Your Full Name **10.**

Professor’s Name

Course Name

8 September 2016

**11.**  Title: Always Centered

Paragraph one of your essay is called the introduction, and it should starts with a sentence that hooks the reader. The rest of your introduction sets the boundaries of discussion as well as the tone (funny, serious, satirical, etc.) for the paper. Background information should be brought up. Define terms, summarize ideas, state opinions, and/or introduce sources you will discuss in detail is in the body paragraphs. Close the introduction with your clear, carefully worded argument statement. This is called the thesis statement. It is typically the last sentence of the introduction and sets up what you are working to prove, show, or explain in the essay.

Each body paragraph should have a controlling idea. Make sure the purpose of each paragraph is clear for readers by stating the topic of discussion within the first few sentences. We call this a topic sentence. Limit each paragraph to one topic of discussion. If using a quote, personal experience, or any other type of evidence, explain how it relates to your argument (i.e. thesis). In other words, analyze the evidence, and discuss how it proves your point. This pattern will help your readers follow what the essay is saying. Write as many body paragraphs as needed to make the argument convincing.

The last paragraph of the essay is your conclusion. Using different words, reaffirm the argument within the proof you used, and close with a conclusion strategy based on the tone and purpose of the essay. Do not introduce new information in the conclusion though you might bring in a relevant quote or example. See other Writing Center handouts for further assistance on academic essay writing.

**What is MLA format?**

The Modern Language Association, or MLA, is the association that gives us this very specific format of presenting college essays. Most every English class at VVC requires that students adapt some form of MLA style to their papers. Here is a brief checklist for formatting your essay in standard MLA style. Ask about our more detailed step-by-step guide, which is provided separately.

**How do I set up my essay for MLA format?**

1. Open a new Word document. You may have to select the “Blank Document” option.
2. Set the font style to “Times New Roman”.
3. Set the font size to “12” for the whole document.
4. Set the line spacing to “Double” in the paragraph menu.
5. Check the box that says “Do not add extra space between paragraphs of the same style” in the paragraph menu.
6. Set the margins to “Normal” or one inch all the way around the page.
7. Create a running header with the “Page Number” option.
8. Manually type your last name and a space before the page number. Change the running header font to size “12” and the style to “Times New Roman.” Then, close the header field.
9. Set the page to left alignment.
10. Set up a full header with your name, the instructor’s last name, the class, and the due date in this order: Day Month Year. No commas are needed.
11. Center your title. Capitalize all the key words. No bolding, underlining, or italicizing your title. The title should look the same as the rest of your essay.
12. Set the page back to left alignment. Indent all of your paragraphs one half inch by pushing the “Tab” button on the keyboard once or by using the indent command on the ruler.

The first page of an MLA formatted essay example is on the reverse side of this document. There is no cover page for this style.