

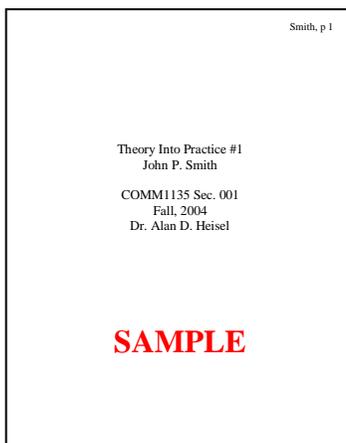
Department of Communication
Standards for Acceptable Submissions

The Standards for Acceptable Submissions were created through the cooperative efforts of several faculty members in the Department of Communication. These standards were developed to help address a variety of format and stylistic issues that commonly occur. This document is organized into four sections: (1) Formatting, (2) Style, (3) Citing/Referencing, and (4) Submission.

1. Formatting

Written assignments should conform to the formatting guidelines **1.a.** through **1.k.**

- 1.a.** Assignments must include a cover sheet that identifies the Assignment Title, Student Name, Course/Section Number, Semester/Year, and the name of the Professor teaching the course (See example below).



- 1.b.** Assignments must be typed or word-processed.
- 1.c.** Assignments must be double-spaced.
- 1.d.** Assignments should have a “header” that includes the student name and page number in the upper right hand corner of the page.
- 1.e.** Assignments must have a maximum 1-inch margin for all paper edges (top, bottom, left, right).
- 1.f.** Assignments must use a consistent font size of either 10 or 12 point.
- 1.g.** Standard fonts must be used (i.e., Arial, Times New Roman, Universal, etc.). Do not use non-standard fonts such as Gothic, Calligraphy, or Script.
- 1.h.** Font color must be black.
- 1.i.** No backgrounds should be used.
- 1.j.** Images and Graphs should not be used without approval of the Professor.
- 1.k.** Headings, Sub-headings, and other formatting issues should conform to the guidelines described in the most recent publication of the *American Psychological Association Style Manual* (currently, 5th edition).

2. Style

Stylistic issues include written language, grammar and syntax, spelling, paraphrasing, and quotations. While some stylistic issues can also be citation issues, these concepts are treated separately.

- 2.a. Submitted assignments must be proofread. Spell-check and grammar check software alone should not be relied upon for the purposes of editing a draft.
- 2.b. Assignments with 10 or more typographical errors are not considered acceptable.
- 2.c. Duplication of five or more words from a single sentence written by another source (e.g., websites, journals, books, magazines, etc.) is not acceptable.
- 2.d. Assignments that include approved charts or graphs with data that are not attributed to the original source are not acceptable.
- 2.f. Assignments that include sections of text that are significantly different from the majority of the submission (in terms of grammar, structure, vocabulary, font style or size) are not acceptable.
- 2.g. Paraphrasing or re-wording of more than one sentence in a sequence written by another source (e.g., websites, journals, books, magazines, etc.) is not acceptable.
- 2.h. Duplication of the organizational structure of the text of another source (e.g., websites, journals, books, magazines, etc.) is not acceptable.
- 2.i. All other stylistic issues should conform to the guidelines described in the most recent Publication of the *American Psychological Association Style Manual* (currently, 5th edition), unless directed otherwise.

3. Citing/Referencing

- 3.a. What should be referenced or cited?

O’Hair, Stewart, and Rubinstein (2001) suggest that you should credit the original author when you use:

- 3.a.1. Direct quotations – you are using someone else’s words
- 3.a.2. Paraphrased information – you are repeating someone else’s ideas in different words
- 3.a.3. statistics
- 3.a.4. any unique information that was not collected by you personally.

“Unique information” means information that you can only find one place. You do not have to cite the source of information that can be found in any standard reference book. However, if it’s new information (for example, a study that’s just been published or information that has just been updated) or if it is information that only one person or group or organization had

originally, you should acknowledge the source. Finally, you should acknowledge when a known source of information that represents a point of contention (i.e., something people disagree about). In other words, if you research there is contradictory findings related to the effects of subliminal messages, you shouldn't only report the studies in which the results refuted the effects without acknowledging those that supported effects (or vice-versa). You may, of course, argue the validity of the studies that contradict the theme of your paper.

3.b. Why should you cite?

The principle of acknowledging, or *citing*, sources is that you should always provide enough information to tell the reader where your information came from and how they can locate it themselves. The format through which this is done varies across different fields. Social sciences, like communication, generally use a format developed by the American Psychological Association, called APA style. This is the format that you are required to use for most of the papers you write in Communication courses.

3.c. Components of citing and referencing the work of others.

There are two parts to citing works.

