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1. **General Information**

This style sheet lists formal conventions for research papers and gives numerous examples for quotations, source documentation, etc.; conventions are based on and examples are taken from the following work: *Modern Language Association. MLA Handbook. 9th ed. MLA, 2021*. Additionally, participation in library tutorials and the attendance of the class “How to Write a Term Paper” are strongly recommended.

1.1. **Length**

**Term papers** in American literary and cultural studies must be the following lengths (including footnotes; excluding title page, table of contents, list of works cited, appendices, and declaration):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>words (binding!)</th>
<th>pages (approx.)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Basismodul (nicht vertieft) Lehramt</td>
<td>3,000–4,000</td>
<td>10–12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aufbaumodul (vertieft) Lehramt</td>
<td>3,000–4,000</td>
<td>10–12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aufbaumodul Bachelor</td>
<td>3,000–4,000</td>
<td>10–12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vertiefungsmodul Bachelor</td>
<td>3,500–4,500</td>
<td>13–15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vertiefungsmodul LA Gymnasium</td>
<td>4,500–6,000</td>
<td>15–20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mastermodul</td>
<td>4,500–6,000</td>
<td>15–20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Theses** in English literary studies must observe the following frameworks:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>time frame (binding!)</th>
<th>words (binding!)</th>
<th>pages (approx.)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bachelorarbeit ( B.A.)</td>
<td>3 months</td>
<td>9,000–12,000</td>
<td>ca. 30–40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zulassungsarbeit Staatsexamen (außer Lehramt an Gymnasien)</td>
<td>3 months</td>
<td>9,000–12,000</td>
<td>ca. 30–40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zulassungsarbeit Staatsexamen Lehramt an Gymnasien</td>
<td>3 months</td>
<td>15,000–20,000</td>
<td>ca. 50–70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Masterarbeit (M.A.)</td>
<td>6 months</td>
<td>24,000–35,000</td>
<td>ca. 80–120</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The length of the **thesis paper** is determined in **consultation with the respective advisor** and depends on the specifics of the topic of choice, the selected method and depth of the research, and the requirements of the respective field of study and degree.

**Caution**: Remember that you are writing a **research paper** and **not an essay**! This includes first and foremost arguing a thesis. Also, your research needs to be based on secondary literature. Finally, your findings are an essential part of your paper.
1.2. **Format**

Term papers and theses must be typed.

**Paper size and margins:** Each page should be DIN A4 with a regular margin for corrections and comments (2.5 cm on all sides).

**Line spacing and font:** The entire document should be in a 12-point font and double-spaced. The first word of each paragraph in the text should be indented 1.25 cm from the left margin (i.e. one tab stop).

**Language setting:** The entire document must be written in English.

**Page numbers:** All pages must be numbered. Starting on the second page, the page number should appear in the upper right-hand corner of every page but the title page.

1.3. **Submission**

The term paper must be submitted via the “Term Paper Submission Tool” on the respective course page of the Virtual Campus (VC). Topical suggestions, formal rules, and guidelines on how to structure your paper are provided by the instructor.

**The term paper is due approximately six weeks after the end of classes.** The exact date is announced at the beginning of each semester. Early submission and grading of the term paper must be agreed upon by the instructor at the beginning of the semester. Late submission of the term paper will not be accepted unless an alternative deadline has been granted by the instructor.

An alternative deadline will be allowed only in cases of illness or other verified emergency situations that are sanctioned by the University of Bamberg’s policy. The alternative deadline is not allowed to accommodate travel or other personal plans! If there is a verifiable emergency that limits your ability to meet the scheduled submission deadline, please contact the instructor immediately.

All students enrolled at the University of Bamberg are expected to complete research assignments with **fairness and honesty.** Failure to do so by seeking unfair advantage or by plagiarizing can result in disciplinary action.

**From the summer term 2022 onwards, the University of Bamberg will use Turnitin, an Internet-based plagiarism detection service.** The service is a mandatory part of the term paper submission tool on the Virtual Campus. In order to restrict access to personal information provided on the title page, the submitted essays will **not** be shared with the global database of Turnitin, but will instead be stored in a database assigned exclusively to the University of Bamberg.
2. **General Structure**

**Attention:** On the department’s website, you can find a pre-formatted Word document (“Term Paper Template”) that already contains all the required parts and formatting.

