

Firstname Lastname
Instructor's First and Last Name, Instructor
Muir 40, Section ABC (123456)
Assignment Name
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The Title of this Essay

This document describes and displays the visual format that is to be used when submitting your papers in Muir writing courses (and also for most other courses you'll take at the university). In general — but not exactly — it follows the “MLA” (Modern Language Association) style. It uses one-inch margins. Please note that Microsoft Word and some other word processing programs default their page layout so that one and one-quarter inch margins are used. If you do not use this document in its electronic form to create a working template for your Muir assignments (opting instead to make your papers conform to this layout by manipulating values in your word processor), it means that you may and probably will need to modify your word processing program's page layout values. To do so in Microsoft Word, choose FILE > PAGE SETUP. Aligned to the right at the top of every page lies a running headline (“Header” in Microsoft Word lingo) that contains your last name and the current page number with a *single* intervening blank between them. Position the running headline one-half inch from the top of the page. Notice that all lines are double-spaced with the exception of the “Identification Block,” which is located in the upper-left corner of the first page only. The identification block contains your first and last name (in that order, please); the instructor's name; the course name, section number, and section identifier (the section ID within parentheses, please); the assignment name (which will be provided for each assignment); and the due date. Notice that in addition to the assignment name, each of your essays will require a title of your own choosing, which should reflect your essay's thesis in a brief but creative way. Do not omit the title. Horizontally center the

title and align all other elements to the left except for the running head.

As for the font, use “Times” or “Times New Roman” or some other equivalent from the *Times* font family. In other words, do not use Helvetica or Ariel or Old English or any other font besides Times. The point size is 12. In other words, not 10, not 11.5, not 16. Indent the first line of each main body paragraph by one-half inch. Notice that the lines within the identifier block are not indented. Do not tweak font characteristics so that characters, words, or lines are condensed (to fit more characters or words on a line) or expanded (to fit less characters or words on line) or tweak line spacing (to fit more or less lines on a page). Hyphenation should not occur except at places where a hyphen is ordinarily part of a compound term. Notice also that only *single* spaces should be used between sentences. Do not use two or more spaces between sentences. Following the above prescription will allow approximately 225-375 words to fit on a page. Also, remember that contractions are rarely, if ever, used in formal writing (i.e., the kind of writing you will be doing in this course as well as most of your other university courses).

For analysis to be successful, you will need to cite passages from the assigned articles and novel. Do not forget that it is important to give credit to the author when you cite her or his words or ideas. Doing otherwise constitutes plagiarism and is a serious offense for which there are serious consequences. Always make it clear where your reader can find the author’s words or ideas that you reference by including page numbers within parenthesis. Your citation will take one of several forms:

If, for example, one were **paraphrasing** the argument made by Annette Rottenberg at the beginning of the third chapter of her book, one might write: *Rottenberg argues that there are three types of claims: fact, value, and policy (A19)*. Because her exact words are not used, no quotation marks are required. If, however, one were to include a **short passage** of her actual

words, quotation marks would become necessary. For example, one might write: *Rottenberg argues that claims “often appear as thesis statements” and “can be classified as claims of fact, claims of value, and claims of policy” (A19)*. Notice that the parenthetical page number reference follows the quotation and precedes the period. This is important. Do not put the page number reference within the quotation marks or the period in any place other than after the page number reference. For example, do not write: “...*claims of policy (A19)*”. or “...*claims of policy. (A19)*” or “...*claims of policy*”. (A19) If a reference you are making comes from more than one page, identify all the pages it comes from. For example, (22-23) or (22, 33-44). This last example suggests that evidence can be found on page 22 and on pages 33 through 44. One final option for citing an author (but one that should be used sparingly) is to include a **longer excerpt**. Always opt for this method if the excerpt requires more than four or five lines of text to display within your paper. This method does not use quotation marks and the excerpt is placed in its own fully-indented paragraph. For example,

this is such a paragraph. There is quite a lot of text being excerpted here so rather than streaming the quotation into a “normal” paragraph using quotation marks, the excerpt is instead separated into its own paragraph, which includes only the excerpt itself. These types of paragraphs use the same indent (one-half inch) as others, but every line is indented, not just the first one. Furthermore, the lines of these “excerpt style” paragraphs are single-spaced, not double-spaced. Remember that because this style of paragraph signals readers that text is being directly quoted, do not add your own words within it, though you can substitute text if absolutely necessary by using brackets, as is explained below. Leave introductory and concluding remarks to the preceding or following paragraph. Notice that between this paragraph and that which precedes and follows it, there is only *one* blank line. The other thing to take notice of is that the parenthetical page number reference (in this example, the hypothetical page 123), which is still required, and which will always be the last element of the paragraph, *follows* rather than precedes the final period of the last sentence in the paragraph. Once again, there are three things to remember about these longer excerpt-type paragraphs: no quotation marks are used unless they are in the source itself, the paragraph is single-spaced, and the parenthetical page number reference follows the last sentence (and its period) rather than being incorporated into the sentence. (123)

Then, afterward, just continue with your essay either with an indented line (if you are beginning a new thought, i.e., starting a new paragraph) or with a fully left-aligned line (if the paragraph in which your passage was introduced is still in progress, as is the case here). Although you are not required to do so, you might also consider using excerpt-style paragraphs even for small passages, especially if such a passage includes a quotation mark *within the source*. Please also realize that the example sentences/passages which were formatted above using italics were offered in that manner for purposes of clarity only. When you cite another author's work, you should do so using regular (sometimes called roman) mode, not italics.

There are two final rules about using the words of another author that you are required to follow. First, if you choose to eliminate any words from within any excerpt that you introduce into your essay, use ellipses dots. For example, if an author said *one fine morning a farmer, tired but determined, went out into his field to begin a hard day's work* and one wished to say more simply that "a farmer...went out into his field," the ellipses dots would be necessary to signify that some words were eliminated from *within* the cited passage. Ellipses dots are **not** necessary (in fact, you should refrain from using them) at the beginning or ending of quotations (that is, for material from *without* the cited passage). For example, "...a farmer, tired but determined, went out..." is wrong. Proper citation for that passage is "a farmer, tired but determined, went out." Second, it is permissible to *slightly* alter an author's words if it is required for grammatical or clarification purposes. For example, rather than writing: *Natalie Zemon Davis argues that " 'hot anger' does not serve as a sufficient excuse for pardoning, neither for the prince of Verona nor, for that matter, for the English law, which was narrower in its definition of excusable homicide than the French" (74)*, one might instead write: *According to Natalie Zemon Davis, " 'hot anger' [did] not serve as a sufficient excuse for pardoning...the prince of*

Verona...[nor]...English law" (74). Notice that substituted words were enclosed in brackets and that it is possible to combine the use of substituted and eliminated text when the situation warrants it.

There is one last item to note about the formatting of your papers: all paragraphs, whether "normal" or "excerpt" style, should break across pages without regard to widow and orphan concerns; that is, do not bother with keeping a minimum number of lines of any particular paragraph together on any one page. In order to make this happen, ensure that you turn **off** your word processor's option for managing more sophisticated page break conditions. In Microsoft Word, choose **FORMAT > PARAGRAPH** from the menu, then select the **LINE AND PAGE BREAKS** tab, then **unselect** all four options: **WIDOW/ORPHAN CONTROL**, **KEEP LINES TOGETHER**, **KEEP WITH NEXT**, and **PAGE BREAK BEFORE**.

There is further information about proper citation format on pages A85-A86 in the Muir 40 Reader (Spring & Fall 2005/Winter 2006 edition), which you should review.