

Style Sheet for Academic Writing

This style sheet provides you with guidelines for the formal setup of research papers and essays when submitted to our chair. It is largely based on the *MLA Handbook*, 9th ed. and focuses on basic formal requirements and gives extensive examples. Further information can be found in the *MLA Handbook*, or on the MLA section of the [Purdue Online Writing Lab](#), one of which should be consulted whenever issues arise **that have not been addressed** by this style sheet. For pointers regarding structure and content, please consult the corresponding [“Guide Lines for Academic Writing.”](#) Form and content both need to be considered in order to write successfully. Pay close attention to both aspects. You may also want to revisit other materials on Academic Skills, e.g., from your introductory courses.

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1. General Format

Set **top, bottom, and left margins to 2.5 cm, and the right to 4 cm.** Depending on if/how you bind your work, you may need to leave a larger left margin so the text is not obscured. **Indent** the first word of any paragraph an additional **1.25 cm**, unless a headline precedes it. Choose a font and a size that is easily readable (e.g., Times New Roman or Calibri, 12 pt). Use full **justification** (*Blocksatz*) and **1.5-line spacing** throughout the entire document, including quotations but excluding footnotes. Print on only one side of the paper. Put your last name and the page number in the upper right-hand corner of every page except the first (this style sheet is formatted accordingly). This format also applies to **BA and MA theses.**

2. Header and Title Page

Essays do not require a title page but need a header that states the name of the university, the institute, the course name and the term, the lecturer, your name, your matriculation number, and the date of submission. Place your header in the upper left-hand corner of the first page. Centre your title and write it in standard capitalization.

Modulararbeiten/research papers require a title page, on which you include the name of the university, the institute, the course name and the term, the lecturer, the title of your paper, the submission date, your name, your matriculation number, and your university email address (cf. the model cover sheet below). Do *not* put the university's emblem on the title page, or on your essay.

The title should suggest the topic and thesis of your paper. In essays, it heads the first page. In longer research papers/Modulararbeiten, it only appears on the cover sheet.

3. Table of Contents

Essays do not need a table of contents. **Modulararbeiten**/research papers **require one.** The table of contents is located directly after the title page and contains the structure of the paper, including all chapter and subchapter titles and the corresponding page numbers. It thus reflects the structure of your argument. Your list of works cited should be treated as a chapter and be listed as well; the table of contents itself, however, should neither be listed nor numbered.

4. Structure of Chapters

Your work should be structured logically; for **Modulararbeiten**/longer papers, this means including chapters and subchapters. They should represent cohesive argumentative entities that form logical steps in your argument. Be sure to use a consistent style. Use subchapters only when you have at least two.

Example:

2. Huck's Spaces

2.1 "Sivilization" in the Douglas Household

2.2 The Old South

2.2.1 Geographical Dimensions

2.2.2 Political Dimensions

2.3 The Mississippi River

5. Page Numbers

Number all pages of your paper consecutively, beginning on the first page of your text (excluding title page and table of contents). Place page numbers in the upper right-hand corner, next to your last name or matriculation number.

6. Punctuation

Remember that you are writing your paper in English; use proper punctuation. Use quotation marks (" ") for simple quotes, as well as for the titles of essays, chapters, short stories, and poems. Use single quotation marks (‘ ’) for quotes within quotes. Full stops and commas are placed inside quotation marks; semicolons and colons are placed outside quotation marks. Use Oxford punctuation (i.e., include a comma before the final conjunction in a list of three or more items). Generally, parenthetical citations should not be preceded by punctuation, except in the case of indented quotations (see the examples in section nine for clarification).

7. Footnotes

Do not use footnotes for literary references; use parenthetical documentation to refer to the sources of your quotes (see section nine). Use footnotes sparingly and only for essential information. Use full justification and **1-line spacing**.

8. Italics

Use italics for words and letters when you refer to them as a term (e.g., “Shaw spelled *Shakespeare* without the final *e*”), for foreign words, for terms you are about to define, for titles of longer works (books, plays, and magazines), and, sparingly, for emphasis.

