

APA Style Manual for Communication Majors: Requirements and Guidelines

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It is essential that Communication majors master proper APA (American Psychological Association) formatting for their papers and citations, as this style is required of most written work in Communication courses. This document provides explanations and examples of current APA style so that students understand what is required. Please note that this document itself is fully formatted according to all APA requirements, so you may simply follow the formatting shown here as you write your paper, rather than trying to memorize all of the requirements. Further details about any topic or instance not covered or shown in this document may be found in the full 7th edition of the APA style manual (American Psychological Association, 2020).

The first major topic covered in this document is paper format, which will help you learn how to set up your paper according to APA standards. The second major topic covered in this document is source citations, including both how to briefly cite your sources in the text of your paper as well as how to provide full citations on a separate reference page at the end. The third major section of this document provides guidelines for style, such as preferred word choices and proper use of italics. The Appendix at the end provides a table of contents for you to more easily navigate the contents of this manual, and it demonstrates how to format an appendix if your paper requires one.

You may be asking yourself why paper and citation format are so terribly important. You likely have encountered several citation styles in your education thus far, and it may be frustrating that every professor seems to want something different. It may help to know that there is a reason for asking you to format your paper and source citations in a particular style: different disciplines have different standards and format preferences, and part of learning about that field or discipline includes learning how professionals in that field acknowledge and document their sources. Professors in the humanities may ask you to use MLA (Modern Language Association) or Chicago style

formatting, while professors in the social sciences may require APA style. Each style emphasizes the details that are most important in that discipline, and each discipline relies on uniformity of citation format so it is easy to identify the sources that have been used in a particular written work.

The following information will help you format your paper and your source citations according to proper APA style guidelines. Whenever you are in doubt about whether to capitalize a title, to include a page number in a citation, or to do anything else related to formatting your paper and citations, you should consult this document. There is nothing magical or mysterious about APA format, and its requirements do not change without warning. Therefore, carefully following the guidelines in this document will ensure that you always correctly adhere to APA requirements.

APA Requirements for Paper Format

Papers that adhere to APA guidelines look different from papers formatted according to other styles. The following topics will help you know which elements to include (and where), ensuring a paper that adheres fully to all APA format requirements.

Title Page

Every paper needs a title page, which indicates the full title of the document, the author(s), the institution, and the running head that will appear at the top of each page. See the title page on this document for an example of what a title page looks like in proper APA format, and follow it as a model when formatting the title page for your papers. Of course, your particular word choices should be your own, but the title of the paper should be positioned in the middle of the page, with a blank line below it, and then the author's name, department, and university as shown.

When creating your title page, you also will need to set up your document header, the information that will appear at the top of all of the pages of your paper. On the title page of this document, you will notice a "running head" in the upper left corner and a page number in the upper

right corner. The running head should be a shortened version of your full title (no more than 50 characters long including spaces) and typed in all capital letters. Be sure to follow the examples on this document exactly to ensure your formatting is correct.

Do not manually type your header and page number at the top of every page – your word processing program will do this for you once you set it up properly. In Microsoft Word, go to the “Insert” tab and click on “Header.” Type your running head on the left side, then tab over to the right side of the header. Still under the “Insert” tab, click on “Page Number” and select “Current Position” and “Plain Number.” When you exit the header, your running head and a page number automatically will appear at the top of all of the pages in your document.

If you are writing a full original research paper, your professor may require you to write an abstract. In APA formatting, this appears on the second page of the document, and there are specific requirements for its length and format. Please consult the full APA style manual for more information on formatting an abstract. Note that most papers you write for courses in the Communication major will not require you to write an abstract.

Margins, Font and Spacing

APA requires one-inch margins all the way around the document. You can set up your document to automatically apply one-inch margins to your entire document. Setting those margins as your default ensures that each new document has the correct margins. Justification should be left only, meaning that all of the text lines up on the left side but the text is jagged on the right side (just like in this document).

APA also requires use of a standard 12-point font and double-spacing of all text in the document, including the title page and the reference page at the end, just as this document illustrates. The only exception we have made in this document is that the examples we provide will

appear in a different font (Times New Roman) than the rest of the text (Calibri). This is only intended to help separate them visually from the surrounding explanations so that you can easily spot the examples. In all of your papers you should plan to use a single standard font throughout the entire paper, including your title page, headings, quotations, page numbers, and all other text.