2.1. **Title Page**

Every **term paper** must have a **title page** including:

1. information about the **paper**: title and (optional) subtitle of the paper, date of submission (not deadline!), exact word count (only text, *not* title page, table of contents, list of references, appendices, or declaration of academic integrity!);
2. information about the **author**: full name of student, matriculation number, exact module for which the paper is submitted (incl. field of studies);
3. information about the **respective class**: course title, name of the instructor, semester during which the course took place.

Every **final thesis** must have a **title page** including:

1. information about the **paper**: title and (optional) subtitle of the paper, date of submission (not deadline!), exact word count (only text, *not* title page, table of contents, list of references, appendices, or declaration of academic integrity!);
2. information about the **author**: full name of student, matriculation number, exact degree for which the paper is submitted (incl. field of studies).

The e-mail address of the student is not obligatory, but we recommend its inclusion in case contacting is necessary.

2.2. **Table of Contents**

The **second page** of the paper contains the **table of contents**.

The table of contents lists **all headlines** (chapters and – if included – subchapters) of the paper. The headlines listed in the table of contents and their numbering must be identical with the headlines and their numbering in the text.

The table of contents also includes the corresponding **page numbers** of each headline.
2.3. **Text (See also Chapter 4 below)**

The paper must be based on a **hypothesis** that is clearly stated in the introductory chapter.

The following structure has proven to be effective:

1. Introduction
2. Main Part A (theoretical part)
3. Main Part B (textual analysis and interpretation)
4. Conclusion.

**Attention:** Only these parts are to be included in the **word count**!

2.4. **List of References (See also Chapter 5 below)**

The list of works cited at the end of your paper is a **list of all of the literature used in your text** and always begins on a new page. It is to be organized alphabetically by authors’ last names, or, if there is no author given, by the title of the work. All lines after the first of each entry should be indented approximately 1.25 cm. There should not be any additional spacing between entries.

**Core elements** of each entry in the List of References are: name of author (or editor or translator); title of source; title of container; other contributors; version/edition; publisher; publication date; and (in case of articles or other shorter texts) page numbers.

2.5. **Declaration of Academic Integrity**

Each student must confirm sole authorship of their submitted work and acknowledge that they have cited all primary and secondary sources directly or indirectly in the paper. For the wording of the declaration, see the handout “Term Paper Template” on the American Studies website.

2.6. **Footnotes**

**Footnotes are no longer used to indicate sources in MLA style:** the only accepted form of citing sources in your text is the parenthetical documentation explained below. Other styles (for example, Chicago style) still use footnotes to indicate sources.

**Footnotes may, however, contain additional information and extended explanations to the text.** They are numbered successively throughout the body of the text and denoted by the use of raised Arabic numbers (without parentheses). They are concluded with a full stop. It is best to use the
standardized footnote format of your word processing program. If you use any sources within the footnotes, they are also cited by (Author’s Last Name Page Number).

3. **Titles, Subtitles, and Chapter Headings**

Titles and chapter headings must be **informative and concise**. They should be set apart from the body of the text by either underlining them or putting them in bold print.

3.1. **Capitalization (MLA Handbook 54-56)**

In your (sub)title and chapter headings always capitalize the first and the last word; in addition, capitalize all words except articles, prepositions, coordinating conjunctions, and the to in infinitives. These rules also apply to (sub)titles of primary and secondary sources that you mention in your text and list in the “Works Cited.” For capitalization in languages other than English, see *MLA Handbook*, pages 37-41.

**Examples:**

- *All’s Well That Ends Well*
- *Harry Potter and the Philosopher’s Stone*

3.2. **Punctuation (MLA Handbook 59-66)**

If you use a subtitle, separate title and subtitle through a colon (alternative option: question or exclamation mark). Other punctuation must not be used unless it is included in the (sub)title from primary or secondary sources mentioned in your text and listed on the “Works Cited” page.