9. Quotations

All quotations, whether direct or indirect, need to be marked as such and be cited correctly. Anything else is plagiarism and will be treated accordingly (see [University of Potsdam, Guidelines on Academic Integrity](#)). The following section explains how to include references and provides examples.

Incorporate a **direct quote** into your text by using quotation marks. You may use entire sentences or just single words or phrases as part of your own sentence. Be sure to reproduce the original source exactly and do not make any changes, unless you mark these changes clearly (see below). By contrast, an **indirect quote** is a paraphrase or a summary of someone else’s thought. Provide the necessary information about the incorporated material: insert a brief parenthetical citation (most commonly, the author’s last name) after using or referring to someone else’s words or ideas, followed by information about the quote’s location (most commonly, the page number). Place the parenthesis as closely as possible to the material you quoted. Any material you drew on must be listed in the list of works cited (see section 9). The parenthetical citation must correspond to the first word in the respective entry in the **Works Cited** section. Usually this means giving **the author’s name and the page number** (LastName 123).

For **works without authors**, use the first words from the entry in the Works Cited (see section 10), such as (an abbreviated version of) the title, the producer, or the editor (*Title* 123). If you have **two authors** with the same last name, add the first initial to your parenthetical reference, or if that is shared as well, add the full first name (LastName X 123). If the work has **two authors**, list both of them (FirstLastname and SecondLastName 123). If it has **more than two authors**, use the first author and then *et al.* (FirstLastName *et al.* 123). If you quote **multiple works by the same author**, include a shortened version of the title (LastName, “Shortened Title” or *Shortened Title* 123). If the same information is found in multiple works, separate the references with a semicolon (LastNameA 123; LastNameB 123). If the **author’s name is mentioned in the sentence**, only provide the page number(s) in the parenthesis (123).

If the author's name is mentioned in the sentence and you quote from multiple works by this author, provide the shortened title and page number ("Shortened Title" or *Shortened Title* 123).

If you omit words from a quotation, use an ellipsis (three periods) . . . with a space between each and after the last. If you add words to a quote for clarification or context, enclose them in brackets [] within the quote. If a quote **extends to more than four lines**, begin a new line and indent the entire quote an additional 1.25 cm. In this case you do not use quotation marks. If your quote is in **a language other than English**, add a translation. Distinguish between translation and original by placing one of them in parentheses, or in a footnote; mark it as your own (my trans.; orig.: "markiere es als deine eigene" 123) or simply cite a translated text. Although you should always try to use primary sources, this is not always possible. If you **quote a quote**, give the original author and add your source as *qtd in* (LastNameOriginal, *qtd. in* LastNameYourSource 123).

Examples:

Original:

The most merciful thing in the world, I think, is the inability of the human mind to correlate all its contents. We live on a placid island of ignorance in the midst of black seas of infinity, and it was not meant that we should voyage far. The sciences, each straining in its own direction, have hitherto harmed us little; but some day the piecing together of dissociated knowledge will open up such terrifying vistas of reality, and of our frightful position therein, that we shall either go mad from the revelation or flee from the deadly light into the peace and safety of a new dark age.

Direct quote [with an addition]:

"The most merciful thing in the world [according to the narrator] is the inability of the human mind to correlate all its contents" (Lovecraft 139).

Direct quote within a sentence:

The narrator assures his readers that "we live on a placid island of ignorance," and that "it was not meant that we should voyage far" (Lovecraft 139).

Indirect quote:

The narrator opens the story by assuring the reader that ignorance is bliss (Lovecraft 139).

Author's name in the text:

Lovecraft's story opens up by assuring the reader that ignorance is bliss (139).

Omission from within a sentence:

"We live on a placid island of ignorance . . . and it was not meant that we should voyage far" (Lovecraft 139).