Do not use a slightly smaller font size and slightly narrower line spacing and margins just to avoid going over the page limit stated in the assignment. If you cannot fit your paper within the maximum page requirements, then you need to go back through it and do some careful editing to remove excess verbiage wherever possible. Your professors will notice small adjustments to try to fit more content into your paper, and you may be penalized for them.

Headings

When you use headings in a paper, it is important to be consistent so it is clear which pieces of text constitute the major sections, and what are subsections within those sections. Think of your headings in terms of levels, with Level One being the largest or most overarching heading for your major sections. Level Two is for subheadings within your Level One sections, and so on. The following examples show the format for each of five levels of headings (as exemplified by the headings in this document):

Level One Heading is Centered and Boldfaced, With Significant Words Capitalized

Use a Level One Heading for the full title of your paper on the title page and at the top of page 2. Also use Level One Headings for the major sections of your paper, if you need to identify them. In this document, you will see that the full title on the title page and at the beginning of the text on page 2 are both formatted as Level One Headings, as are the three major sections of this document (APA Requirements for Paper Format, APA Requirements for Source Citations, and APA Requirements for Style). In most of the papers you write for your Communication courses, you will only need a title. It is

usually not necessary or desirable to use headings to identify the main points in a short paper. The heading on the separate reference page at the end of your paper (References) also will use a Level One Heading.

Level Two Heading is Left-Justified and Boldfaced, With Significant Words Capitalized

Use a Level Two Heading for subsections under each main section. In this document, you will see major subsections under each of the three main sections. Being able to identify which level each heading is will enable you to see how the topics relate to each other, a key component of good reading comprehension. You will only need Level Two Headings in a longer paper that has major sections and subsections that need to be identified for the reader.

Level Three Heading is Left-Justified, Boldfaced, Italicized, and Capitalized

Use a Level Three Heading if your subsections have subsections that need to be identified. This is rare in short student papers, so you may never need to use this type of heading. However, some of the articles you read may have this kind of heading, so it is helpful to be able to identify them.

It is important that you never allow a heading to become separated from its related text; if the heading is the last line at the bottom of a page and the text starts at the top of the next page, you should insert a page break above the heading so that it remains with the text on the next page.

References and Appendixes

APA has guidelines for how sources are cited, both within the text of the paper and on the reference page at the end of the paper. The proper format for both in-text and reference page citations will be discussed in the next major section, but for now we will note that the full citations for all sources cited in the paper must appear on a separate reference page after your last page of text. Appendixes, which may contain additional information, tables, or figures, appear on separate pages after the reference page(s). This document contains one appendix, which shows the basic format.

APA Requirements for Source Citations

It is imperative to give credit to all sources from which you obtained information that you use in your paper, both in the paper where that information appears as well as at the end of your paper. Failure to acknowledge your sources is plagiarism, a very serious offense. Plagiarism occurs anytime you pass off someone else's ideas as your own, and accidental plagiarism is every bit as punishable as intentional plagiarism. Therefore, you need to understand how to cite your sources properly so it is always clear where each piece of information came from in the course of composing your written work. Before we discuss the actual formatting requirements, let us consider some issues related to the use of sources.

Many, if not most, of the writing assignments you will have in college will require you to locate and make use of materials that help support your ideas, whether you are being asked to apply a concept from the textbook to a particular situation, or you are being asked to provide evidence to bolster your arguments on a particular issue. There are many challenges inherent in this process, and knowing what some of them are will help you be more effective and efficient in using and citing those sources.

What Constitutes a Credible Source

The quality of your written work can only be as good as the quality of the sources upon which you rely for support and substance within your paper. Your instructor typically will specify the kinds of sources they expect you to use for a particular assignment, but some guidelines apply to all written work in Communication courses. First, you are ethically obligated to assess the quality of any source you are considering using. This means verifying the accuracy of the contents and making sure you can ascertain whether there are any inaccuracies or inherent bias within that source. It also means being able to distinguish between various electronic sources you may encounter; it makes a big difference if

the content you are reading was written by a blogger for their own personal site, published by a reputable organization, or created by a group that has a particular leaning, to name just a few possibilities.

