

## MLA Guidelines for Citing Online Sources

### UWF Writing Lab

created by Erin Pendleton according to  
MLA Handbook, 5<sup>th</sup> Edition

#### Material with a URL

In Works Cited: Author. "Title of Article." Printed Source info. Database or Online Source. Date of access <URL>.

Example: Fox, Justin. "What in the World Happened to Economics?"  
Fortune 15 Mar. 1999: 20-102. ABI/INFORM Global. 2 Mar.  
1999. <<http://www.uni.com/proquest/>>.

NOTE 1: Although the MLA Handbook does not say to underline URLs, many systems do so automatically.

- 2: Often, online sources provide no author or print-based publication info, usually because none exists. In these cases, leave out whatever is not available to you, and move on to the next item. Most sources will look like this:

"Are School Vouchers Constitutional?" National Center for Policy Analysis: Idea House. 25 Sept. 1999. <<http://www.ncpa.org/pi/edu/July98e.htm>>.

- 3: You do not always have to bring down the entire URL. You may break it at a slash mark (/), not at a dot (.).

Example:

"Virtual Environment for Submarine Ship Handling Training." NAWC.  
19 Sept. 1999, <<http://www.govexec.com/tech/articles/1096info.htm>>.

#### Within the text

Follow normal MLA guidelines (Author's last name, page number). The problem is that you probably won't have real page numbers—only those indicating how many pages you've printed. Since page numbers may vary with different printers, simply do not give any page numbers at all.

If the work has no known author, use a major word in the articles' title: ("Monkeys" 5).

If the work has no known author or article title, use the Web source: (NWAC 3).

If the work has no identifying information beyond the URL, give the URL.

NOTICE THAT A COMMA DOES NOT COME BEFORE THE PAGE NUMBER!

#### E-mail

In Works Cited: Writer's Name: "Subject Line." Description of message including recipient's name. Date of Message.

Example: Boyle, Anthony T. "Re: Utopia." E-mail to Daniel J. Cahill. 21 June 1997.

NOTE: If the subject line is blank, skip that part in the citation.

Within the text

If you're using an e-mail communication in your paper, the writer should be someone of relative authority, not your friend or your brother. Therefore, the writer should be important enough to introduce in your text:

In a personal e-mail, Second Lieutenant Brian Turner of the United States Marine Corps states, "Marines go through the toughest physical conditioning of all the military branches. Oo-rah!"

**That's about it!**

If you have information obtained from a CD-ROM, online posting, software program, or some other technologically advanced apparatus, consult the 5<sup>th</sup> edition of the MLA Manual for the appropriate citation methods. The library has it on reserve, and the Writing Lab keeps a copy for your perusal. You may also ask a lab assistant to help you. In addition, MLA maintains a Web site at <[http://www.mla.org/set\\_stl.htm](http://www.mla.org/set_stl.htm)>.