Omission coinciding with the end of a sentence:

“We live on a placid island of ignorance The sciences, each straining in its own direction, have hitherto harmed us little” (Lovecraft 139)

Quote extending four lines (indent, do not use quotation marks):

The narrator assures the reader that true knowledge of the world would be most horrifying:

The most merciful thing in the world, I think, is the inability of the human mind to correlate all its contents. We live on a placid island of ignorance in the midst of black seas of infinity, and it was not meant that we should voyage far. The sciences, each straining in its own direction, have hitherto harmed us little; but some day the piecing together of dissociated knowledge will open up such terrifying vistas of reality, and of our frightful position therein, that we shall either go mad from the revelation or flee from the deadly light into the peace and safety of a new dark age. (Lovecraft 139)

Thus, the text is assumed to be a contribution to the scientific discourse of the time.

Information is in multiple sources:

Utopian literature has frequently been compared to a form of experimentation or some kind of laboratory (Moylan 3; Ahmad 12).

Language other than English:

Poblete observes “a relatively contradictory relationship between the forms of social production of the Latino in general in the United States and the more specific forms in which that identity is produced in the literary field” (my transl.; orig.: “hay una relacion relativamente contradictoria entre las formas de produccion social de lo latino general en los Estados Unidos y las formas mas especificas en que esa identidad es producida en el campo de lo literario” 167).

He proclaims one of the author’s core convictions “dass *Gott todt* is” (translates to: “that God is dead”; Nietzsche, ch. 2).

Quote as found in another work:

Homi Bhabha argues that W.E.B. Du Bois’s fiction contributes to the understanding of “the importance of the ‘counterfactual’ in the realm of political discourse and the desire for freedom” (qtd. in Ahmad 129).

If you quote a **dialogue** from a **drama**, indent 1.25 cm and write the character’s name in capital letters followed by a period (“HAMLET.”), then start the quotation. (For monologue, you do not need to do this). If a character’s speech extends one line, indent the following lines by an additional 0.6 cm. When the dialogue shifts to another character, start a new indented line. Quote stage directions like any other text, or, if they interrupt the flow of the conversation, omit them by treating them like an ellipsis. The location can either be given as the page number or as the Act and Scene, and Line numbers, if this information is available (LastName 1.2.3) (LastName; act 19). If you quote **verse** (from a poem or within a play), up to three lines can be quoted within the usual format. The end of a line is indicated by a slash. If four or more lines are included at once, the entire quote needs to be indented 1.25 cm; no

quotation marks are used, and the original lines are preserved. If the publication offers line numbers or stanzas, provide them; otherwise, use page numbers. If you are quoting **film** or **recordings**, include the relevant time stamp.

Examples:

Dialogue with page number:

LINDA. *Buttoning up his jacket as he unbuttons it.* All told, about two hundred dollars would carry us, dear. But that includes the last payment on the mortgage. After this payment, Willy, the house belongs to us.

WILLY. It's twenty-five years! (Miller 245)

Monologue (in verse) with Act/Scene/line number:

Richard freely announces which role he will play: "And therefore, since I cannot prove a lover / To entertain these fair well-spoken days, / I am determined to prove a villain / And hate the idle pleasures of these days" (Shakespeare I.i 28–31).

Verse not extending three lines:

Dickinson writes: "The Carriage held but just Ourselves- / and Immortality" (Dickinson 3-4).

Quotation extending three lines:

Because I could not stop for Death
He kindly stopped for me
The Carriage held but just Ourselves
And Immortality. (Dickinson 1-4)

From a movie:

In the movie, this change of tone is resolved by Richard giving the first part of the speech in public and reciting the final lines of his opening monologue as a soliloquy in the bathroom. In there, he is first talking to himself, then addresses the audience via the camera (Loncraine 00:09:30 - 00:12:20).

A recording:

Considering the neuroscientific discourse on human behavior, the lecture argues that "we are all wind-ups" (Brown 00:18:40).

