

## RESEARCH PAPERS: WORD & APA FORMATTING

- There is no page limit. Papers are judged on effort and how well each section of the paper follows the following guidelines
- Margins = 1" all sides
- Font & size = times new roman, 12 point
- Spacing = double space, flush left
- Paragraphs = tab indent 0.5"
- Hanging indents = Reference Section, first line flush left, rest indented 0.5"

## APA STYLE

### Title

- First thing read during search (followed by abstract)
- Includes main topic and concepts
- Should include important variables (dv, iv)
- Recommended length = no more than 12 words
- Center, cap first letter each word (called "title case")

### Title Page (page 1 of manuscript)

- Center title, place in upper third of page
- Cap first letter of each word in title (called "title case")
- Include author name(s) in format = first, middle initial, last
- Next line state institutional affiliations of each author
- Also includes "author note" but not for a thesis
- Start header on title page and include:
  - Running head (abbreviated title) flush left and page # flush right
  - Running head no more than 50 characters (including spaces)
  - Format = "Running head: ABBREVIATED TITLE ALL CAPS"
- Header on subsequent pages = **leave off the words "running head:"** and simply include the running head itself (flush left) and page # (flush right)

### Abstract (page 2 of manuscript)

- ~150-250 words dependent upon journal
- 150 words for a graduate thesis
- Brief summary of entire paper
- Must include main problem being investigated
- No citations allowed!
- Trick: take 1-2 sentences from each section (intro, methods, results, discussion)
- Never use only the abstract when citing – lots of info missing, can be very misleading and inaccurate

- APA = accurate, nonevaluative, coherent & readable, concise
- Center and cap the word "abstract"
- Write a single paragraph, no indents
- Most important and most difficult section to write well

### **Introduction (page 3 on...)**

- Read section 2.05 in APA manual
- Introduces reader to overall problem under investigation
- Provides justification (argument) for why the study needs to be done
- Reviews the research others have done on the same topic
- Includes hypothesis (last paragraph)
- Forest *and* trees
- All paragraphs should have minimum of 2 sentences
- Last sentence of paragraph should lead logically to first sentence of subsequent
- Paragraph ("transitions")
- APA format: starts with title of paper (technically a 1<sup>st</sup> level heading, centered,
- But it is not in bold) – Note: this is not true with thesis format
- APA format does not start with the word "Introduction"
- 1<sup>st</sup> paragraph
  - Catchy first sentence, general statement of problem area
  - Last sentence = list what rest of intro will cover *in order* (this is using parallel structure)
- 2<sup>nd</sup> – n<sup>th</sup> paragraphs
  - Cover background literature
  - Can use images/figures (Beware: may be copyrighted)
  - Use subheadings–2 minimum–to organize (see section 3.03)
  - Use subheadings in order given in last sentence of 1<sup>st</sup> paragraph
  - Last paragraph is statement of thesis with hypothesis
  - Argue your point–convince us why your study needs to be done
  - Key studies need details ("trees"), not just results ("forest")!!!
- Last paragraph
  - Might include summary (if intro is long enough)
  - Formal statement of thesis with hypothesis(es)—no surprises
  - Brief methods
- Notes on citations
  - Use "and" if non parenthetical; use ampersand ("&") in parentheses
  - 1 author, always use name = lee (1994)

- 2 authors, always use both names = lucas and lee (2010)
- 3-5 authors
  - example = 1<sup>st</sup> time in paper = Lee, Miyasato, and Clayton (1998)
  - example = use et al. In rest of the paper = Lee et al. (1998)
- 6+ authors, o.k. To start with et al. Even if it's the 1<sup>st</sup> time
- 1<sup>st</sup> non-parenthetical time in a paragraph (but not 1<sup>st</sup> time in paper) = Lee et al. (1998)
- 2<sup>nd</sup> non parenthetical time in same paragraph omit year = lee et al.
- Every time parenthetical (except first in paper) = Lee et al. (1998)
- 2 or more citations in same parentheses = put in alphabetical order and separate with a semicolon
- 2 or more citations, by different author(s), in same parentheses = put in alphabetical order and separate with a semicolon
  - example = (Lee & Clayton, 2001; Schlinger et al., 1999; Zahn, 2000)
- 2 or more citations, by same author(s), in same parentheses = put in ascending chronological order and separate with a comma (in press goes last)
  - example = (Lee & Clayton, 2001, 2002, in press)
- 2 or more citations, by same author(s), in the same year, in same parentheses = use "a", "b", "c" – these will appear in reference section in alphabetical order by title of paper
  - example = (Lee & Clayton, 2001a, 2001b, 2001c)

