APA Format Cheat Sheet

PURPOSE OF APA

Originally created for psychologists, the American Psychological Association (APA) style is commonly used by a variety of social and behavioral sciences as well as business fields. APA style is intended for scientific and business research.

GENERAL RULES

APA requires all text to be double-spaced, all pages to have a 1-inch margin, all pages to be numbered in the top right corner of the header, and all text to be in a 10-12-point readable font (Calibri, Arial, Times New Roman, etc.). All sections of your paper (including the Abstract, Literature Review, Method, Results, Discussion, and References) should be labeled with headings, though not all these sections are required for every paper.

TITLE PAGE

The title page is the first page of your paper, and its purpose it to clearly show readers what your paper is called, who wrote it, for whom it was written (class, professor, department, and institution), and when it is due.

Note: If your instructor has different requirements for paper format than this, follow their instructions.

- ♦ As of APA 7th edition, student papers no longer include a running head.
- ♦ Center the full title of your paper in bold two double-spaced lines from the top of the page. The bolded title should also appear centered at the top of the first page of the body of your paper.
- ♦ Two lines down, center your first name, middle initial, and last name.
- ♦ On the next line, center the title of the academic department you're working in followed by a comma and the name of your institution.
- ♦ Next, center the course code followed by a colon and the title of the class, the name of the professor (including their title), and the due date for the assignment each on their own lines.

ABSTRACT

An abstract is a brief summary of your paper, usually ranging from 150-250 words. The purpose of the abstract is to hook potential readers by giving them a sneak peek into what your paper is about.
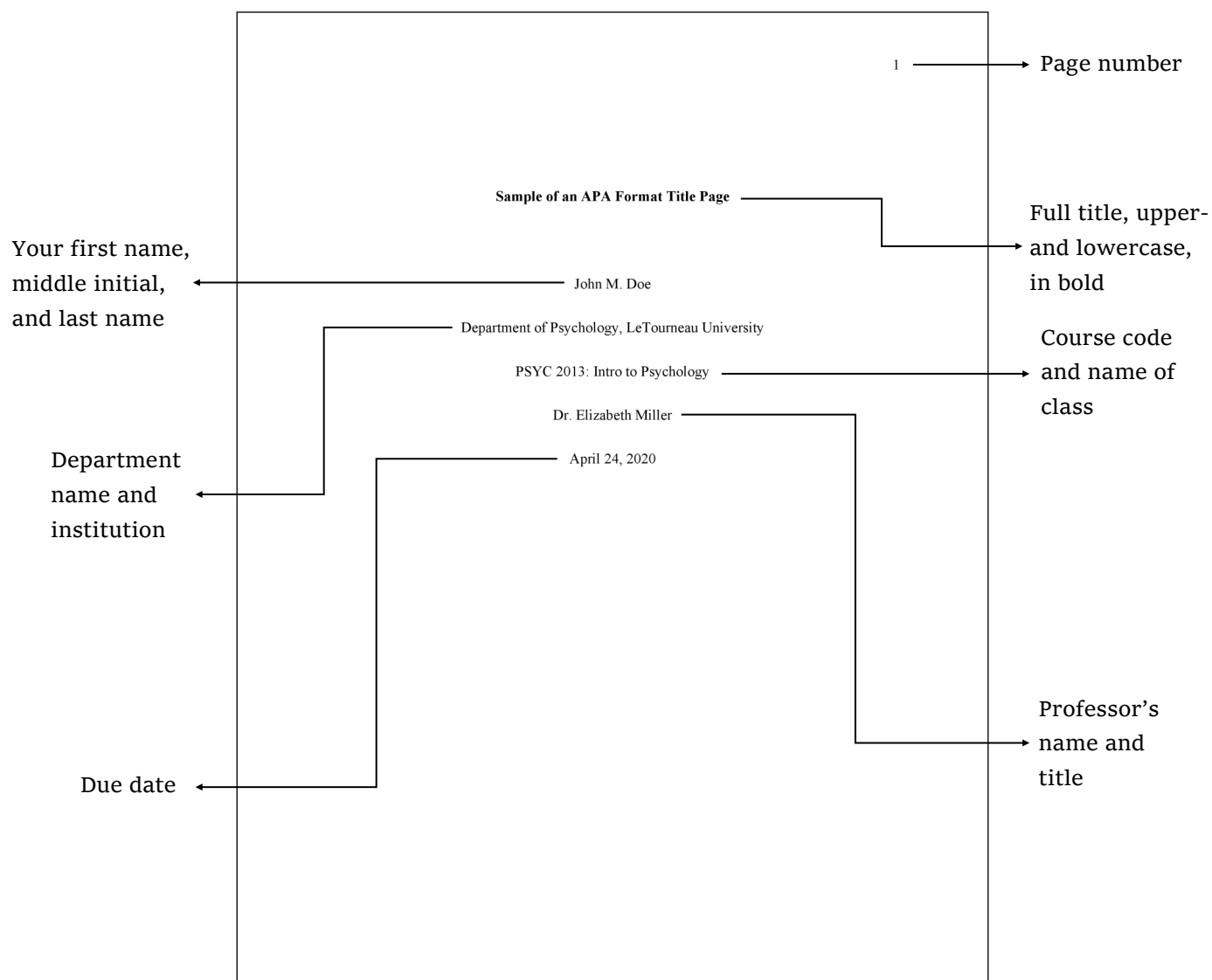
- ♦ Center "Abstract" in bold at the top of the second page.
- ♦ Start the text of the abstract on the next line.
- ♦ Unlike the rest of the paragraphs in your paper, do not indent the first line of the abstract.
- ♦ Include details about the main points and conclusions from your paper.
- ♦ It is easiest to write the abstract after finishing your paper.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The purpose of a lit review is to summarize and analyze the existing research on your paper's specific topic. Lit reviews give an overview of the major scholarship on your topic to introduce the necessity and relevance of your paper's contribution to the overall academic discussion. A lit review is not the same as an annotated bibliography.

♦ Read major articles, books, theses, and other works on your topic.

♦ In your lit review, organize the sources in a way that makes sense (you may consider chronological order or sorting by trend or methodology).

♦ Briefly summarize and evaluate each source's findings.

♦ Identify any similarities, inconsistencies, or gaps in their research.

♦ Set up how your paper will support, refute, or otherwise contribute to these existing findings.

TITLE PAGE EXAMPLE:

Page number

1

Sample of an APA Format Title Page

Full title, upper- and lowercase, in bold

Your first name, middle initial, and last name

John M. Doe

Department of Psychology, LeTourneau University

Department name and institution

PSYC 2013: Intro to Psychology

Course code and name of class

Dr. Elizabeth Miller

Professor's name and title

April 24, 2020

Due date

For specific questions not addressed in this handout, please visit the LETU Writing Center, email WritingCenter@letu.edu, or consult the PurdueOWL APA formatting and style guide.