Song lyrics:

Her songs draw on multiple subaltern identities, from the USA and the UK: "Suki Zuki / I'm coming in the Cherokee Gasoline / There's steam on the window screen" (M.I.A. 01:00).

There are multiple instances when you have **no page numbers**. Different **e-book** devices and **online sources** employ different systems to indicate location. For this reason, if available, use sources with page numbers. If that is not possible, use a reference for the location that is fixed and included in the document, such as chapters, paragraphs, etc. The

same goes for **internet documents**. If, for example, the homepage has different sections (for example, entries, chapters, sections), give these as locations.

Examples:

Quotation from an e-book with chapters:

The narrator Ifemelu also uses her blog to critically portray the life of her friends back home in Nigeria (Adichie, ch. 50).

Quotation from an online entry without page numbers:

Thus, she “offers no solutions to problems, nor does she simplify the complex realities of the past or present” (“Morrison”).

10. Works Cited

It is absolutely crucial to include a list of works cited. This is not a research bibliography; list only the works you actually cited in your text. Any source information that you provide in your work must correspond to the source information on the Works Cited page: the signal word you provide in the parenthetical citation (most likely the author’s last name) must be the first word of the corresponding entry in the Works Cited.

Keep the margins consistent throughout your paper. List your works in alphabetical order and begin each entry at the left margin. Indent all subsequent lines by 1.25 cm (*Sondereinzug: Hängend*). Note that you should capitalize the first and all principal words in the publication’s title and subtitle. Page numbers with three or more digits can be abbreviated by giving only the last two digits if those are the only ones that need to be altered (123-45). If a source has one or two authors or editors, name them; if it has more, name only the first and then put *et al.* For online sources that do not have a DOI or stable URL and are likely to change over time, include the date you accessed the material.

Examples:

Book by a single author:

Nixon, Rob. *Slow Violence and the Environmentalism of the Poor*. Harvard UP, 2013.

Two books by the same author:

Morrison, Toni. *Beloved*. Picador, 1987.

---. *Song of Solomon*. Plume, 1987.

Including the year of first publication:

Silko, Leslie Marmon. *Ceremony*. 1977. Penguin, 1986.

Author using a pseudonym (and including the year of first publication):

Twain, Mark [Samuel Langhorne Clemens]. *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*. 1884. Penguin, 1959.

Anthologies or Compilations:

Claeys, Gregory, editor. *The Cambridge Companion to Utopian Literature*. Cambridge UP, 2010.

Short Story/Poem/Essay/Article/Chapter in an Anthology or Collection:

Dunbar, Paul Laurence. "A Prayer." 1896. *The Wiley Blackwell Anthology of African American Literature*, edited by Andrew Jarrett Gene, vol. 1 (1746–1920), Blackwell, 2014, p. 872.

Gilman, Charlotte Perkins. "The Yellow Wallpaper." 1892. *The Norton Anthology of American Literature*, edited by Nina Baym et al., 3rd ed., vol. 2, Norton, 1989, pp. 649–60.

Lovecraft, H.P. "The Call of Cthulhu." 1926. *The Call of Cthulhu and Other Weird Stories*, edited by S.T. Joshi, Penguin Books, 1999, pp. 139–70.

Article in a Scholarly Journal:

Northover, Alan. "Strangers in Strange Worlds: Margaret Atwood's MaddAddam Trilogy." *Journal of Literary Studies*, vol. 33, no. 1, 2017, pp. 121–37.

Article from a Scholarly Journal from an Online Database (such as JSTOR/Muse):

Include either the DOI or a stable URL.

Crick, Robert Alan. "Mark Twain, Fenimore Cooper, and Batman." *The English Journal*, vol. 81, no. 5, 1992, pp. 72–74. *JSTOR*, doi: 10.2307/819899.

Lavigne, C. "'I'm Batman' (and You Can Be Too): Gender and Constrictive Play in the Arkham Game Series." *Cinema Journal*, vol. 55, no. 1, 2015, pp. 133–41. *Project Muse*, muse.jhu.edu/article/595611.