**Examples:**

- "Murder, She Wrote": The Genesis of Susan Glaspell’s *Trifles*
- *Reading the West: New Essays on the Literature of the American West*
- *Whose Music? The Sociology of Musical Language*

3.3. **Italicized Titles and Titles in Quotation Marks (MLA Handbook 66-73)**

**Titles that are italicized:** books, plays, poems published as books, pamphlets, periodicals (newspapers, magazines, journals), websites, online databases, films, television and radio broadcasts, podcasts, longer musical compositions, works of visual art.

**Titles that are put in quotation marks:** articles, essays, stories, poems, chapters, pages in websites,
episodes of television and streaming series, short musical compositions, unpublished works.

**Examples:**

- ✓ *The History of Tom Jones, A Foundling* (novel)
- ✓ *but* “The Introduction to the Work, or Bill of Fare to the Feast” (book one, chapter one)

- ✓ *The Waste Land* (poem published as book)
- ✓ *but* “The Hollow Men” (poem)

- ✓ *PMLA* (journal)
- ✓ *but* “Literature and Science Policy: A New Project for the Humanities” (an article in *PMLA*)

- ✓ *Star Trek* (television broadcast)
- ✓ *but* “The Enemy Within” (episode of season one)

4. **The Text (Chapters 1–5)**

The text should be structured into five chapters. Only those five chapters are included in the word count. Before starting to write, please consult with your advisor about the topic of your paper as well as your research hypothesis.

4.1. **Italicization (*MLA Handbook* 276)**

**In the text, italicize letters, words, and sentences that you would like to emphasize.** Italicization for the purpose of emphasis should be used carefully in order to prevent it from becoming ineffective. If you emphasize words within a quotation, add the phrase *emphasis added* in parentheses after the quotation and before the concluding punctuation mark.

Italicize **words in foreign languages** (exceptions: quotations, non-English titles in quotation marks, proper nouns).

Italicize **words and letters referred to as words and letters.**

**Examples:**

- ✓ Lincoln specifically advocated a government “for the people” (emphasis added).
- ✓ Shaw spelled *Shakespeare* without the final *e*. 
The word *albatross* probably derives from the Spanish and Portuguese word *alcatraz*. The Renaissance courtier was expected to display *sprezzatura*, or nonchalance, in the face of adversity.

4.2. *Quotations (MLA Handbook 252-286)*

Quotations can be added as direct quotations (no alteration to the original source) or indirect quotations (parenthesis or summary of the original source). In all cases, the origin of the quoted material must be acknowledged by adding parenthetical documentation (see 4.2.3.).

4.2.1. *Quotation Marks (MLA Handbook 34-35)*

All quotation marks are uppercase quotation marks.

**Double quotation marks** are used for direct quotations and translations.

**Single quotation marks** are used for translations following the original directly, definitions, and quotations inside quotations.

**Examples:**

- The first idiomatic Spanish expression I learned was *irse todo en humo* (“to go up in smoke”).
- Old English *sped* ‘speed’ is very seldom used.

4.2.2. *Length of Quotations (MLA Handbook 264-265)*

**Short quotations** (up to three lines) in the text are denoted by the use of double quotation marks.

**Longer quotations** (four lines or longer) as well as block quotations are moved to the next line and indented 1.25 cm from the left; they are not denoted with quotation marks.

4.2.3. *Parenthetical Documentation (MLA Handbook 26-27, 100-101, 227-230)*

All sources should be cited in parentheses before the punctuation mark that ends the sentence, clause, or phrase containing the quotation (format: Author’s Last Name Page Number(s)). In block quotations, however, the reference follows the final punctuation mark and is separated from that mark through one space.
Examples:

✔ Although writings describing utopia have always seemed to take place far from the everyday world, in fact “all utopian fiction whirls contemporary actors through a costume dance no place else but here” (Rabkin, Greenberg, and Olander vii).

✔ Between 1968 and 1988, television coverage of presidential elections changed dramatically (Hallin 5).

