

Running head: EFFECTIVE CITING AND FORMATTING

Effective Citing and Formatting in an APA Paper

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SWK 310

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May 2, 2008

Note: 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 consistent with the APA publication manual. The cover page is the first page of the document. It offers a full title in the middle of the page, along with the author’s name and any other relevant information. In a course, that typically includes the course code or name, the professor’s name, and the date of submission (although in a published paper, these three items would be replaced with the author’s institution, such as “Aurora University”). All items are double-spaced. A “Running head” can be provided to the left on the first line of the page; it includes a middle-sized version of the title with all letters capitalized. A “header” should be provided in the upper right hand corner, along with the page number. In Microsoft Word, this involves using the “Header and Footer” function under “View” and the “Page Numbers” function under “Insert.”

As the publication manual indicates, an abstract in an APA style paper is meant to be a “brief, comprehensive summary of the contents” of an article or essay (American Psychological Association [APA], 2001, p.12). 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 should be “readable, well organized, brief and self-contained” and should not exceed 120 words (p.12). The page has the title “Abstract” and is not indented. Below is an example of an actual abstract from an article by Pedersen and Marsella (1982).

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.

Place Title of the Paper Here Even Though You Have a Title 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. This paragraph should introduce the topic. It should suggest what questions need to be asked and what problems need to be addressed. It 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 background section or a Literature Review section. Below are some sample paragraphs which 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 as many citation issues as possible.

Heading for a Major Section Formatted Like the Paper's Title

Heading Within a Major Section Looks Like This

According to Karmer (1978), autism is a "neurological dysfunction of the brain which commences before the age of thirty months" (p. 34). He studied eleven 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. Psychoses each displayed distinct, though related, symptoms (Martin, 1997). Ruter (1978) has suggested that 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, 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 Highlights 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. 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)

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 or ethics of the profession or its practitioners (Leiby, 1978; Lubove, 1965; Reamer, 1995a). Social workers' 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 "shiftless" or "wayward" habits (Boxmore, 1997, p.15).

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[NOTE: This reference list does not match the sample citations provided in this handout, some of which are made up. The entries here are compiled from the Center for Teaching & Learning APA handout on reference lists, just to give you a sense of how the list should look.]