

# Research Paper Format Guidelines

## Guideline

### 1. General Rules

- 1.1. The research paper should be typed and double-spaced on standard-sized paper (8,5" x 11"), with 1" margins on all sides.
- 1.2. Include a page header (page title and page number) at the top of every page.

### 2. Available fronts

- 2.1. Sans serif fonts
  - 2.1.1. 11-point Calibri
  - 2.1.2. 11-point Arial
  - 2.1.3. 10-point Lucida Sans Unicode
- 2.2. Serif fonts
  - 2.2.1. 12-point Times New Roman
  - 2.2.2. 11-point Georgia
  - 2.2.3. 10-point Computer Modern

### 3. Title Page


- 3.1. The title page should contain the title of the paper, the team members' names (author name), the institutional affiliations(which is FuSSO-IRIC here), and the author's note.
  - 3.1.1. All text on the title page, and throughout your paper, should be double-spaced.
- 3.2. Title
  - 3.2.1. Type the title in upper and lowercase letters centered in the upper half of the page.
  - 3.2.2. The title should be centered and written in boldface.
  - 3.2.3. The title should be focused and succinct and it should not contain abbreviations or words that serve no purpose.
  - 3.2.4. The title may take up one or two lines.
- 3.3. Team members' names
  - 3.3.1. First name
  - 3.3.2. Middle initial(s)

- 3.3.3. Last name
- 3.4. Institutional affiliation
  - 3.4.1. The location where the researcher(s) conducted the research
- 3.5. Author note
  - 3.5.1. It should be divided into several paragraphs, with any paragraphs that are not relevant omitted.
  - 3.5.2. The first paragraph should include the author's name.
  - 3.5.3. The second paragraph should show any change in affiliation.
  - 3.5.4. The third paragraph should include any disclosures or acknowledgments, such as study registration, open practices, and data sharing, disclosure of related reports and conflicts of interest, and acknowledgment of financial support and other assistance.
  - 3.5.5. The fourth paragraph should include contact information for the corresponding author.
- 3.6. Note again that page headers also appear at the top of the title page.
  - 3.6.1. The title page will include the title of the paper flush left in all capitals and the page number flush right.

**The Purdue Online Writing Lab's Sample Title Page:  
Following the American Psychological Association's Guidelines**

Polly Purdue and Purdue Pete  
Purdue Online Writing Lab  
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**Author Note**

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Purdue Pete is now at the Department of Philosophy, Purdue University.

We have no conflicts of interests to disclose.

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**4. Abstract**

- 4.1. Begin a new page.
- 4.2. Abstract page

- 4.2.1. It should already include the page header (described above).
- 4.2.2. On the first line of the abstract page, center and bold the word "Abstract" (no italics, underlining, or quotation marks).
- 4.2.3. Beginning with the next line, write a concise summary of the key points of the research (do not indent).
- 4.2.4. The abstract should contain at least the research topic, research questions, participants, methods, results, data analysis, and conclusions.
- 4.2.5. It may also include possible implications of the research and future work you see connected with your findings.
- 4.2.6. The abstract should be a single paragraph, double-spaced, and typically no more than 250 words.
- 4.3. List keywords from the paper in the abstract
  - 4.3.1. Indent as you would if you were starting a new paragraph, type *Keywords:* (italicized), and then list your keywords.
  - 4.3.2.

#### PURDUE ONLINE WRITING LAB'S SAMPLE ABSTRACT

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##### **Abstract**

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*Keywords:* Lorem, ipsum, dolor

## 5. Introduction

### 5.1. Begin broadly.

5.1.1. The audience, format, and purpose of your paper influence how broad it should be.

5.1.2. You can expect more background knowledge from readers.

### 5.2. Use a "hook" to capture readers' interest.

5.2.1. The *hook* refers to the first sentence of your introduction, which is what you will use to spark curiosity and entice readers to carry on.

5.2.2. It should be concise and relatively simple.

5.2.3. It should be specific enough that the readers already have a sense of what the paper might discuss, but simple enough for most readers to quickly understand.

5.2.4. Try one of the following to catch the readers' eye:

-An eye-catching, starting fact or statistic.

-An interesting or provocative question.

-A definition of a key term or concept.

-An overview of a debate, and the positions on both sides.

-A question, puzzle, or surprise.

-An apparent problem or paradox.

-An intriguing anecdote, quote, or observation.

### 5.3. The 'so what': Why is this important?

5.3.1. Keep your readers by presenting your thesis clearly and persuasively.

5.3.2. Set the context of your paper, situating your topic in the context of other research in the field.

If a reader asks you "So what?", you will want to be able to say why your thesis matters.

Think about the following questions:

-Why are you making this argument in the first place?

