Formatting your APA-style paper

Fonts, Headings, Spacing, etc.
(not including APA citation format)

Why have format rules?

- If you were submitting for publication:
  - Allows publisher to know how many pages article would cover
  - Provides standard look for all articles
- If you are submitting a paper:
  - Allows faculty to know how long your paper really is – a 3 page paper is a 3 page paper
  - Make paper more readable

Title Page (overview)

- Page header
- Running head
- Title of paper
- Your name
- Your organization

Page header

- A short title and page number included on every page, including title page
- Upper right corner
- Purpose: to help put pages back together if they are separated
- Use first 2 or 3 words of actual title
- Put 5 spaces between short title and page number
- Use the page header function!
  (see instruction sheet on web site)


Running head

- Included to tell publisher the wording of the title that you want on the top of the pages of published article
- Don’t confuse with page header
- Notice capitalization
  - “Running head:” only the ‘R’ is in caps
  - The title itself is ALL in CAPS
- Limited to 50 characters including spaces
- Shortened form of real title of paper, but should capture essence and make sense
  (unlike page header, which can be first 2 or 3 words)


Title of Paper

- Should reflect the content of the paper
- Recommended length is 10 to 12 words
- Use regular title capitalization = capitalize all “important” words
- If long enough for 2 lines, break in a logical spot & double space the lines
- Center horizontally and vertically on paper

Byline  
(your name)  
☐ Use your formal name, not a nick name  
☐ OK to include credentials if you have them, but not required  

Institutional Affiliation  
☐ Just use Creighton University  
☐ Don’t include the class name or number etc.  
☐ City & state not necessary  

Abstract  
☐ Brief summary of your paper  
☐ On second page, after title page  
☐ Limited to 120 words  
  ■ (use Word function to count—in Word2003: Tools → Word Count)  
☐ Often omitted on very short papers – check with faculty  

Body of Paper  
☐ Everything between the Abstract to the References  
☐ Start with a repetition of your title – centered & exactly the same as on title page  
☐ Length of paper usually is based on number of pages in body  

Headings  
☐ Number of level of headings depends on length & complexity of paper  
☐ Differences in format depend on number of levels used—need to study manual  
  ■ Center or left justification  
  ■ Italic  
  ■ Capitalization  
☐ Faculty may tell you to omit on short papers  

General  
☐ Margins—“at least 1 inch at top, bottom, right, and left sides” (p. 286)  
☐ Font (typeface) 12 point, serif type  
  Preferred – Times New Roman & Courier (p. 285)  
☐ Line spacing – use double line spacing everywhere, resulting in no more than 27 lines of text (not counting page header) per page (pp. 286-287)
General (continued)

- Line length—maximum is 6.5 inches (p. 287)
- Justification—use left justification for all text. DO NOT use full justification which justifies both right and left. Right edge should be "ragged" because this makes the text easier to read
- Hyphenation of words—DO NOT hyphenate at the end of a line


Punctuation spacing

- Space once after all punctuation*
  - After commas, colons, semicolons
  - After end of sentence punctuation
  - After periods within references
  - After periods used after initials in names
  - *Exceptions:
    - Internal periods of abbreviations (e.g., U.S.)
    - When a period and a comma are used together in a reference
      - Don't space after the period
      - (Smith, J. J., Brown, B. B., & White, W. W.)

Hint: use word processing tools to help with this


Indentations

- Indent the first line of every paragraph
- Be consistent
- 5 to 7 spaces
- Use the tab key


Numbers

- Be aware of rules about when you should express numbers in words or in figures
- General rule: Use figures to express numbers 10 and above
- Lots of exceptions—best practice: check every number you use against the examples in the manual


Good News

- Format is one of the easiest parts of the paper to get right
- A template is available
- You might also want to try software
- Links to these will be on web site