Poblete, Juan. "Literatura, Mercado y Nación: La Literatura Latina en los Estados Unidos." *Revista De Crítica Literaria Latinoamericana*, vol. 35, no. 69, 2009, pp. 167–192. *JSTOR*, [jstor.org/stable/27944649](https://www.jstor.org/stable/27944649).

Online Journal:

Baudemann, Kristina. "Seeds of a Future World: Science and Technology in the Digital Art of Elizabeth LaPensée." *Current Objectives of Postgraduate American Studies*, vol. 18, no. 1, copas.uni-regensburg.de/article/view/272. Accessed 10 Jan. 2026.

Newspaper Article:

Krugman, Andrew. "Fear of Eating." *New York Times*, 21 May 2007, late ed., p. A1.

Webpages: General Form

Please note that especially online sources that are not peer reviewed or not released in an academic context, should be treated with caution. Include the name of the author, and/or the institution behind the source, the title of the entry and the overall website which contains it, the date/year it was published, the online address, as well as the date it was accessed.

Examples:

Kathy Jetñil-Kijiner. "New Year, New Monsters, New Poems." *Kathy Jetñil-Kijiner*, 25 Jan. 2018, <https://www.kathyjetnilkijiner.com/new-year-new-monsters-and-new-poems/>. Accessed 13 Jan. 2026.

Yale University Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, editor. *America and the Utopian Dream*. Yale University, 2006, brbl-archive.library.yale.edu/exhibitions/utopia/index.html. Accessed 10 Jan 2026.

Movie:

Richard III. Directed by Richard Loncraine, First Look International, 1995.

OR, if you are discussing one person's specific contribution (such as the director, or an actor), you give them in place of the author:

Loncraine, Richard, director. *Richard III*. First Look International, 1995.

Series:

Heller, Bruno, creator. "Penguin's Umbrella." *Gotham*, season 2, episode 7, Fox, 3 November 2014.

"Valar Morghulis." *Game of Thrones*, season 2, episode 10, HBO, 3 June 2012.

Song:

The Beatles. "Across the Universe." *No One's Gonna Change Our World*, Regal Starline, 1969.

Beyoncé. "Single Ladies." *I Am ... Sasha Fierce*, Columbia, 2008.

(Alternatively, cf. 'online video')

Online video:

Coldmirror. "Harry Potter und ein Stein." 2006. *YouTube*, uploaded by Synchronist der Dritte, 20 November 2013, youtube.com/watch?v=ZPY7aWogLw. Accessed 13 Jan. 2026.

Online Lecture:

Robert Heinze. "Between Nationalism and Universalism." *Panopto*, 18 Nov. 2025, <https://videoup.uni-potsdam.de/Panopto/Pages/Viewer.aspx?id=0c68f45e-5892-42ee-b2a2-b3af0163593f>. Accessed 08 Apr. 2026.

Huey, Aaron. "America's Native Prisoners of War." *TED Talks*, September 2010, https://www.ted.com/talks/aaron_huey_america_s_native_prisoners_of_war. Accessed 10 Jan. 2026.

Video Game:

Don't Starve. Klei Entertainment, 2013.

If focusing on a specific contributor (designer), list first:

McMillen, Edmund, designer. *Don't Starve*. Klei Entertainment, 2013.

Podcast (single episode and entire podcast series):

Gladwell, Malcolm. "The Lady Vanishes." *Revisionist History*, season 3, episode 5, Pushkin Industries, 2016. Accessed 13 Jan. 2026.

Revisionist History. Pushkin Industries, 2016. Accessed 13 Jan. 2026.

Social Media (Tweets, Facebook posts, Instagram posts, TikTok videos):

@NASAPersever. "Perseverance will get you anywhere." *X*, 18 Feb. 2021, x.com/NASA/status/1362506126839848961. Accessed 08 Apr. 2026.