✔ John K. Mahon adds a further insight to our understanding of the War of 1812: Financing the war was very difficult at the time. Baring Brothers, a banking firm of the enemy country, handled routine accounts for the United States overseas, but the firm would take on no loans. The loans were in the end absorbed by wealthy Americans at great hazard–also, as it turned out, at great profit to them. (385)

If you are quoting from the same author more than once in the same paragraph (without quotations from other authors interrupting), you must only mention the author’s name after the first quotation; for the quotations following, referencing the page number(s) alone is sufficient.

Example:

✔ *Romeo and Juliet* presents an opposition between two worlds: “the world of the everyday,” associated with the adults in the play, and “the world of romance,” associated with the two lovers (Zender 138). Romeo and Juliet’s language of love nevertheless becomes “fully responsive to the tang of actuality” (141).

If you have already mentioned the author’s name in the sentence, clause, or phrase containing the quotation, you must only give the page number in parentheses.

Examples:

✔ Tannen has argued this point (178-85).

vs.

✔ This point has already been argued (Tannen 178-85).

✔ Others, like Jakobson and Waugh (210-15), hold the opposite point of view.

vs.

✔ Others hold the opposite point of view (e.g., Jakobson and Waugh 210-15).
For **sources with more than three authors**, give the last name of the first author followed by *et al.*

If you use **several works by the same author**, for identification of the different works, add a shortened version of the title after the author’s name and separate name and title with a comma.

If you quote **different authors with the same last name**, add the first initial for identification.

In **works without an author listed**, use only a shortened version of the title.

If you cite **documents without page numbers**, no number should be given in the parenthetical quotation. However, if your source uses explicit paragraph numbers instead of page numbers, give the relevant numbers preceded by *par.* or *pars.*

### 4.2.4. Alterations of Sources

You should not change the spelling or wording of a direct quotation. However, you can omit words, clauses, or sentences if you indicate the omission by three spaced omission points: . . .

**Example:**

✓ According to Phelan and Rabinowitz, Wayne C. Booth’s “most durable contribution . . . was his development of the concept of the ‘unreliable narrator’” (33).

When your quotation reads like a complete sentence but the original sentence does not end there, an ellipsis (…) is needed at the end of your sentence.

If the source you quote from uses ellipsis points, put the ellipsis points you add into square brackets or add an explanatory phrase in a parenthesis after the quotation.

If you use a quotation with incorrect grammar or an orthographic error, place the comment (*sic*) after the expression in question.

A comment or explanation that appears after the closing quotation marks appears in parenthesis.

**Comments, explanations, and clarifications of pronouns inside a quotation** must be indicated through square brackets.

**Examples:**

✓ Shaw admitted, “Nothing can extinguish my interest in Shakespear” (*sic*) (*Last Plays* 2).
✓ Milton’s Satan speaks of his “study [pursuit] of revenge” (*Paradise Lost* 23).
✓ In the first act he soliloquizes, “Why she would hang on him [Hamlet’s father] / As if increase of appetite had grown” (*Hamlet* 101).
Lincoln specifically advocated a government “for the people” (*Lincoln Speeches* 149, emphasis added).

For more information on how to quote from drama and poetry, especially concerning line breaks and omissions, check *MLA Handbook* 77-86.

## 4.3. Further Matters of Interest (Names, numbers, abbreviations, etc.)

Use a capital letter for the first word of a complete sentence of a direct quotation.

For **rules on punctuation**, see *MLA Handbook* 29-36, 264-268.

For **rules on the names of persons**, see *MLA Handbook* 41-51.

For **rules on numbers**, see *MLA Handbook* 158-164.

For **common (scholarly) abbreviations**, see *MLA Handbook* 294-301.

**Examples:**

- Although writings describing utopia have always seemed to take place far from the everyday world, in fact “all utopian fiction whirls contemporary actors through a costume dance no place else but here” (Rabkin, Greenberg, and Olander vii).
- Between 1968 and 1988, television coverage of presidential elections changed dramatically (Hallin 5).
- John K. Mahon adds a further insight to our understanding of the War of 1812: Financing the war was very difficult at the time. Baring Brothers, a banking firm of the enemy country, handled routine accounts for the United States overseas, but the firm would take on no loans. The loans were in the end absorbed by wealthy Americans at great hazard—also, as it turned out, at great profit to them. (385)

There are multiple **abbreviations used in academic writing**. The MLA style permits the following:

- **cf.**: means “compare” (from Latin “confer”), may be used in parenthetical citations to compare one source with another (i.e. you are quoting from one person and in parentheses you add the reference to another passage that you are not quoting directly for the sake of comparison)

  **Example from** [https://style.mla.org/cf-for-confer-or-compare](https://style.mla.org/cf-for-confer-or-compare): Diminutive staffs (between ten and twenty officials to inspect the nation’s multifarious workhouses) necessarily meant that much was left to “local discretion” (Fraser 53; cf. Wood 79-83).

