

## Basic Formatting Rules

- Research papers are always typed or word processed.
- Essays may be typed, word processed, or hand written in *black ink*.
- Use only 8 ½ x 11 inch white paper. If hand written, use lined paper with no jagged edges.
- Double-space your entire paper including quotations, Works Cited page, set-off quotations—in short the entire paper is double-spaced; never more and never less.
- Use 1 inch margins on the top, bottom, left, and right.
- Use 12 point print in a professional font such as Times New Roman.
- Create a header that includes your last name and numbers pages consecutively in the upper right-hand corner, one-half inch from the top and flush with the right margin. (Note: Your instructor may ask that you omit the number on your first page. Always follow his/her wishes.)
- Paragraphs should be indented ½ inch.
- Set-off or offset quotations should be indented an inch from the left margin.
- Use either underlining or *italics* in your paper to indicate titles of books. Titles that are normally in quotation marks should not be italicized. Note: Most sources consider underlining to be better than italicizing. Whichever you use, use it consistently throughout. Do not use underlining in some places and italics in others.
- Staple your completed paper in the top left corner. Do not use a folder or binder unless instructed to do so by your teacher.
- Tables should be labeled “Table,” given a number, and captioned flush to the left-hand margin on the lines above the table. Materials such as photographs, images, charts, and drawings should be labeled “Figure” and be properly numbered and captioned on the lines following the figure. (See labeling of tables and figures in this booklet.)

## Your First Page

- Do not make a title page for your paper unless specifically instructed to do so.
- In the top left corner of the first page only, enter your full name, instructor’s name, period number, and the date. This information, like the entire paper, should be double-spaced.
- Create a header that includes your last name and numbers all pages consecutively in the upper right-hand corner, one-half inch from the top and flush with the right margin. (Note: Your instructor may ask that you omit the number on your first page. Always follow his/her wishes.)
- If you have a title for your paper, center the title on the line below the header. Do not bold, italicize, underline, or place the title in quotation marks. Capitalize the first letter of each significant word in the title. You may use a question mark or exclamation point after the title if appropriate, but never a period. Double-space, indent and begin your paper. Do not skip extra spaces between paragraphs; remember, the entire paper is double-spaced.