Title of Paper

Name

Brigham Young University—Idaho

Course Number: Name

Instructor's Name

Assignment Due Date

Abstract

An abstract can be thought of as a general summary or overview of the paper. The abstract should be no longer than one or two paragraphs in length; a longer abstract is appropriate for a longer paper, but the length of paper required for a long abstract is unlikely to be assigned. Most professors do not require an abstract, therefore, students should assume that an abstract is not required. An abstract should only be written if the professor specifies that it is part of the assignment requirements. An abstract should include key words from the body of the essay.

Keywords: APA, template, writing, format, references

Title of Paper

Generally speaking, in American Psychological Association (APA) format, an introduction paragraph is not necessary. If the author feels that an introduction paragraph is needed, based on the topic or content of the paper, an introduction paragraph may be included. It is important to note that if an introduction paragraph is included in a paper, that it should not have a level one heading as this would insult the reader's intelligence, according to APA. If the first paragraph of an essay is untitled, it is assumed that it is an introduction to the paper and no level heading is required. Note that on the title page, there is a space between the title of the paper and the author's name.

General Rules

APA 7th edition was published in October 2019. An APA essay should be double spaced, no spaces before or after paragraphs, and have 1-inch margins. There should only be one space following a period. The font should be sans serif or serif—acceptable fonts include Calibri 11 pt, Arial 11 pt, Lucida Sans Unicode 10 pt, Times New Roman 12 pt, Georgia 11 pt, and Computer Modern 10 pt. The font itself does not matter as long as it is readable, a reasonable size, and consistent throughout.

Contractions are not appropriate and should not be used in formal writing. Contractions are considered slang, and any form of slang does not belong in formal writing. For the most part, passive language is generally frowned on, however, in APA, passive language is often accepted and required based on the topic being discussed. For example, a paper written for the sciences may require passive voice in order to properly convey the topic.

Running Head

A running head should be present throughout the paper as well as page numbers. Insert a page number on the right side of the page, tab over to the left side of the page, and write in the running head. The running head should be in all uppercase letters. Each page of the document should have a uniform looking running head, including the title page, which should not include the phrase "Running head" as was expected in APA 6th edition. The running head as well as all level headings should be no more than 40 characters.

Level Headings

APA style has 5 levels of headings—refer to the APA handbook for formatting guidelines. Headings are used to organize information. Because APA is a scientific style of writing, transitions between paragraphs do not need to be complex; rather, simply using a new level heading when the topic changes is an appropriate transition. Each section can be as short as one paragraph and as long as is appropriate for the topic. For the most part, student-written essays will not need headings past level 3. A general rule of thumb is that the longer the paper, the more headings will be required. Most student papers will not use headings past level 3 as they are not long enough to warrant all levels of heading.

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Language

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APA format is scientific, and writing should reflect this. The author would do well to remember this. Writing should be straight forward and to the point. Long, wordy sentences need to be pared down so as to convey the message as quickly and efficiently as possible. Qualifying words like very are superfluous and are not necessary. These types of words make the content seem wishy-washy. An essay written in APA should be simple and direct with concrete concepts and theories.

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BYU-Idaho Nursing Program

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The nursing program has strict requirements for written assignments.

In-Text Citations

General Rules

APA requires in-text citations to be sentence-to-sentence. This means that if a reference is used in once sentence and the next sentence also requires the same reference, both sentences will have an in-text citation. It is inappropriate to cite for a paragraph as a whole as this is misleading. Remember that the purpose of writing an essay for school is to show critical thinking skills, therefore, references should be expounded on appropriately and used only as they support a claim by the author. A general rule of thumb to follow when determining if a sentence requires a reference is the 70-30 rule. If 30% or more of the sentence comes from a reference, it requires an in-text citation.

Direct Quotes, Paraphrase, and Long Quotes

References in APA are used to support the author's ideas and lend credibility. Undergraduate students have little credibility and need to rely on researchers and peer-reviewed articles. A direct quote's intext citation should include the page number or paragraph number (if page number is not applicable) in the in-text citation following the year of publication. Paraphrased information does not need a page number or paragraph number in the in-text citation. A quote longer than 40 words should be formatted as a block quote. For example:

> Please note that in a block quote, the quote is signaled by a colon, does not have quote marks, it is intended ½ inch, and the in-text citation is formatted differently than in the rest of the paper—the period is at the end of the sentence rather than after the in-text citation. Block quotes should be used sparingly; one block quote per 5-10 pages is adequate. (Author, year)

A paragraph should not end on a quotation. The author would do well to remember that the professor who assigned the paper is looking to see whether the author has adequate critical thinking skills. Quotes should always be explained well as this shows adequate ability to understand and synthesize information.

