMENTATION

The Modern Languages Association (MLA) developed a style guide which is commonly used in English and the Humanities. The *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*, 7th edition (2009) by Joseph Gibaldi regulates document formatting, in-text citations, and works cited.

- In the MLA Style, parenthetical references that refer to a list of "Works Cited" at the end of your essay. *A parenthetical citation must appear in the paper each time you use material from a source.* If you do not credit your sources, you will be plagiarizing and will be in danger of receiving a mark of zero.

- The only information that will usually be necessary is the author's last name and the page number of the book:

    > * The early eighteenth century "saw the rise of a new leisure industry" (Rogers 10).

    Note that no punctuation separates name and page number and that the sentence period follows the reference. In the case of an indented or set-off quotation, the sentence period precedes the reference. You can also name the author in the body of your sentence, in which case the only necessary parenthetical information will be the page number:

    > *Rogers states that the early eighteenth century "saw the rise of a new leisure industry" (10).

    In a number of cases, references will not be so straightforward; below are some cases you are likely to encounter:

    a) <u>An Author of Two or More Works</u>: If you are citing one work by the same author, place a comma after the author's name and provide an abbreviated title– (Frye, *Anatomy* 109).

    b) <u>A Work by Two or More Authors</u>: Name both authors or, in the case of three or more authors, use the phrase *et al.,* meaning, "and others" – (Nicholson and Rousseau 33) or (Abrams et al. 124).

    c) <u>Two or More Authors with the Same Last Name</u>: Supply the author's first name in your reference – (Samuel Johnson 298).

    d) <u>A Multivolume Work</u>: Indicate the specific volume used – (Blotner2:1347).

    e) <u>Citing a Work by Title</u>: If you are citing a work for which no author is named, such as *The Chicago Manual of Style*, use a shortened version of the title – (Chicago 305).

f) <u>Biblical References</u>: Biblical references are to be given in the body of the essay using an abbreviation for the name of the book. The name of the book, followed by the chapter and verses are given in parentheses, followed by the punctuation for the sentence. If a passage is referred to but not directly quoted, it should also be referenced.

    Example: (Mt. 5: 1-15).
                    (1 Cor. 13: 1-13).
                    (1 Sam. 31:1-2)

g) Referencing from the Internet: *Any parenthetical reference from the Internet must be easily identifiable in the Works Cited.*

    Option 1: Use the author's name and paragraph numbers. (Ross, pars. 3-5)
    Option 2:   If there is no author, use an identifiable word in the title.
    (Causes, pars. 10-12). The word "Causes" easily matches the title found in the Works Cited: "Causes of the American Revolution".
    Option 3:   If there is no author and no title, use the web site address. Do not use page numbers as pagination may not be consistent from system to system.

h) In citing famous literary works, such as **Shakespeare's plays**, include information about act, scene, and lines.
                    Example: (1.4.7)
                            (4.5.4-8)
                            (3.2.5-10; 14)