

Document Design

Essays presented to your professors should be written according to a standard format: font, spacing, margins, headings, and page numbering are prescribed. The sample below illustrates these different features of a college-level essay. For more information, consult a college-level handbook such as *The Everyday Writer*, a reference of standard grammar, usage and documentation recommended by the English Department and the Integrative Studies program, or visit the Writing Center, 2nd floor, Library. The Writing Center posts walk-in hours each quarter. Watch for our schedule.

Sample First Page

The diagram shows a sample first page of an essay with several callouts and annotations:

- Top Margin:** A vertical double-headed arrow labeled "1" indicates a one-inch top margin.
- Header:** The text "Your Name" is followed by "Professor ____", "INST 105", and "4 September 2009".
- Title:** The text "Your Title" is centered. A callout box says "Center your title." Another callout box says "Use a standard font and size."
- Page Number:** The text "Name 1" is in the top right corner. A callout box says "Insert page number. Then double-click and add your last name, which will appear with the appropriate number on every page of your essay."
- Left Margin:** A horizontal double-headed arrow labeled "1" indicates a one-inch left margin. A callout box says "1" margins top and bottom, left and right".
- Right Margin:** A horizontal double-headed arrow labeled "1" indicates a one-inch right margin.
- Text:** The main text consists of three paragraphs. The first paragraph starts with "Academic writing follows certain conventions. The font, spacing, margins, and placement of headings and page numbers you select affect the appearance of your essay, which should be consistent from page to page and from paper to paper, and which should be appropriate to the assignment. Established rules dictate these matters of form to help make your essay clear and readable." The second paragraph starts with "Some rules apply to type font, spacing, and indenting. A standard font is the one used here, Times New Roman, and the font size is usually 12 pt. Margins should be one inch at the top, bottom, left, and right of each page. Essays should be double-spaced. When you begin a new paragraph, tab, or indent the first word five spaces." The third paragraph starts with "A major concern in college-level writing is how to incorporate and cite quotations. Carefully selected quotations demonstrate your knowledge of the text. For example, you will notice that in *Strange as this Weather Has Been*, many of the characters speak in the dialect of that region of Appalachia, and you might write: Bant, for instance, says, "I stepped out and let the screen snock shut behind me" (Pancake 153). A few words or a part of a sentence may be enough to illustrate your idea. You may want to use a longer quotation occasionally, but try not to overload your essay with quotations. Your ideas and analysis are most important."
- Bottom Margin:** A vertical double-headed arrow labeled "1" indicates a one-inch bottom margin.
- Bottom Callout:** A callout box says "Author's name and page of quotation in parentheses".