Formatting

1-2 Authors

Both authors are used in each reference followed by the year of publication (Smith & Wesson, 2019).

3 or More Authors

Each reference including the first one is the first author followed by et al. followed by the year of publication (Glock et al., 2020

Unknown Author

The title of the article in quotes should be used in place of the author followed by the year of publication ("The Importance of Education," 2015).

Unknown Date

If the date is unknown, "no date (n.d.)" should be used following the author (Mayberry, n.d.)

Organization as an Author

The organization should take the place of the author followed by the year of publication (Centers for Disease Control, 2018).

Personal Communication (Interview)

In the case of interview, the author should indicate that the information came from a personal communication in in-text citations as it is not included in the references page—the first

initial and last name of the interviewee is followed by the phrase "personal communication" and

the date of the interview, email, or letter (J. Smith, personal communication, March 10, 2019).

Indirect Sources

If information is gathered secondary through a reference, the reference that the reader

finds the information in should be cited, not the source in which the information originates—the

in-text citation should reflect that the information has been gathered secondarily by saying "as

cited in" followed by the name of the author whose article the student read, not the author of the

information being used, and year of publication (as cited in Jones, 2017).

Signal Phrase

If a signal phrase is used, the year of publication should follow immediately after. For

example: Jones (2017) states…

Reference Page

The Reference Page should begin on its own page. The phrase Reference Page should be

centered, boldface. References should be organized alphabetically. The Reference Page should

be double-spaced with a hanging indent. Within a single source, all authors are listed, up to 20

authors. If there are 21 or more authors, the 19th author is listed followed by an ellipsis (…), no

ampersand (&), and the final author (ie: Smith, J. S., Jones, Y.,… Mayberry, A.). Titles of any

work listed on the references page should only have capital letters in the following instances: the

first letter of the first word, the first letter of the first word following a colon or dash, proper

nouns, and abbreviations. Digital object identifier (DOI) is more reliable than a URL and should

be used if available. DOIs come in two formats: a series of letters and numbers or a website that

starts with DOI. Either is an acceptable DOI. References are created according to the type of

reference. Below are several common types of references that students use and on the reference

page is a list of examples. APA lists many different types of references, so refer to the APA

manual for a comprehensive list.

Article in Periodical

Author, A. A., Author, B. B., & Author, C. C. (Year). Title of article. *Title of Periodical,*

volume number(issue number), pages. URL or DOI or https://doi.org/xx.xxx/yyyy

Book

Author, A. A. (Year of publication). *Title of book: Subtitle*. Publisher Name.

Textbook

Author, A. A. (Year of publication). *Title of book: Subtitle* (edition). Publisher.

Online Article

Title of page. (Year, Month Day). Site name. Retrieved Month Day, Year, from URL

YouTube video

Person or group who uploaded video. (Year, Month Day). *Title of video* [Video].

YouTube. URL.

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Conclusion

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While APA format can be daunting, students should approach writing assignments with

confidence as the reader can sense hesitation. Remember that the purpose of a written

assignment is to show depth of understanding of class material. The purpose of the conclusion is

to provide a polished finish to the essay. The conclusion caps off the material and is designed to

leave the reader with a last impression of the content.

References

American Psychological Association. (August 8, 2020). *Introducing the 7th ed. APA style publication manual* [Video]. YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H5JWKbrHOAE

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Grove, S. K., & Gray, J. R. (2019). *Understanding nursing research: Building an evidence-based practice* (7th ed.). Elsevier

McGuire, S. L., Gerber, D. E., & Currin, M. D. (2019). Helping students use APA format. *Journal of Nursing Education, 40*(9), 414. https://doi.org/10.3928/0148-4834-20011201-07

Style and grammar guidelines. (2020). APA Style. Retrieved February 27, 2020, from https://apastyle.apa.org/style-grammar-guidelines