

Faculty of Community Services

Academic Support & Resource Centre

APA: Common Errors

In FCS programs, knowing how to use the APA citation style is essential. This handout will go over some of the commonly made errors in APA usage.

COMMON FORMATTING ERRORS

- Wrong font – as per APA guidelines, there are several fonts that are acceptable to use, however, most professors request that all documents are typed in 12 pt. Times New Roman font.
- Wrong margins – as per APA guidelines, all documents should have standard 1” margins (2.54cm).
- Wrong spacing – unless otherwise specified by your instructor, as per APA guidelines, all documents should be double spaced.
- No running head – as per APA guidelines, all professional documents should have a running head in all caps placed in the top left corner and a page number at the top right corner. APA 7 guidelines specify that student papers do not need a running head, however the page number at the top right corner is necessary.
 - No extras – as per APA guidelines, all documents should not include boldface or underlining, unless you are using them for tables and figures or certain headings.
 - The title of your paper should be bolded.

COMMON IN-TEXT ERRORS

- Numbers – numbers under 10 are spelled out in APA (for example, instead of 9, you would write nine); numbers 10 and above are written as numerals.
- Incorrect use of et al. – the period always goes after ‘al’, not ‘et’ and is used when there are three or more authors.
- Page numbers – page numbers should only be included when using direct quotations (i.e. Smith, 2017, p. 5).

COMMON REFERENCE LIST ERRORS

- No hanging indent – as per APA guidelines, all reference lists need hanging indents for each reference.
- Improper spacing – as per APA guidelines, each reference should be double spaced.
- Websites – periodicals and journals require the year of publication; however, websites require the date of publication.

Online Resources

- ✓ <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/>
- ✓ <http://www.bibme.org/citation-guide/apa/>

References

Myers, M., Paiz, J., Angeli, E., Wagner, J., Lawrick, E., Moore, K., Anderson, M.,...Keck, R. (2019, December 20). *General format*. Purdue Online Writing Lab.
https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/purdue_owl.html