Second, there are certain kinds of sources that are generally not considered acceptable. Wikipedia, for example, is not considered a credible source for the vast majority of the writing assignments you will encounter in college. While much of the information contained in its entries may very well be accurate, and it can provide some helpful background information on a topic, the fact that anyone can contribute to those entries means you have no way of assessing the quality of the information you find there. Wikipedia should never be your only source of information, it should always be treated with skepticism, and it should never be cited in your papers. Furthermore, any encyclopedia generally will not count as a source because it is considered “general knowledge” and while it may provide some useful background, it is not considered a *source* in the same sense as someone who has published her or his ideas, arguments, data, etc.

Keeping Track of What Came from Where

When you consult many different sources for a single paper, be sure to carefully keep track of which content came from where. Any time you take words or ideas from a source, it is recommended that you get into the habit of noting the source right away. Do not assume it will be easy to go back later and figure out the source from which each piece of information came, as it can be difficult and time-consuming. Do not ever let the information become separated from the citation, as you may have to spend a great deal of time hunting that information down again so you can cite it correctly.

Sometimes it is not clear exactly what the source is, or what kind of source it is. This can become especially problematic when conducting research on the internet – you may have found some great information, but you can’t tell who wrote it, where it came from, or if it was taken from

somewhere else and reprinted online. Always be sure to obtain as much information as you can about any source you hope to use and cite in your paper. If you cannot find any identifying information, then you should be very skeptical about the contents of that source, as it becomes impossible to evaluate its legitimacy or credibility.

Source Citations within the Text of Your Document

Every time you include information that came from someone other than yourself, you must provide a brief source citation in the text of your paper. You will provide a full citation at the end of the paper (see “Source Citations on Your Reference Page” below), but you also must indicate in the paper itself which information came from where, right next to that information. You may choose to include this information in one of two ways, either as a direct quotation (taking their words verbatim) or as a paraphrase (putting their ideas into your own words). In both cases, you must acknowledge the source of that information. The following sections explain the differences in purpose and citation formatting for direct quotations and paraphrasing.

Direct Quotation

When keeping the original author’s exact wording intact is crucial, you may choose to represent their ideas verbatim (exactly word-for-word) in the text of your paper and use quotation marks. Please note that direct quotations should be used very sparingly and only when absolutely necessary. Direct quotations often break up the flow of the paper, and when overused, they may suggest to the professor that you did not fully understand the ideas you are representing in the paper. The vast majority of the time you should succinctly paraphrase your sources’ ideas (see below for format guidelines).

When you have decided that a direct quotation is warranted, you may format your citation in one of two ways, depending on how you wish to compose the sentence in which it will appear.

Imagine that you have just found a great quotation in an article by S. Cunningham that was published in 2018 in an academic journal called *Environmental Communication*. This article is a narrative analysis of how fracking was covered in national television evening news programs. You wish to use the author's exact words to describe the major results from the study, and you have two options. You can either mention the author in the sentence itself or in the parenthetical citation. Can you detect the subtle formatting differences in the following two examples? Both are correct:

Cunningham (2018) found in her study on television news coverage of fracking that “four features of narrative are central to stories that began with controversy and contamination, but then shifted to boomtowns and energy independence, suggesting that news coverage became more industry-oriented over time” (p. 804).

A recent study of television news coverage of fracking found that “four features of narrative are central to stories that began with controversy and contamination, but then shifted to boomtowns and energy independence, suggesting that news coverage became more industry-oriented over time” (Cunningham, 2018, p. 804).

First, note that we did not use Cunningham's first name or the title of the article or source in either of these examples. Also, note that the year always directly follows the author's name, regardless of where the name appears. In both cases, the page number was provided because it was a direct quotation. Lastly, note that the period came after the parenthetical reference, not at the end of the quotation. These are all important hallmarks of APA citation style. Your decision to use one of these two options should be based on how you want the sentence to flow, which is a stylistic consideration. Both options are correct for citing a direct quotation.

In situations where you are directly quoting text from a source that does not provide page numbers, such as online sources, you should refer to either the paragraph number and/or the

heading under which the quoted text can be found. Here is an example of an in-text citation for a direct quotation from a web page:

“Public speaking is often said to be the greatest fear a person can have, even greater than death.