3.c.1. The first part is *in-text citations*. In-text citations are labels that are inserted next to each piece of information that comes from another source. In APA style, the in-text citation is made up of the author's last name(s) and year of publication.

3.c.2. The second part is the *works cited list*. This is an alphabetized list of all the sources that are cited in the entire paper. It contains not only the author's name and the publication date, but also information like the book or article title and the publisher/location of publication. It should include all the information that a reader needs to go out and find the original source.

The idea is that readers who want to follow-up on a piece of information they read about in your paper can use the in-text citation to find the appropriate entry in the works cited list. The works cited list, in turn, could allow them to find the original book, article, or web-page. There are specific rules about the type of information that is put into a works cited list for different types of sources and how this information should be formatted. Examples are provided in the works cited list at the end of this information sheet.

3.d. Common examples of citing and referencing the work of others.

3.d.1. How to acknowledge a source if you are re-stating someone else's ideas in your own words:

If you are paraphrasing or summarizing someone else's ideas, you can cite the source in the text of the paper by mentioning the name of the original author and, if it is appropriate to the flow of the sentence, the title of the publication. Include the year of the publication in parentheses after the author's name.

For example:

According to Gerbner, Gross, Morgan, and Signorielli (1994), the effect of television on audience members' perceptions of crime is cumulative. The more one watches, the more one's view of the world will match the violent patterns of representation of television.

Another way to credit a source is by using *parenthetical citations*. After the paraphrase or piece of information that you are using, include the name of the original author, a comma, and then the year of the publication within a set of parentheses.

For example:

One of the concerns about cultivation theory is that it fails to take into account the fact that audiences select what they watch. Some individuals may see very little violence by consistently choosing to watch game shows. Other individuals may see a lot of violence in the same amount of time by choosing to watch crime dramas (Potter, 1993).

3.d.2. How to acknowledge a source if you are using someone else's exact words:

If use the same words as the original author it is a "direct quote" and it must be identifiable to readers. If you are using another person's words, but fail to indicate that you are doing so, it counts as plagiarism even if you include a parenthetical reference at the end of the passage.

Of course, there are certain combinations of words, for example, “such as” and “it is” that turn up over and over again in almost any text. We all use them, without necessarily stealing them from each other. However, distinctive combinations of words - and most phrases and sentences should be considered distinctive combinations of words – should be considered unique creations of their writers’ and those writers should always be given credit for them. As a rule of thumb, whenever you are using more than five of another writer’s words in the same order as that writer, you should consider it a direct quote and acknowledge the original writer. To acknowledge the writer, you need to use either quotation marks or a block quote. The length of the quotation determines which one is appropriate.

3.d.2a. If your quotation is less than 40 words long, the other person’s words should be enclosed in quotation marks and integrated into the rest of your paragraph. If you mention the author’s name when you introduce the quote, you should follow it with the year of publication in parentheses. Then, at the end of your quotation, you should also include the page number on which the words originally appeared. Use the paragraph number if you are quoting from an electronic text like a web page that does not have page numbers.

For example:

Gerbner, Gross, Morgan, and Signorielli (1994) argue that the kinds of television programs an individual chooses to watch are ultimately irrelevant because the images of television programming are uniform: “...the pattern of settings, casting, social typing, actions, and related outcomes...cuts across program types and viewing modes and defines the world of television. Viewers are born into that symbolic world and cannot avoid exposure to its recurrent patterns...” (p. 20).

3.d.2b. If you are not mentioning the author’s name in the sentence, it should be added along with the year to the parentheses at the end of your quotation.

For example:

This type of reality program represents one of the most popular and influential of the programming category. *Survivor* has been said to represent “the ‘classic’ format of the current generation of reality TV” (Andrejevic, 2004, p. 195).

3.d.2c. If your quotation is more than 40 words, it should be presented in the form of a *block quote*. That is, the quotation is formatted as its own paragraph. Each line of this paragraph is indented five spaces. The page number, along with the author’s name and the publication year if it hasn’t been mentioned in the introductory sentence, should be included at the very end of the block quote.

For example:

Although audience members can differ in their evaluations of film characters, there are conventions that communicate to the audience what their response to particular characters’ should be. Noel Carroll (1995) argues that one of these conventions is the way characters are shown to treat others.

Quite frequently in mass fictions, characters are designated as morally good in virtue of their treatment of supporting characters, especially ones who are poor, old, weak, lame, oppressed, unprotected women, children, helpless animals, and so on. Good characters typically treat such people with courtesy and respect, whereas your standard snarling villain, if he notices them at all, usually does so in order to abuse them – to harass the woman sexually, to taunt the child, to kick the dog, or worse. (p. 79)

According to the principle Carroll describes, a brief scene in which a character is shown behaving kindly toward a panhandler would function communicate to most of the audience that the character is good.

