

# **JUMPSTART YOUR APA STYLE WRITING!**

\*Note: This guide is compiled from the student guidelines of the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*, 7<sup>th</sup> Edition.

## **Why is APA Style Important?**

- Scholarly writing allows for standardized participation in a field of inquiry. This means that as a student reads or writes about a topic that includes existing research, it is done in the predictable style of a given field. It is a professional way to write.
- When reviewing research documents, the reader may wish to view an article or other research item mentioned therein. References, citations, and citation strings allow a reader to identify and locate those items. They also acknowledge the work of other author(s) and researchers.
- Carefully constructed citations help avoid plagiarism and academic dishonesty.

## **Student Paper Basics**

An APA student manuscript should be:

- 12 point, Times New Roman font (or as directed by your professor)
- 1-inch margins
- Double-spaced
- Pages are numbered in the top right corner beginning on the title page. No punctuation is used.
- There is no running head on a student paper

## **Print Resources**

- The APA manual is available in the University Library to check-out and in the UWC for use within the room.

## **Online Resources**

- Style and Grammar Guidelines (<https://apastyle.apa.org/style-grammar-guidelines>)
- Purdue Owl Writing Lab APA ([https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research\\_and\\_citation/apa\\_style/apa\\_formatting\\_and\\_style\\_guide/general\\_format.html](https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/apa_style/apa_formatting_and_style_guide/general_format.html))
- APA Style Guide (<https://apastyle.apa.org/blog>)

## **Title Page**

A title page for a student paper should include the following:

- Title of paper (every major word is capitalized)
- Your name
- Institutional affiliation (Texas A&M University–Central Texas)
- Course number and name
- Instructor's name
- Assignment due date

\*Note: A student paper does not require an author's note.

## **Second Page**

The second page of an APA 7<sup>th</sup> student paper is for the abstract.

- The page number continues on the pages that follow the title.
- The word “Abstract” should be centered and boldface at the top of the page.
- The main paragraph of the abstract should **NOT** be indented.
- Abstracts do not contain citations.
- Following the abstract, there should be a selection of keywords that describe the important ideas or subjects for your paper.

## **What is an Abstract?**

An abstract quickly summarizes the main points of your paper and should not exceed 250 words. It is **NOT** an introduction. It is best to write an abstract after you have finished your paper. When writing your abstract, consider these questions: What is the problem? What has been done? What did you discover? What do the findings mean?

## **Headers**

There are 5 heading levels in APA

- Level One:
  - **Centered, Boldface, Title Case Heading**

Text starts a new paragraph.

- Level Two:
  - **Flush Left, Boldface, Title Case Heading**

Text starts a new paragraph.

- Level Three:
  - ***Flush Left, Boldface Italic, Title Case Heading***

Text starts a new paragraph.

- Level Four:
  - **Indented, Boldface Title Case Heading Ending With a Period.** Paragraph continues on the same line as the same paragraph.
- Level Five:
  - ***Indented, Boldface Italic, Title Case Heading Ending With a Period.*** Paragraph continues on the same line as the same paragraph.

**For examples, visit:**

[https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research\\_and\\_citation/apa\\_style/apa\\_formatting\\_and\\_style\\_guide/apa\\_headings\\_and\\_seriation.html](https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/apa_style/apa_formatting_and_style_guide/apa_headings_and_seriation.html)

## **APA In-Text Citation Basics**

- APA format follows the author-date method of in-text citation
  - Example: (Jones, 1998).
  - Example: Jones (1998) states...
- When directly quoting from another work, you should include the page number at the end of the parenthetical citation using “p.” for one page or “pp.” for multiple pages
  - Example: (Jones, 1998, p. 199). Or (Jones, 1998, pp. 199-201).
  - Note: APA style calls for rare use of direct quotations and prefers that you paraphrase.

- When referencing several works in one sentence, create a citation string.
  - Example: (Anders, 2012; Kael, 2015; Zey, 2019).

### **Reference List Basic Rules:**

- “References” should be bolded and centered at the top of the page
- Author’s first and middle names should be written as initials.
  - Example: “Smith, J. M.” (For up to twenty names, list last names and initials of each author, with commas separating author names. Add comma before last author’s name.)
- The reference list should be alphabetized by the last name of the first author of each work.
- All lines after the first line should be indented one-half from the left margin (also known as a hanging indent).
- For multiple articles by the same author/authors, list the entries in chronological order from earliest to most recent.
- Italicize titles of longer works
  - Example: books, edited collections, names of newspapers, and so on.
- Place publication year in parentheses. End with a period.
  - If there is no publication year, use “no date” (n.d.).
- Capitalize only the first letter of the first word of a sentence case title. For a two-part title, capitalize the first letter of the first word following the colon. Also capitalize proper nouns. Do not italicize. End with a period.
- Capitalize all major words in the journal name. Follow with a comma. Italicize the journal name (but not the comma after).
  - Major Words: Nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, pronouns, and all words of four letter or more are considered major words
  - Minor Words: Short (three letters or fewer) conjunctions, short prepositions, and all articles are considered minor words
- Italicize the volume number. Do not put a space between the volume number and the parentheses around the issue number.
  - Do not italicize the issue number or parentheses. Follow the parentheses with a comma.
  - If there is no issue number, add a comma after volume number.
- Include the article page range. Use an em dash; do not put spaces around the em dash. End with a period.
- Include a DOI for all works that have one. Do not put a period after the DOI.

### **Example References:**

#### ***Scholarly Journal Article***

James, C. L. (2007). Validating a computerized scoring system for assessing writing and placing students in composition courses. *Assessing Writing*, 11(3), 167-178. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.asw.2007.01.002>

***Book***

Huot, B. (2002). *(Re)Articulating writing assessment for teaching and learning*. Utah State University Press.

***Chapter in an Edited Collection***

Condon, W. (2006). Why less is not more: What we lose by letting a computer score writing samples. In P. Ericsson & R. H. Haswell (Eds), *Machine scoring of student essays: Truth and consequences* (pp. 211-220). Utah State University Press.

**If you need help, visit the University Writing Center!**  
**[tamuct.mywconline.com](http://tamuct.mywconline.com)**