Consequently, researchers have long been examining the causes and treatments for public speaking anxiety to help individuals overcome this fear” (Finn, 2008, para. 1).

Longer direct quotations require a special block formatting. APA requires that a quotation of 40 or more words must appear in a freestanding block of typewritten lines without quotation marks. Start block quotations on a new line, indent all lines in the block, and double-space the entire block quotation, as shown in the example on p. 35 of this document. If you are providing the citation at the end, finish the last sentence with a period before listing the parenthetical reference. Here again we must emphasize that direct quotations, especially lengthy ones, should be used only when absolutely necessary for your particular purposes.

Paraphrasing

As noted above, you should paraphrase in the vast majority of instances where you are using others’ ideas. This helps ensure good flow in your writing because the phrasing is your own. It also allows you to provide as much or as little detail as you deem appropriate for your particular needs, and it does a better job of demonstrating your correct understanding of what you’re discussing in your paper. Be sure that your paraphrase accurately captures the essence of the author’s ideas and that you have not taken those ideas out of context. As was the case with direct quotations, you have two options for representing these ideas in the text of your paper:

Rogers (1994) argued that critical and empirical scholars can learn much from each other if they can overcome the natural conflict inherent in their different approaches.

It has been argued that critical and empirical scholars can learn much from each other if they can overcome the natural conflict inherent in their different approaches (Rogers, 1994).

Note that in these cases no page number is provided, the author and year still appear next to each other in exactly the same way as before, and the period still comes at the very end of the sentence. Of course, you may introduce the idea however you wish; your phrasing for this sentence and the surrounding text should provide good flow and make it clear why you are including this person's idea here. The idea, whether quoted or paraphrased, should not be left to stand alone; it should be well integrated into the text of your paper, with a clear connection to your main point, argument, or topic.

Who and How Should I Cite?

The preceding examples are for situations in which one author is clearly named. However, there will be times when you wish to use content from a source with multiple authors, a source with no named author, or a source in which the author is citing another author. These types of situations are explained in this section.

Two Authors. As you may have guessed, the in-text citation format changes slightly when there is more than one author. In our examples above, Cunningham was the only author of the article we were citing. However, suppose we wish to include information from the book, *Boxing Plato's Shadow: An Introduction to the Study of Human Communication* by Michael Dues and Mary Brown, published in 2004. In this case, you still have two options for incorporating the citation into your sentence as a paraphrase, but the formatting will differ:

Dues and Brown (2004) note that communication skills are listed as crucial in nearly every study of job skills being sought today in prospective employees.

Communication skills are listed as crucial in nearly every study of job skills being sought today in prospective employees (Dues & Brown, 2004).

Note that when the two authors are mentioned in the sentence itself (in the first example), the word “and” is used between them. When the authors appear in parentheses at the end of the sentence (as in the second example), an ampersand (&) is used between the two names. Also note that no page number is provided in these citations because they are not direct quotations but rather paraphrases of the authors’ original words.

Three or More Authors. When a source has three or more authors, you will simply name the first author followed by “et al.” (which means “and others” in Latin). So, if you were citing the book *Exploring Human Communication*, which was written by three people and published in 2000, your first in-text citation might look like this:

There are many different definitions of communication because of the complex nature of the communication process (DeWine et al., 2000).

Notice that there is no comma after the first author’s name. This is because the phrase “DeWine and others” does not require a comma. In cases where you have multiple sources that begin with DeWine, have three or more authors, and are published in the same year, you would need to include the second (and possibly the third) author in the citation to avoid confusion about which source you’re referring to in your in-text citation. However, these are rare occurrences and will not usually be the case for the sources you use in a single paper. See the full APA style manual for more details about these kinds of citation situations.

No Named Author. Some sources you may wish to use will not have a named author. In those cases, in the text of the paper you will need to cite a shortened version of the article title, enclosed in quotation marks. Let’s say you were reading the *New York Times* and found an article entitled, “Poll

Finds Americans' Priorities Shifting in the New Millennium" with no author identified. Here is what the in-text citation would look like for that source:

Even six years after 9/11, a national poll found that Americans were still far more concerned about national security than they were about the economy ("Poll Finds," 2007).

This is one of the only times you will ever use quotation marks with a title in APA format.

Citing a Source within a Source. The last situation we will discuss here is when the source you are reading (for example, that textbook by DeWine et al. that we mentioned above) mentions information from another source and cites it. Let's say you are reading the following passage from DeWine et al.'s (2000) book and want to refer to part of it in your paper:

Organizational climate has been linked to satisfaction and commitment so that the more satisfied employees were with communication, decision making, leadership, motivation, and goal setting, the more likely they were to be committed to the organization (Guzley, 1992). Elements leading to a positive and rich climate also were identified by Peters and Waterman (1984) ...

What needs to be clear when you use and cite this information is who exactly the original author was. Keep in mind that you have read this passage in the book by DeWine et al., but these are not their ideas. If you plan to use some of Guzley's ideas, then you need to make it clear that they are in fact his ideas. Here is an example of what your sentence and citation might look like:

Guzley (1992) found that satisfaction with communication and other important processes was related to an individual's commitment to the organization (as cited in DeWine et al., 2000).

What you see here is an acknowledgment of Guzley's idea and the fact that you found it in the book by DeWine et al. (2000). If you don't name Guzley at the beginning of the sentence, your parenthetical citation would look like this: (Guzley, 1992, as cited in DeWine et al., 2000). On the reference page, you would provide the full citation for the DeWine et al. (2000) book. Because you

have told the reader where you found the information, there is no need to provide a full citation for Guzley (1992) on the reference page.

We need to emphasize that it usually is preferable for you to obtain and read the original work and cite that directly; this is the only way to be certain that you are correctly representing the original author's ideas. However, we understand that when you are referring to content from your textbooks, particularly at the intermediate level of study, you will not always be able to locate the original source. In these situations, we expect you to follow the guidelines described here.

When and Where Should I Cite?

You always should provide a source citation the very first time you include information from that source. However, if the information in the subsequent sentences also comes from that source, students often wonder if they need to provide a parenthetical citation after each of those sentences as well. Knowing when, where and how often to cite is a skill that comes with practice, but the following are general guidelines that apply to most situations.

Repeated Citations. As noted above, you must always provide a source citation the very first time you use information from that particular source, and the citation should be included in that sentence. If the information in the next sentence also comes from that source, you can avoid having to provide the citation again by making it clear that you are continuing to use information that also is from that same source. Consider the following example:

Dillon and Bushman (2017) conducted an experiment to test whether exposure to a film with guns influenced children's use of guns during play. They found that participants who saw movie characters using guns were more likely to hold a gun and pull the trigger, as well as play more aggressively.

The use of "they" in the second sentence makes it clear that the information that follows is still from that same source. Of course, you have many different options for referring back to the author or

source without providing the full citation. Choose the wording that makes the most sense for your particular context and that will make it clear to whom you are referring.

Distinguishing Between Your Own and Others' Ideas. Sometimes you will have a sentence that is partially your own idea and partially information from a source you have found. The most important thing in deciding where and how to include the source citation is to make sure it is clear which part is which. The following example illustrates the use of a concept from a textbook and its application to the author's own life:

I often have noticed the role of the looking-glass self, which refers to the image of ourselves that we see in the gaze of another person (West & Turner, 2018), in my own relationships with friends, family and significant others.

The location of this citation makes it clear that the material directly in front of it is from that particular source, while the rest of the sentence is the author's own idea. Putting the citation at the very end of this sentence would imply that West and Turner (2018) discussed the looking-glass self as it pertains to your own relationships, which is not the case.

Distinguishing Between Multiple Sources. It is especially important to be careful about citation location when there are multiple sources being cited in a single document. Using a pronoun such as "they" may not be enough to help the reader know which source you're referring to, especially if more than one of your sources has multiple authors. In some cases, you may need to emphasize the differences between what two or more sources say, as in the following example: While Smith and Jones (2004) found that most patients prefer to be actively involved in their own healthcare, Anderson and Schneider (2005) found the opposite to be the case in their study of the same phenomenon. What may help explain this difference is that the participants in Anderson and Schneider's (2005) study were older and perhaps less prone to participation in the first place.