NASA. "Hello, Moon." *Instagram*, 07 Apr. 2026, <https://www.instagram.com/p/DW1nTDiDvnF/>. Accessed 08 Apr. 2026.

If you use software to generate your List of Works Cited (such as EndNote, Citavi, Word), double-check the style of citation, capitalizations, completeness of the list of Works Cited, and correct classification of the works. Our department requires that you sign a Statement of Academic Integrity stating that the work was produced by yourself. You can find the template on the homepage of the department for English Language Education: (["Plagiarism Statement"](#))

Sample Cover Sheet

Universität Potsdam
Institut für Anglistik und Amerikanistik
Aufbaumodul Amerikanische Literatur und Kultur
“College Professors as Action Heroes”
Prof. Dr. Robert Langdon
Summer Semester 2017

“Pilgrims in an Unholy Land”:
The Imperial Interventions of Dr. Henry Walton Jones, Jr.

December 9th, 2017

Wednesday Addams

BA Englisch

13th Semester

Matr. No. 8675309

Sample List of Works Cited:

Works Cited

- Adichie, Chimamanda Ngozi. *Americanah*. Kindle edition, Fourth Estate, 2013.
- Ahmad, Dohra. *Landscapes of Hope: Anti-Colonial Utopianism in America*. Oxford UP, 2009.
- Dickinson, Emily. "Because I Could Not Stop for Death." *The Norton Anthology of American Literature*, edited by Jeanne Campbell Reesman and Arnold Krupat, 7th ed., vol. C, Norton, 2007, p. 86.
- Eckstein, Lars. "Recollecting Bones: The Remains of German-Australian Colonial Entanglements." *Postcolonial Studies*, vol. 21, 2018, pp. 6-19.
- Loncraine, Richard, director. *Richard III*. First Look International, 1995.
- Lovecraft, H.P. "The Call of Cthulhu." 1926. *The Call of Cthulhu and Other Weird Stories*, edited by S.T. Joshi, Penguin Books, 1999, pp. 139–70.
- M.I.A. "Bad Girls." 2012. *YouTube*, uploaded by Noisey, 2 Feb. 2012, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2uYs0gJD-LE>. Accessed 13 Jan. 2026.
- Miller, Arthur. *Death of a Salesman*. 1949, Penguin, 1998.
- "Morrison, Toni." *The Concise Oxford Companion to African American Literature*, edited by William L. Andrews et al., Online edition, Oxford UP, 2002.
- Moylan, Tom. *Demand the Impossible: Science Fiction and the Utopian Imagination*. 1986. Peter Lang, 2014.
- Nietzsche, Friedrich. *Also Sprach Zarathustra: Ein Buch für Alle und Keinen*. 1883. *Nietzsche Source* Digital Critical Edition, nietzschesource.org/#eKGWB/Za-I. Accessed 10 Jan. 2026.
- Robert Heinze. "Between Nationalism and Universalism." *Panopto*, 18 Nov. 2025, <https://videoup.uni-potsdam.de/Panopto/Pages/Viewer.aspx?id=0c68f45e-5892-42ee-b2a2-b3af0163593f>. Accessed 08 Apr. 2026.
- Schwarz, Anja, and Andrew Hurley. "'The Greatest Son of our Heimat': Reading German Leichhardts Across the National Socialist Era." *Journal of Australian Studies*, vol. 39, no. 4, 2015, pp. 529-45.
- Shakespeare, William. *Richard III*. 1597. Edited by James R. Siemon, 3rd ed., Bloomsbury, 2009. The Arden Shakespeare.
- Waller, Nicole, and Gerold Seldmayr, editors. *Politics in Fantasy Media. Essays on Ideology and Gender in Fiction, Film, Television and Games*. McFarland, 2014.
- Wiemann, Dirk. "David Mitchell, *Cloud Atlas* (2004)." *Handbook of the English Novel, 1900 – 2015*, edited by Christoph Reinfandt. De Gruyter, 2017, pp. 500-19.