- **i.e.**: comes from the Latin “id est”, meaning “that is”, and is set off by commas, unless
preceded by a different punctuation mark.

✓ *e.g.* comes from the Latin “exempli gratia”, meaning “for example”, and is also set off by commas, unless preceded by a different punctuation mark.

The MLA avoids the following abbreviations:

- *ibid.*: comes from the Latin word *ibīdem*, meaning “in the same place”, was often used to refer to the source that was cited immediately before.
- *op.cit.*: comes from the Latin *opus citatum*, meaning “(in) the work cited” and was also used to indicate that the same source as immediately before is referenced again.

If you are unsure about the use of abbreviations, check *MLA Handbook* 294-301 or https://style.mla.org/.

5. **The List of References (aka “Works Cited”)**

The List of References can also be called “Works Cited”. Only works that are directly quoted or referenced in your text must be included in the List of References. Primary and secondary sources are not listed separately and **all entries must be sorted alphabetically** (use the first name of the surname of the author or, if this does not apply, the first letter of the entry).

**Places of publication** do not need to be included in the list of references.

**Names of Publishers** should be kept as brief as possible:

- *University* is abbreviated *U*, *Press* is abbreviated *P*, e.g. *Cambridge UP*

Each entry in the List of References is organized in an identical pattern: author – complete title of the work – publisher – year of publication. If the text is part of a larger work, the information about this “container” must be added as well. Here are the schemes for some of the most common types of entries:

**Basic book format:**

✓ Last Name, First Name. *Title of Book*. Publisher, Publication Date.
Basic format for work in an anthology, collection, or reference:

✓ Last Name, First Name. "Title of Essay." Title of Collection, edited by Editor's Name(s), Publisher, Year, Page range of entry.

Basic format for articles in a scholarly journal:

✓ Author(s). "Title of Article." Title of Journal, Volume, Issue, Year, pages.

Basic format for all other sources, leave out parts that do not apply:

✓ Author. "Title." Title of container (self contained if book), Other contributors (translators or editors), Version (edition), Number (vol. and/or no.), Publisher, Publication Date, Location (pages, paragraphs and/or URL, DOI or permalink). 2nd container’s title, Other contributors, Version, Number, Publisher, Publication date, Location, Date of Access (if applicable).

Be aware that URLs, DOIs, or permalinks (depending on which of these is available) are a required part of the bibliographical entry for online sources. This includes journal articles or e-books you access through online databases such as JSTOR, ProjectMUSE, or ProQuestEbook Central.

Here you can find examples of the types of sources most commonly used in literary and cultural studies. Remember that the key components of any reliable source are transparency and competence. If the origin of a source is not identifiable or accessible, or if the competence of the author cannot be established, then the source should not be included in your research.

5.1. Examples for Primary Sources


### 5.2. Examples for Secondary Sources

**Print Media:**

**Monography by one author:** Davis, Angela Y. *Blues Legacies and Black Feminism: Gertrude “Ma” Rainey, Bessie Smith, and Billie Holiday*. Pantheon, 1998.


Online Sources:


Website with editors and a publisher: *Piers Plowman Electronic Archive*. Edited by Robert Adams et al., Society for Early English and Norse Electronic Texts, 7 June 2018, piers.chass.ncsu.edu/.


Other Media:


6. Final Corrections

Every author of a term paper or thesis is responsible for reading through the finished paper and for correcting all spelling, punctuation, and grammatical errors.

7. Additional Questions

If you have any additional questions concerning research or the structure/format and writing of term papers or theses, or if you are interested in any further examples, consult the following work: