**Research Paper Guide**

***Title Page*** (double space, and center on the page—top/bottom and right/left)

Student’s Name

Psychology Course Title

Instructor’s Name and Class Days and Times

Project Title

***Body of the Paper***

Center the title of your project on the top line.

In the first paragraph, describe the topic and explain its relevance to psychology (at least 100 words). If your project is service learning or psychology career exploration, also describe the setting (the agency you worked with or the location of the psychology professional you visited).

In the second paragraph, explain why you chose the topic. It includes your personal interest in the topic (at least 100 words).

Beginning with the third paragraph, explain what you learned about your topic (at least ***two full pages***). This is your summary of the research you found about your topic. Divide the information into several paragraphs for this explanation. You are expected to provide in-depth, meaningful information rather than just surface learning.

Conclude with a comparison of your expectations versus what you actually learned (at least 150 words).

***References***

Put the title References on the top line.

You must have at least 3 sources for your PSYC Fair manuscript, and each must have an author and a date (at least the year). You must also cite your textbook. Sources such as Wikipedia are not acceptable sources; you may use Wikipedia to help you narrow your search, but not as a source. This course requires the use of APA style (American Psychological Association). Use APA format for your list (see “APA Format” and “plagiarism” handouts for details).

***Format***

 Type your paper using 12-point, Times New Roman font.

 Use one-inch margins all around (top, bottom, right, left). Do not use bold and do not use italics (except where required in the References), even on the title page.

 Double space the document, including the Reference List.

 Run spell check.

 Take your paper to the Writing Center or an English tutor to be sure it is coherent and grammatically correct.

 Print the paper with black ink.

 Staple the pages together with one staple in the top left-hand corner.

**APA Format**

You must have at least 3 sources for your PSYC Fair manuscript, and each must have an author and a date (at least the year). You must also cite your textbook. This course requires the use of APA style (American Psychological Association).

Here are some helpful hints to get you started with APA.

 **Font**: Use 12-point Times New Roman font.

 **Page Spacing**: Double-space the References page—no extra spaces; no single spacing. You must set your computer before your begin: First, set “**Paragraph**:” (a) Spacing, After = 0, (b) Line Spacing = Double, (c) Special = Hanging = 0.5”. Second, set 12-point as the **font size** and Times New Roman as your **font style**. Third, set your **margins** for 1” all around (top, bottom, right, left) and **justify left only** (do not use full justify). Use this same format for the rest of the manuscript **except** do not use hanging indent; indent the first line of each paragraph 0.5” in the rest of the document.

 **Spacing after Periods**: Use only 1 space after a period on the References. The rest of the document has 2 spaces after each period; the References only have 1 space.

Each reference must include the following 5 items (in this order):

1. **Author’s last name and initials**. If there is no author listed, begin with the title. You may NOT use Wikipedia or a similar source.

2. **Date of publication in parentheses** (if there is no date, use n.d.).

3. **Title of document/article**. Only the first word is capitalized in the title of the article. Of course, proper nouns like a name are always capitalized.

4. ***Source*** (title of the book or journal) in italics, volume of a journal in italics, and the issue number of a periodical (not in italics). Use title case for the title of a journal; capitalize only the first word of a title of a book.

5. **A URL that will take readers directly to the source (for an electronic source)**. Note that the URL is not underlined (do not hit the “enter” key or the “space” key after the URL to prevent the underline)

Here are a few examples of correct APA References.

References

Ashe, D. D., & McCutcheon, L. E. (2001). Shyness, loneliness, and attitudes toward celebrities. *Current Research in Social Psychology, 6*(9). Retrieved from <http://www.uiowa.edu/%60grpproc/crisp/crisp.6.9.htm>

Moskowitz, H. (1990). Effects of alcohol on driving performance. *bNet*. Retrieved from http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi\_m0847/is\_nl\_v14/ai\_9353143

Sun safety. (2007, September). *Kid’s Health for Parents*. Retrieved from <http://www.kidshealth.org/parent/firstaid_safe/outdoor/sun_safety.html>

Stangor, C. (2011). *Introduction to psychology*. Irvington, NY: FlatWorld Knowledge.

Weiten, W. (2011). *Psychology themes and variations: Briefer version* (8th ed.). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth. 10

**Plagiarism**

Plagiarism is a serious form of cheating. To plagiarize is to claim another’s ideas or writing as one’s own. It is a form of stealing.

Plagiarism can take several forms. Students often associate the term with writers who copy entire passages from a book, magazine, encyclopedia, or other printed source and turn them in to an instructor as their work. This is, perhaps, the most blatant form of plagiarism as well as the easiest for instructors to detect. After all, instructors can usually recognize a passage lifted from *Time* magazine or other sources with distinctive styles. In fact, instructors can almost always recognize professional writing, even if they cannot immediately identify its source.

Plagiarism takes several other forms. For instance, students plagiarize when they borrow ideas from other writers without giving them credit. In this case, students might not even use the other writer’s language; nevertheless, they are stealing the writer’s content. Students also plagiarize when they present another student’s work (*or the work of a professional paper writing service, or work copied from a Web Site*) as their own. Thus, documentation involves more than just citing the source of direct quotations.

Because plagiarism is such a complex concept to come to grips with in its entirety, take note of the following summary definitions:

1. Plagiarism includes the **literal repetition without acknowledgement of the writings of another author.** All significant *words, phrases, clauses or passages* in a student’s paper which have been taken directly from the source material must be enclosed in quotation marks and acknowledged either in the text itself or in foot or endnotes.

2. Plagiarism includes borrowing without acknowledgement another writer’s **general plan, outline, or structure of argument** in the creation of one’s own organization.

3. Plagiarism includes borrowing another’s **ideas** and representing them as one’s own. To **paraphrase** the thoughts of another writer without acknowledging is to plagiarize.

4. Plagiarism includes allowing **any other person or organization (including those found on the internet)** to prepare the paper and submitting it as one’s own work.

**Plagiarism in the course will not be tolerated**. Penalties for plagiarism include, but are not limited to, failure in the course, suspension, and permanent expulsion from the university. For more information, consult the *Houston Community College Student Handbook* section on “Academic Honesty.” 12

**Research Paper Checklist**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Use the following checklist as a guide to ensure that you have completed all parts of this assignment. |  |
|  | |
|  Did you create a title page that follows the guidelines noted in the Research Paper Guide? |  |
|  Does your manuscript consist of at least 500 words? |  |
|  |  |
|  Is the title centered on the first line of your paper? |  |
|  Did you include a separate page with the title References? |  |
|  Do all of your electronic sources include detailed information about where and when you found them (not just http://www.something)? |  |
|  Did you include at least three references besides your textbook? |  |
|  |  |
|  Did you use APA format when completing the entire paper? |  |
|  Did you staple the entire paper together with one staple in the top left-hand corner? | |