-What is the problem?

-Why is this work important?

### 5.4. Thesis statement

- 5.4.1. The thesis is generally the narrowest part and last sentence of the introduction and conveys your position, the essence of your argument or idea.

## 5.5. Roadmap

- 5.5.1. Not all papers need to include a roadmap, but many do.
- 5.5.2. Usually following the thesis, a roadmap is a narrative table of contents that summarizes the flow of the rest of the paper.
- 5.5.3. Roadmaps may also list the bodies of literature that the author will review or key points from the study design and procedure.

## 6. Body

- 6.1. The body is the bulk of the paper, where the "convincing" takes place.
  - 6.1.1. Each paragraph focuses on one piece of argument, building on what you have already written and flowing logically to the next step.
  - 6.1.2. Ultimately, the body should fully persuade readers that the thesis is substantiated by evidence and sound reasoning.
  - 6.1.3. Most paragraphs have four components: topic sentence, evidence, analysis, and transition.
- 6.2. Topic sentence
  - 6.2.1. The topic sentence is usually the first in the paragraph.
  - 6.2.2. It tells the reader your main point and should connect to the thesis stated in the introduction.
  - 6.2.3. Subsequent sentences in the paragraph should relate back to this topic.
- 6.3. Evidence
  - 6.3.1. Ideas, facts, or information from external sources that support the claims.
  - 6.3.2. Either data you collect yourself, or the research and writing of others.
- 6.4. Analysis
  - 6.4.1. You should never present evidence without some form of analysis, or explaining the meaning of what you have shown.
  - 6.4.2. Even if the quote, idea, or statistic seems to speak for itself, you must offer the reader your interpretation of how it supports your topic sentence.
  - 6.4.3. Although they are separate concepts, it can be hard to separate analysis from evidence in practice. They are closely linked and often occur in the same sentence.

## 6.5. Transition

- 6.5.1. At the start of each paragraph, consider how it relates to the previous one.
- 6.5.2. Also, consider how the last sentence sets up your next point.
- 6.5.3. A short transition phrase can guide the reader from one idea to the next.
- 6.5.4. Too many transition words make writing clunky and hard to read, but they are handy for shifting between paragraphs.

## 7. Literature Review

### 7.1. Introduction

- 7.1.1. Start with a broad introduction to the topic.
  - 7.1.1.1. Include relevant background information and definitions or explanations of the main terms and concepts.
  - 7.1.1.2. Explain what your working topic and thesis are.
- 7.1.2. Provide information that is relevant to your specific topic, and explain the importance of your topic.
  - 7.1.2.1. Show why it is worth reading your literature review.
- 7.1.3. Tell the reader what the scope of your review is.
  - 7.1.3.1. Demonstrate a forecast of key topics or texts that will appear in the review.
- 7.1.4. Tell your reader what the aim or purpose of your review is.
  - 7.1.4.1. This is often included at the end of the introduction.
  - 7.1.4.2. The specific aim is provided after general background and relevance to the topic, close to the end of the introduction.
- 7.1.5. Describe how you found sources and how you analyzed them for inclusion and discussion in the review.

### 7.2. Body

- 7.2.1. The body of the review contains your review of the literature relevant to your research question or aim.
  - 7.2.1.1. Structure the body of your literature review logically and coherently.
  - 7.2.1.2. Consider what your sub-topics or sections will be to answer your research question thoroughly and coherently.
  - 7.2.1.3. Consider the most logical order to discuss your sections.
  - 7.2.1.4. Create sub-headings for the sections of your review.

- 7.2.2. Summarize and synthesize.
  - 7.2.2.1. Give an overview of the main points of each source and combine them in a coherent whole.
  - 7.2.2.2. Highlight the relationships between sources in very clear ways. Don't force a relationship between sources if there isn't one. Not all your sources have to complement one another.
  - 7.2.2.3. Don't ignore any outliers in your research. Take note of every perspective.
- 7.2.3. Analyze and interpret the literature.
  - 7.2.3.1. Rather than merely describing the findings of several different literature sources.
  - 7.2.3.2. Some description of the key findings is important to give the reader context.
  - 7.2.3.3. Include an analysis of the key themes, gaps in understanding, and points of disagreement between the different literature sources.
  - 7.2.3.4. Don't just paraphrase other researchers.
  - 7.2.3.5. Add your interpretations where possible, discussing the significance of findings about the literature as a whole.
- 7.2.4. Organize your body paragraphs depending on your topics.
  - 7.2.4.1. Chronological: The simplest approach is to trace the development of the topic over time, which helps familiarize the audience with the topic. If you choose this strategy, be careful to avoid simply listing and summarizing sources in order. Try to analyze the patterns, turning points, and key debates that have shaped the direction of the field. Give your interpretation of how and why certain developments occurred.
  - 7.2.4.2. Thematic: If you have found some recurring central themes that you will continue working with throughout your piece, you can organize your literature review into subsections that address different aspects of the topic.
  - 7.2.4.3. Methodological: If you draw your sources from different disciplines or fields that use a variety of research methods, you can compare the



results and conclusions that emerge from different approaches.

7.2.4.4. Theoretical: You can use it to discuss various theories, models, and definitions of key concepts. You can argue for the relevance of a specific theoretical approach or combine various theoretical concepts to create a framework for your research.

7.2.4.5. Use transition words and topic sentences to draw connections, comparisons, and contrasts..

7.2.5. Remember to include accurate and relevant citations and references throughout this section.

### 7.3. Conclusion

7.3.1. Conclude by demonstrating how you have answered your research question and/or how you have achieved your research aims.

7.3.1.1. It tells the audience you have achieved what you intended.

7.3.2. Highlight the key points you discussed.

7.3.2.1. Summarize the key findings you have taken from the literature and emphasize their significance.

7.3.2.2. Refer to implications of this knowledge in a broader sense, as well as recommendations for future studies/research (if applicable)

7.3.3. The conclusion starts specifically and finishes the board.

7.3.3.1. Don't include new information in your conclusion.

7.3.3.2. Highlight the key points raised in the earlier sections of your literature review.

7.3.3.3. Don't include in-text citations in your conclusion.

## 8. Conclusion

8.1. The conclusion is the last section of the paper.

8.1.1. It should briefly review the argument you have built, but not a summary - it is your final pitch to the audience for your main idea.

8.1.2. By the end of your paper, readers should already understand your position and the evidence used to support it.

8.1.3. The conclusion provides readers a sense of completion, a reminder of why your paper was worth reading.

8.2. A conclusion should:

- 8.2.1. Remind the reader what you have just told them, clarifying the key ideas to ensure there is no misunderstanding.
- 8.2.2. Return to the hook used in the introduction.
- 8.2.3. Return to a broader lens, reminding readers how the thesis applies to your context.
- 8.2.4. Suggest what the reader should take away from your paper.
- 8.2.5. Pose questions for future study, actions to take, policy interventions, or other implications of your ideas.
- 8.2.6. Synthesize and comment on the ideas you have presented.
- 8.3. A conclusion should not:
  - 8.3.1. Repeat your words exactly in the conclusion.
  - 8.3.2. Introduce any major new concepts or parts of your argument in this section.
  - 8.3.3. Make any substantially new points based on the ideas discussed previously.

## 9. APA Referencing

### Book with one author

Bernstein, T.M. (1965). *The careful writer: A modern guide to English usage* (2nd ed.). New York: Atheneum.

### Book with two to five authors

Beck, C. A. J., & Sales, B. D. (2001). *Family mediation: Facts, myths, and future prospects*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

### Two or more books by the same author *Arrange alphabetically by the book's title*

Postman, N. (1985). *Amusing ourselves to death: Public discourse in the age of show business*. New York: Viking.

Postman, N. (1985). *The disappearance of childhood*. New York: Vintage.

### Anthology or compilation

Gibbs, J. T., & Huang, L. N. (Eds.). (1991). *Children of color: Psychological interventions with minority youth*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

**Work in an anthology or an essay in a book**

Bjork, R. A. (1989). Retrieval inhibition as an adaptive mechanism in human memory. In H. L. Roediger III & F. I. M. Craik (Eds.), *Varieties of memory & consciousness* (pp. 309-330). Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.

**Book by a corporate author** *Associations, corporations, agencies, government departments and organizations are considered authors when there is no single author*

American Psychological Association. (1972). *Ethical standards of psychologists*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

**Article in a reference book or an entry in an encyclopedia** *If the article/entry is signed, include the author's name; if unsigned, begin with the title of the entry*

Guignon, C. B. (1998). Existentialism. In E. Craig (Ed.), *Routledge encyclopedia of philosophy* (Vol. 3, pp. 493-502). London: Routledge.

**Article in a journal**

Mellers, B. A. (2000). Choice and the relative pleasure of consequences. *Psychological Bulletin*, 126, 910-924.

*Note: List only the volume number if the periodical uses continuous pagination throughout a particular*

*volume. If each issue begins with page 1, then list the issue number as well.*

Klimoski, R., & Palmer, S. (1993). The ADA and the hiring process in organizations. *Consulting*

*Psychology Journal: Practice and Research*, 45(2), 10-36.

### **Article in a newspaper or magazine**

Semenak, S. (1995, December 28). Feeling right at home: Government residence eschews traditional

rules. *Montreal Gazette*, p. A4.

