Writing in APA Style

Contents

Why am I reading about APA anyway?

1. You will have to write papers for your program in Education and in this course.
2. When writing your papers, you must cite your sources.
3. In Education, your citations must be in APA format.
4. You must know the basics of how to cite a source and list it in your "References" section.

Properly Citing Sources is a MUST

Under VIU's [Policy 96.01: Student Academic Conduct](#), you are required to cite your sources. You will cite them if you quote them, if you paraphrase them, or refer to them (e.g. "Several authors have found X to be true (Jenkins, 2010; Howard, 2009; Johnson, 1991)."). Anything else is considered plagiarism and subject to academic discipline.

APA is "The" Style for Education

You may be familiar with other styles of academic writing where you used endnotes or footnotes and a bibliography to cite your sources. That is not APA Style. In the field of Education, whether you are looking to publish an article, submit a thesis, or write a paper for this Faculty of Education, the most popular style used is APA--or some variation of it.

APA Style

APA stands for American Psychological Association. The APA Style is a format for laying out papers (title page, abstract, table of contents, body pages, references—font type, size, spacing), citation format (in-text rather than using footnotes or endnotes) and mechanics (when to capitalize, how to format long versus short quotes, how and when to use italics/underlining, when to spell out numbers like "five" or use a numeral like "5"). While not every Education course or program will require title pages and abstracts, you will be required to cite your sources. APA Style defines how your sources are cited within the body of your writing and how you list them in your "References" section at the end of your document. How "strictly" you have to follow the current APA format depends on your program, your instructor, and the writing assignment.

From time to time, APA releases updates and new manuals. Currently, the official APA Style Guide is up to the 6th edition, but you don't need to buy the current guide to learn the basics. The resources in this module are free and will help you master the basics of APA formatting.

Using Electronic Citation Tools

There are a variety of APA-based citation tools available to use with word processors and they can be quite helpful. While there are many good ones, **not one citation helper gets it all right, all the time**. You must remember to **manually** proof your final copy to catch anything the citation software missed—or ill formatted.

Our Citation Tool: RefWorks
The web-based bibliographic citation tool supported by Vancouver Island University is called RefWorks. Vancouver Island University students and employees can create a RefWorks account to draft, import, store and organize their references. RefWorks will generate bibliographies in APA (as well as other styles). It can also generate in-text citations in Microsoft Word by using the Write-N-Cite utility. To find out more see: http://libguides.viu.ca/refworks

APA Style Overviews

- Quick Overview: APA Poster from OWL Purdue Online Writing Lab: http://owl.english.purdue.edu/media/jpeg/APAPoster09.jpg
- APA 6th Edition Quick Reference from Penn State University (July 2009): http://www2.yk.psu.edu/learncenter/apa-july-09.pdf

APA Style Basics from OWL

OWL Purdue Online Writing Lab (http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/) is one of the more extensive websites to support use of the APA Style and is provided by Purdue University.

In-Text Citations: How you cite your sources in the body of your writing

- Format guide from OWL Purdue Online Writing Lab: http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/03/
- Some tips:
  - When citing a direct quote from a print document, you must include the page number where the original text is found in the original document. Sometimes your document may not have a page number as it may be electronic. In such a case, provide a section heading and paragraph number so the reader can readily locate your source. E.g. (Jenkins, 2012, The Perils of Pauline, para. 4). If you can, use the paragraph symbol rather than type out 'para.'
  - When using a short quote, paraphrasing or referring to a work, make sure you place the period (".") outside of the citation information.
  - Long quotes--where you have a quote that runs over 2 lines of typed text-- should be formatted as an indented "block quote" and the citation information goes after the period ".".

Examples of short & long citations for an in-text reference to "Managing digital footprints: Ostriches v. eagles" by J. Hengstler (2011):

- Hengstler (2011) says there is "a surprising scarcity of data regarding cyber-bullying of adults--especially teachers, administrators, and post-secondary faculty" (p.91).
- Hengstler (2011) believes that progressive policies are a positive influence:
  > Where progressive policies are in place, they provide support to educators for scaffolding students' responsible use of this technology in ways that contribute to community—be it classroom, school, town, nation or globe. They also scaffold educators' use of this technology to further allow them to contribute to their profession. (p. 91)

Listing References: How you create your "References" section at the end of your paper

- Overview of reference section formatting from OWL Purdue Online Writing Lab: http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/05/

- Specific examples from OWL Purdue Online Writing Lab: How to list specific types of sources."References" example from APA.org
  http://flash1r.apa.org/apastyle/basics/data/resources/sample-references2.pdf
  - author/authors http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/06/
  - article in periodical http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/07/
  - book http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/08/
  - other print resource http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/09/
  - electronic resources http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/10/
  - other media http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/11/

Example of "Reference" section entry for Hengstler (2011) book chapter:

References:

Hengstler, J. (2011). Managing digital footprints: Ostriches v. eagles. In S. Hirtz & K. Kelly (Eds.), *Education for a digital world 2.0* (2nd ed.) (Vol. 1, Part One: Emerging technologies and practices). Open School/Crown   Publications: Queen's Printer for British Columbia, Canada. Available from http://www.viu.ca/education/faculty_publications/hengstler /EducationforDigitalWorld2.0_1_jh89.pdf

More APA Style Guidance: Layout, Tables, Figures

- **Paper Layout:** What settings you should use in your word processor (Word, Pages, Google Docs, etc.)
  - Layout size: 8.5" x 11"
  - Margins: 1" all sides (top, bottom, left, right)
  - Font & Size: Times New Roman or similar; 12 pt
  - Line spacing: double spaced
  - References Page: entries double spaced, left aligned; entries have a 'hanging indent' where first line is flush left & second line of same entry is indented; entries in alphabetical order

- **Including Tables & Figures:** How you include tables or images in your writing
  - Format guide (1 of 2) from OWL Purdue Online Writing Lab: http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/19/
  - Format guide (2 of 2) from OWL Purdue Online Writing Lab: http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/20/

- **Headings & Sections:** How you format the titles of sections in a paper
  - Format guide from OWL Purdue Online Writing Lab: http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/16/

Some Advanced Writing Tips for Graduate Level Work

- Common grammar & mechanical errors in writing APA papers from BOLD Educational Software http://bold-ed.com/apa_errors.htm Don't sweat them all but take a look at some basic issues like
  - Writing in active rather than passive voice: http://bold-ed.com/passive.htm
  - When & where to use commas: http://bold-ed.com/commas.htm
  - When & where to use "and" vs. "&": in written text use "and" and in ()'s use "&"
- When to spell out a number (fifteen) or use a numeral from APA Lite for College Papers http://www.docstyles.com/apacrib.htm#Sec41 but know there are exceptions listed to the rules on pp. 111-114 of the APA Publication Manual, 6th Ed.
- When to use italics from APA Lite for College Papers http://www.docstyles.com/apacrib.htm#Sec33