# Brief Look at Upcoming Changes in MLA and APA Documentation Guidelines

The most significant change is that print is no longer considered the default medium of information, the consequence of which is "that the medium of publication should be included in each works cited entry."

- This transition is happening in colleges across the country, what does this mean to you, your department and your students?
- The library will continue to assist student in the preparation of accurate citations utilizing whatever format their teachers require, but handouts and links we create will be to the updated MLA style starting in summer 2009.
- Library staff will offer workshops in the fall, to students and to faculty, in the use of the new style.

In Summer 2008, the Modern Language Association released its third edition of the MLA Style Manual and Guide to Scholarly Publishing, which publicly unveiled modifications to MLA Style for the upcoming year. These changes go into effect April 2009 with the release of *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers (7th edition)*. General paper formatting (margins, headings, etc.) and in-text citations will remain the same, but all Works Cited style entries will be different from the 6th edition guidelines.

Here's how the **Online Writing Lab at Purdue University** summarizes the 2009 MLA Update:

- **No More Underlining!** Underlining is no more. MLA now recommends italicizing titles of independently published works (books, periodicals, films, etc).
- **No More URLs!** While website entries will still include authors, article names, and website names, when available, MLA no longer requires URLs. Writers are, however, encouraged to provide a URL if the citation information does not lead readers to easily find the source.
- **Continuous Pagination? Who Cares?** You no longer have to worry about whether scholarly publications employ continuous pagination or not. For all such entries, both volume and issue numbers are required, regardless of pagination.
- **Publication Medium.** Every entry receives a medium of publication marker. Most entries will be listed as Print or Web, but other possibilities include Performance, DVD, or TV. Most of these markers will appear at the end of entries; however, markers for Web sources are followed by the date of access.
- **New Abbreviations.** Many web source entries now require a publisher name, a date of publication, and/or page numbers. When no publisher name appears on the website, write N.p. for no publisher given. When sites omit a date of publication, write n.d. for no date. For online journals that appear only online (no print version) or on databases that do not provide pagination, write n. pag. for no pagination.

(Excerpts from an email from SBCC Librarian Elizabeth Bowman, April 13, 2009.)
The Sixth Edition of the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* will be released on July 1, 2009.

With millions of copies sold, the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* is the style manual of choice for writers, editors, students, educators, and professionals in psychology, sociology, business, economics, nursing, social work, and justice administration, and other disciplines in which effective communication with words and data is fundamental.

In addition to providing clear guidance on grammar, the mechanics of writing, and APA Style, the *Publication Manual* offers an authoritative and easy-to-use reference and citation system and comprehensive coverage of the treatment of numbers, metrification, statistical and mathematical data, tables, and figures for use in writing, reports, or presentations.

The fifth edition has been revised and updated to include:

- The latest guidelines and examples for referencing electronic and online sources
- New and revised guidelines for submitting papers electronically
- Improved guidelines for avoiding plagiarism
- Simplified formatting guidelines for writers using up-to-date word-processing software
- All new guidelines for presenting case studies
- Improved guidelines for the construction of tables
- Updates on copyright and permissions issues for writers
- New reference examples for audiovisual media and patents
- An expanded and improved index for quick and easy access

Writers, scholars, and professionals will also find:

- New guidelines on how to choose text, tables, or figures to present data
- Guidelines for writing cover letters for submitting articles for publication, plus a sample letter
- Expanded guidelines on the retention of raw data
- New advice on establishing written agreements for the use of shared data
- New information on the responsibilities of co-authors

New and experienced readers alike will find the fifth edition a complete resource for writing, presenting, or publishing with clarity and persuasiveness.

(Retrieved from [http://books.apa.org/books.cfm?id=4200061](http://books.apa.org/books.cfm?id=4200061) on April 28, 2009.)