Driedger, S. D. (1998, April 20). After divorce. *Maclean's*, 111(16), 38-43.

### **Television or radio program**

MacIntyre, L. (Reporter). (2002, January 23). Scandal of the Century [Television series episode]. In

H. Cashore (Producer), *The Fifth Estate*. Toronto: Canadian Broadcasting Corporation.

### **Film, video recording, or DVD**

Kubrick, S. (Director). (1980). *The Shining* [Motion picture]. United States: Warner Brothers.

### **Article from a database**

Provide the same information as you would for a printed journal article and add a retrieval statement that gives

the date of retrieval and the proper name of the database.

Schredl, M., Brenner, C., & Faul, C. (2002). Positive attitude toward dreams: Reliability and stability of

ten-item scale. *North American Journal of Psychology*, 4, 343-346. Retrieved December 16, 2004, from Academic Search Premier database.

Dussault, M., & Barnett, B. G. Peer-assisted leadership: Reducing educational managers' professional

isolation. *Journal of Educational Administration*, 34(3), 5-14. Retrieved December 16, 2004, from

ABI/INFORM Global database.

### **Non-periodical documents on the Internet**

Library and Archives Canada. (2002). *Celebrating Women's Achievements: Women Artists in Canada*.

Retrieved December 16, 2004, from <http://www.collectionscanada.ca/women/h12-500-e.html>

#### **Article in an Internet-only journal**

Pelling, N. (2002, May). The use of technology in career counseling. *Journal of Technology in Counseling*, 2(2). Retrieved December 16, 2004, from [http://jtc.colstate.edu/vol2\\_2/pelling.htm](http://jtc.colstate.edu/vol2_2/pelling.htm)

## Template

All teams are REQUIRED to use the [IRIC Research Template](#). Please make sure to create a duplicate copy before making any edits.

## Rubrics

### **1. Title Page (5 points)**

- 1.1. The title is centered, bold, and succinct (1 point)
- 1.2. Author names and institutional affiliations are listed properly (2 points)
- 1.3. The author's note includes relevant information and is well-organized (2 points)

### **2. Abstract (5 points)**

- 2.1. The abstract is concise and summarizes key points effectively (2 points)
- 2.2. Keywords are listed appropriately (1 point)
- 2.3. Keywords accurately reflect the content of the paper (1 point)
- 2.4. Abstract adheres to formatting guidelines (1 point)

### **3. Introduction (10 points)**

- 3.1. The introduction begins broadly and includes a hook (2 points)
- 3.2. The thesis statement is clear and persuasive (2 points)
- 3.3. The context of the paper is well-established (2 points)

- 3.4. A roadmap or narrative table of contents is included (2 points)
- 3.5. The introduction concludes effectively (2 points)
- 4. Body (15 points)**
  - 4.1. Each paragraph contains a clear topic sentence (2 points)
  - 4.2. Evidence is presented and analyzed effectively (3 points)
  - 4.3. The analysis demonstrates critical thinking and supports the thesis (3 points)
  - 4.4. Transitions between paragraphs are smooth and logical (2 points)
  - 4.5. Body persuasively supports the thesis (5 points)
- 5. Literature Review (15 points)**
  - 5.1. Introduction to the literature review is comprehensive (2 points)
  - 5.2. The body of the literature review is well-structured and organized (3 points)
  - 5.3. The summary and synthesis of literature are thorough (3 points)
  - 5.4. Analysis of key themes and gaps is insightful (3 points)
  - 5.5. Citations and references are accurate and appropriate (2 points)
  - 5.6. Conclusion effectively summarizes key points (2 points)
- 6. Conclusion (5 points)**
  - 6.1. Conclusion effectively restates the thesis and key points (2 points)
  - 6.2. Implications for future research or practice are discussed (2 points)
  - 6.3. The conclusion is concise and does not introduce new information (1 point)
- 7. APA Referencing (5 points)**
  - 7.1. In-text citations are properly formatted and consistent (2 points)
  - 7.2. References are listed alphabetically and follow APA style guidelines (2 points)
  - 7.3. All sources are accurately c ;
- 8. Adherence to Formatting Guidelines (5 points)**
  - 8.1. Paper is typed and double-spaced with correct margins (1 point)
  - 8.2. Font style and size comply with guidelines (1 point)
  - 8.3. The page header is included on all pages (1 point)
  - 8.4. The title page and abstract page are formatted correctly (1 point)
  - 8.5. Overall formatting is consistent and professional (1 point)

**9. Originality and Creativity (5 points)**

- 9.1. Content demonstrates original thinking and creativity (3 points)
- 9.2. Ideas are presented engagingly and innovatively (2 points)