Note: No quotation marks are needed if you are using a block quote. However, whenever you use someone else’s

words, you need to use one of these formats to communicate this to the reader in order to avoid plagiarism.

3.e. Avoiding plagiarism

Please remember that no matter what kind of in-text citation you use, you must also include the entire bibliographic citation (author, title, publication date, page numbers, publisher, and so forth) of all the sources you've used in a "Works Cited" page attached to the end of your paper. For information about formatting the works cited list, see the most recent edition of the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (currently, 5th edition).

3.f. Techniques to avoid plagiarism

- 3.f.1. Give yourself enough time. If you're not under time pressures, you'll have more opportunities to formulate your own words and perspectives. Make sure that you've acknowledged all your sources.
- 3.f.2. Make careful notes when you are researching your paper. Make sure that you keep track of what ideas come from which source.
- 3.f.3. Remember to **always** acknowledge it when you are using someone else's words with either quotation marks or a block quote. Generally, any time your paper contains more than five words that are the same as one of your sources and are in the same order as your sources, those words should be in quotation marks or in a block quote. They should also be accompanied by the author's name, the publication year, and the page number.
- 3.f.4. Err on the side of caution. When in doubt, give a reference or ask your professor for help *before* you turn in the paper.

3.g. Citations and Referencing for Acceptable Submissions

Failing to properly reference and cite your sources properly is not acceptable.

- 3.h.** For an expanded treatment of appropriate citation rules, please review the most recent edition of the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (currently, 5th edition).

Works referenced in section 3: Citing and referencing the work of others

Andrejevic, M. (2004). *Reality TV: The work of being watched*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.

American Psychological Association. (2001). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (5th ed.). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

Carroll, N. (1995). The paradox of suspense. In P. Vorderer, H. J. Wulff, & M. Friedrichsen (Eds.), *Supsense: Conceptualizations, theoretical analyses, and empirical explorations* (pp. 71-92). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Gerbner, G., Gross, L., Morgan, M., & Signorielli, N. (1994). Growing up with television: The cultivation perspective. In J. Bryant & D. Zillman (Eds.), *Media effects: Advances in theory and research* (pp. 17-41). Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

O'Hair, D., Stewart, R., & Rubenstein, H. (2001). *A speaker's guidebook*. New York: Bedford/St. Martin's.

Potter, W. J. (1993). Cultivation theory and research: A conceptual critique. *Human Communication Research*, 19, 564-601.

4. Submissions

4.a. Guidelines for electronic submission

4.a.1. All written assignments submitted electronically must be saved in one of the following file formats: Microsoft Word (*.doc), Portable Document Format (*.pdf), or in Rich Text Format (*.RTF).

4.a.2. Only one file should be submitted for each assignment.

4.a.3. The filename for each assignment should conform to the following format: Course Number – Semester – Year – Last Name.

For example, If Jill Kramer were submitting an assignment electronically for COMM 1050 in the fall, 2007 semester, she would name the file: 1050-fs07-kramer.doc

4.a.4. All assignments submitted electronically must be uploaded to the Digital Drop Box (DDB) of the appropriate course.

- 4.a.5.** Students should identify the assignment title in the comment section when uploading the file to the DDB.

4.b. Guidelines for hard-copy submission

4.b.1. *Make sure that your professor accepts hard copy submissions!*

4.b.1. Assignments should be stapled on the upper left hand corner of the page.

4.b.2. Assignments must have a cover sheet formatted according to section 1 of this document.

4.b.3. Submit letter-size paper assignments only! Do not use plastic folders or other binding materials.

4.b.4. Assignments must be submitted by the due date indicated on the syllabus.

4.b.5. Assignments may be delivered to the mail box of the appropriate faculty member (located in room 590 Lucas Hall) or as otherwise directed by the professor of the course.

4.b.6. If you fax a copy of your assignment, be sure to include a cover sheet indicating the class and the professor to whom the document should be delivered. The fax number is 314-516-5816. You can request verbal confirmation of the fax by calling the Department of Communication's main office (314-516-5486).

Please note: Although the overwhelming majority of professors in the Department of Communication are likely to require these standards for all submitted assignments, it must be noted in the syllabus. As a result, if your syllabus has an assignment that does not explicitly state that these standards must be met, the classification of “acceptable” or “not acceptable” submissions is not binding. However, complying with these standards is likely to increase your overall grade. For those assignments that explicitly require adherence to these standards, the assignment must be deemed “acceptable” in order to receive a grade. Failure to conform to the standards described in this document will cause the submitted assignment to be classified as unacceptable, resulting in ZERO for the assignment. If you have any questions regarding the content of this document, please ask your professor.

The following faculty of the Department of Communication made contributions to this document.

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