## **Methods**

- Continues from intro (i.e. Do not insert a page break)
- Starts with 1<sup>st</sup> level heading "Methods" (centered, bold)
- Detailed description of how study was (or will be) conducted
- A "recipe" specific enough for reader to duplicate study
- Use subheadings
- Human Participants
  - number and selection process
  - major demographics (sex, age, race, ethnicity, education, ses...)
  - agreements and/or payments to participants
- Nonhuman Subjects
  - genus, species
  - strain number and/or supplier
  - number, sex, age, weight, physiological condition
  - feeding and light regimen

- assertion of adherence to ethical guidelines on treatment & handling
- Materials/Apparatus/Measures
  - all physical aspects of study (everything used)
  - if a measure/questionnaire, copy must be included in appendix
  - consider a picture/image!
- Procedure
  - details of what actually happens usually in chronological order
- Statistics
  - lists stats you used to test each hypothesis

### **Results ("Possible Outcomes" in Research Proposal Paper, see next section)**

- In the Research Proposal Paper there are no research results yet since you have not conducted your research study yet.
- Statistical reporting of data
- Report stats on each hypothesis in the same order as presented at end of the intro section
- Additional analyses may be included if results warranted
- Include tables & figures (graphs & images) to give additional info

### **Discussion (becomes "Possible Outcomes" in Research Proposal)**

- Reviews and interprets results in context (No results discussed in Research Proposal, so this section can be called "Possible Outcomes")
- Includes no statistics!
- States whether results supported or refuted hypotheses
- Discusses results relative to other research in intro section
- Reviews weaknesses in study and offers alternative explanations
- Ends with implications for future work

### **Possible Outcomes (becomes "Discussion" in Final Paper)**

- discusses potential outcomes of study per hypothesis
- can include graphs of what supportive data *might* look like
- first potential outcome supports hypothesis
- other outcomes do not so you have to offer plausible explanations

### **References (start on new page)**

- Consult APA manual often!!!
- Alphabetical list of all articles cited in entire paper
- Note: "citations" go in body of text, "references" go in reference section
- Provides others with your sources of info
- Must be in precise APA format (then later in thesis format)
- Use digital object identifiers (dois) if given (no period)

- If no DOI use uniform resource locators (urls) of journal, newsletter, or magazine using format: Retrieved from <http://www.xxxxxxxx> (no period)
- No need to include "Retrieved from..." if using a large database such as EBSCO
- Basic format issues:
  - start on new page, center "References" at top as heading
  - use hanging indents (at 0.5") NOT carriage returns!!!!
  - more than 7 authors = Gilbert, D. G., McClernon, J. F., Rabinovich, N. E., Sugai, C., Plath, L. C., Asgaard, G., ... Botros, N. (2004).
  - no first names of authors
  - no abbreviations other than initials of names
  - no caps in title of articles (other than first word of title or word after colon)
  - cap first letter of first word after colon (even if the original paper did not)
  - commas between all author names even if there are only 2
  - cap first letter of all words in journal name (except "of", "and", etc.)
  - cap only the first letter of the first word in book title
  - name of journal and volume italicized, issue is not name of book italicized
  - use an ampersand ("&") for the word "and" in reference section

### **Appendices (start on new page)**

- If needed..., and they might be for thesis
- Includes lengthy items not in other sections (e.g., questionnaires)
- All figures and tables in thesis (if chosen)