

Effective Citing and Formatting in an APA Paper

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Note: The cover page is the first page of the document. It offers a full, descriptive title (preferably no more than 12 words), centered in the upper middle of the page, followed by the author's name and any other required information. All items are double-spaced.

At the top of the cover page (justified left), a shortened version of the title must be provided as a header; this short version is known as a "Running head." On the cover page itself, the phrase "Running head:" will appear, followed by the start of the title (no more than 50 characters) with all letters capitalized. In order to make the running head coherent, you may slightly modify the title words. Then, on subsequent pages in the paper, the running head continues to appear in the header area, but the phrase "Running head" is now dropped.

To insert the "Running head" in a **Microsoft Word 2003 document**, use the "Header and Footer" function under "View." Separately you should use the "Page Numbers" function under "Insert" to place a page number in the upper right corner of the page, with page one being the cover page. However, for a **Microsoft Word 2007 document**, both functions are under "Insert."

Not all professors will require a cover page. Many professors will also have specific expectations for how a cover page in their class should look – defer to them! The model here is generally consistent with the APA publication manual, though strictly speaking the manual only calls for a title, the author's name, and the author's institution (e.g., Aurora University) centered in the upper middle of the page, rather than including course code, professor's name, and date. Those additional elements are included here because many professors expect to see this information on a cover page. The manual also calls for an "Author Note," which is not applicable to most student papers, and thus it is not modeled here.

Abstract

The ethical crisis of cross-cultural counseling and therapy results from the use of mental health assumptions, assessments, and interventions that were developed in one cultural context but implemented in a totally different one. The present article sought (a) to determine if ethical guidelines sensitive to cross-cultural counseling and therapy are needed, (b) to discuss guidelines for research that have direct implications for cross-cultural counselors and therapists, and (c) to identify questions of ethics that come out of reading through American Psychological Association guidelines that pertain to serving a multicultural population. Questions for discussion are identified but solutions are not offered. The authors encourage increased discussion and cooperation that will result in the development of ethical guidelines for cross-cultural counselors and therapists.

Above is an example of an actual abstract from an article by Pedersen and Marsella (1982).

As the 6th edition of the *APA Publication Manual* indicates, an abstract in an APA style paper is meant to be a “brief, comprehensive summary of the contents” (American Psychological Association [APA], 2010, p. 25) of an article or essay. An abstract is meant to be read independently of the essay. Just as someone might read an abstract in order to choose whether or not to read a journal article, so your abstract exists to give a reader an overview of the high points of your entire essay. Thus, the abstract is not an introduction paragraph. It should allow a reader to have a clear sense of key elements, such as the topic, problem, goals, thesis, approach, and findings offered within your paper. The abstract explains what is the issue or problem being addressed and makes clear what the paper has demonstrated (not what it *will* demonstrate), so you should use present or past tense in reporting the paper’s contents.

The abstract has no indent. It has the title “Abstract.” It is double-spaced. The 6th edition of the manual leaves the length of the abstract up to different journals, recommending that the word count should remain between 150 and 250 words. One example in the manual on page 41 lists an additional line at the end of the abstract, indented, that reads: “*Keywords:* aging, attention, information processing, emotion, visual search.” In other words, it may be appropriate for you to select the most important terms or topics from your paper and place them at the end of the abstract, but the manual does not require you to do so.

Note on spacing after punctuation: in Chapter 4 of the manual, authors are instructed to place one space after most punctuation marks, but two spaces after a period (or other punctuation) at the end of a sentence. Unfortunately, the manual itself only provides sample papers and examples with *one* space after sentence-ending periods (indeed, the manual itself is written with only one space!). Later corrections to the manual from APA suggest using two spaces should apply only to a draft manuscript. So, this is one issue where you may have to rely on the preferences of your professor, but the intention seems to be that a finished product (such as your paper) should have only one space. This handout continues to use a single space.

Place Title of the Paper Here Even Though You Have a Cover Page

The instructions and sample paragraphs on these pages are formatted as a paper would be. The first paragraph of the paper should begin here; the title serves as the first heading, so there is no need to write the word "Introduction" as a heading. This paragraph should introduce the topic. It should suggest what questions need to be asked and what problems need to be addressed. For most student papers, the introduction should also provide a clear thesis statement, one that makes a clear claim that the rest of the paper will go on to demonstrate. If you are writing more of a summary paper, then this thesis candidate should be the idea or theme that holds the essay together. If you are presenting your own research, then this section should relate to what was researched, what result was expected, and what was discovered.

For many APA style papers, the introduction will be followed by either a Method section or a Literature Review section, but in many student papers what follows is a background section. Below are some sample paragraphs that might be found in a Literature Review section or later sections of a paper. The paragraphs are unrelated and have been tinkered with to highlight various citation issues.

Heading for a Major Section Is in Bold and Centered

Heading Within a Major Section Is Flush Left

According to Kanner (1943), autism is a "neurological dysfunction of the brain which commences before the age of thirty months" (p. 34). He studied 11 cases, all of which showed a specific type of childhood psychosis that was different from other childhood disorders, although each was similar to childhood schizophrenia. The psychoses each displayed distinct, though related, symptoms (Martin, 1997). Rutter (1978) has suggested these symptoms can be grouped into four criteria: "onset within 30 months of birth, poor social development, late language

development, and a preference for regular, stereotyped activity" (Conclusion section, para. 8). However, an unusual variation in this classic pattern of autism has been discovered in the last 30 years. Known as late-onset autism, the condition appears in children who develop normally for the first 12 to 18 months of life before regressing in their speech, behavior, and social skills. This change usually occurs right after they have been given the MMR, or measles vaccination ("Vaccination," n.d.).

This Next Paragraph Features a Block Quotation (40 Words or More)

As the studies by Johnson (1982) and Everson (1995) have shown, it is not only children who are malnourished who suffer lasting health problems, but also those who become junk food addicts. Moreover, Gates (1998) has claimed:

Cavities, poor muscle development, low energy, and obesity are just some of the serious problems. A recent survey found that an astonishingly high percentage of obese adults (74%) consumed junk food *on a daily basis as children* [emphasis added]. And while we might not be ready to call this child abuse, it's time to implement a more far-reaching educational effort aimed at parents. (as cited in Davidson, 1999, p. 18)*

Thus, later health problems seem to correlate with eating habits in childhood.

Subheadings look like this. In the late 20th century, when social work was formally inaugurated as a profession, there was much more concern about the morality of the client than about the morality of the profession or its practitioners (Leiby, 1978; Reamer, 1995a). The earliest practitioners focused on organized relief and responding to the curse of pauperism. Often this preoccupation took the form of paternalistic efforts to bolster poor people's morality and the rectitude of those who had succumbed to "wayward" habits (Boxmore, 1997, p. 15).

* Note: The above example is a block quotation (a quote 40 words or more), but it is also an indirect quotation [a student taking a quote by one person (Gates) that was actually found in an article by another author (Davidson)]. In other words, the "as cited in" phrase is due to this being an indirect quote, not a block quote.