APA Style

Why is this Important?

After reading all our workshops:

♦ You may take a class where you have to write up a research project.
♦ You might have to write a review of the literature.
♦ You may, after you graduate, get a job where you have to produce reports or grant proposals using APA style for the references.
♦ You might even become a scientist and produce professional journal articles that call for APA style. Many fields outside of Psychology use it often.

What is APA Style?
What is the APA Publication Manual and where do I get it?

APA style is the accepted format for writing professional level publications in most of Psychology and used by many other fields. APA style formally started in 1928 when editors and business managers of psychological and anthropological journals met to discuss the form that journal articles should take when submitted for publication. The group also prepared a set of instructions for article preparation that was published in the February 1929 issue of Psychological Bulletin. APA Style has been evolving since then and is in its fourth version.

The reasons to have a clear and agreed upon set of rules are that:

- Such rules contributed to clear communication and make papers, articles and books easy to read.
- The rules will aid in producing clear tables and graphs.
- References will be presented in a fashion that are easy to use and will facilitate your being able to find that reference, if you want to read it yourself.
- Statistical terms and results will be presented in a common format that can be easily comprehended.

Reducing Bias:

Another important and more recent development is the set of guidelines for reducing bias in language. Unfortunately, many people can be unaware that a choice of terms for
different ethnic or racial groups can be offensive. Gender bias should be avoided and appropriate language is needed when discussing issues of sexual orientation.

The Publication Manual

The current version is entitled:
It is published by the American Psychological Association. More information can be found at the APA’s site:

http://www.apa.org/books/pubman.html

Some hints:

• You can buy this from the APA directly or your instructor may order for the campus bookstore. Commercial bookstores and online service carry it also.

• APA provides some ancillary materials that may be very useful:

  APA-Style Helper (www.apa.org/apa-style) is software designed specifically to help behavioral and social sciences students and other new writers write term papers, reports, review articles and other manuscripts that adhere to APA-style guidelines. See the sample menu bar.

  Mastering APA: Student’s Workbook and Training Guide (http://www.apa.org/books/masterin.html) This workbook is the source students need to improve their writing skills. Mastering APA Style is a self-pacing, self-teaching workbook that can be used to learn APA style quickly and effectively.
What crucial items does the manual cover?:

- Content and Organization of a manuscript
- Expression of ideas - style, grammar, reducing bias
- APA Editorial Style - includes references, statistics, tables and graphs
  This is a crucial section. References give students fits and professors regard them as one of the most important parts of a paper.
  We could give examples of references but there are so many different parameters that you would quickly find one that we didn't cover. It's best to buy the book and program.
- Manuscript preparation - margins, paper, headings, spacing - all the stuff that professors grade you on.

**Other Stuff that is Useful**

- **Frequently Asked Questions: APA** maintains a FAQ (a list of frequently asked questions). Check it out at:
- **Many people are at a loss on how to cite the Web or databases - check out:**
  Electronic Reference Formats Recommended by the American Psychological Association
  [http://www.apa.org/journals/webref.html](http://www.apa.org/journals/webref.html)
- **Many schools and departments maintain examples and style guides.**
  Check out these two:
  [http://www.wisc.edu/writing/](http://www.wisc.edu/writing/) University of Wisconsin at Madison

REMEMBER THIS:

- Follow the Publication Manual as if your life depended on it!
- Your professors will go **BALLISTIC** if you don't follow it precisely.
- If you ever try to publish an article in an APA style journal - you'd better know this.