In this excerpt, it is clear which source said what. It is always important to include the date immediately after the author(s), especially when there may be multiple sources by the same author but published in different years. The author who wrote the excerpt above may go on to say: Later research by Anderson and Schneider (2007) confirmed that older patients tend to prefer less of an active role than their younger counterparts.

This is why we always include the year immediately after the author(s), as it helps us know which “Anderson and Schneider” on the reference page corresponds to which piece of information in the text.

Multiple Sources for a Single Piece of Information. A final situation is worth mentioning.

Sometimes you will need to cite more than one source for a single piece of information because that information can be found in both places. For example, let’s say that both Smith and Jones (2004) and Chang (2006) found that most patients prefer to be actively involved in their own care. Here is an example of how you would acknowledge that in your in-text citation:

At least two different studies have found that most patients prefer to be actively involved in their own health care (Chang, 2006; Smith & Jones, 2004).

Here you will notice that the sources were listed in alphabetical order, with Chang coming before Smith, and the two sources are separated by a semi-colon.

Source Citations on Your Reference Page

You may have noticed that the information contained in the in-text citation is very limited. If you were reading a paper with the example citations provided above, you may be wondering, “Who the heck is Rogers?” and “What kind of a source did this information come from?” These are good questions, and they are answered on the reference page, which is the very last page(s) of your paper. Brief citations are provided in text so the reader can then refer to the reference page to find out

more details about that source. Providing the full source citation in the text of the paper every time information from that source is used would get very cumbersome and would extend the length of the paper unnecessarily. Keeping the in-text citations brief and providing the full citations at the very end of the paper is a more efficient way to get the same information across to the reader.

The heading on your reference page, “References,” indicates that these are all of the sources that have been *referred to* in the text of your paper. This is not a bibliography that indicates all of the sources you may have consulted (even if you did not use information from them). Listing a source on your reference page means there is at least one in-text citation for that source in your paper.

Different source types have slightly different reference page citation formats, although all citations will follow the same general format: Author. (Date). Title. *Source*. Publisher. All citations on your reference page must be double-spaced, just as they are shown here and in the references for this document. This section provides citation formatting for a variety of types of sources.

Books

In order to cite a book, you will need to know the author or authors’ names, the year of publication, the full title of the book, and the publisher. If the book is an edition other than the first, you also will need that information. If the book was edited by one or more people and the individual chapters were written by other people, you also will need that information, as well as the title of the chapter from which your information came. Each of these instances are described in this section.

Book with a Single Author. The following example, which is the full citation for a source we mentioned earlier, shows the proper citation for a book with a single author:

Rogers, E. M. (1994). *A history of communication study: A biographical approach*. The Free Press.

Note that the first and middle names are not spelled out – only initials are used. Also note that while the entire book title is italicized, only the first word of the title is capitalized. The exception is the use

of proper nouns like people's names (e.g., Kennedy) or places (e.g., Minnesota). This book also happens to have a subtitle, and the first word after the colon also is capitalized. Putting the title in italics and capitalizing only the first word and proper nouns is how APA format lets you know this source is a book (and not a magazine or some other type of source). The last element is the name of the publisher. Note that there is a period after each component of this citation, almost as if there are three distinct "sentences." When the full citation requires multiple lines, the first line should be left-justified and all subsequent lines are indented (see the references for this document for examples).

Book with Two Authors. As we noted earlier when discussing the in-text citation example with two authors, it also is important to keep the authors in the same order in the reference page citation as how they appear on the book:

Dues, M., & Brown, M. (2004). *Boxing Plato's shadow: An introduction to the study of human communication*. McGraw-Hill.

Once again, the author's last name is followed by a comma and one or two initials. A comma and an ampersand (&) separate the two authors. The second author's name is in the exact same format as the first author: last name followed by a comma and the initial(s). It is important to remember not to spell out first or middle names in any kind of citation. The year again directly follows the authors (which is always the case for every kind of citation in APA format). Because this is a book, the title is italicized and only the first word and the proper noun, "Plato" are capitalized. Again, the last element is the publisher. Each element has a period after it.

Book in an Edition Other Than the First. This is a useful format to know, as most of your textbooks specify a particular edition number:

West, R., & Turner, L.H. (2018). *Introducing communication theory: Analysis and application* (6th ed.). McGraw-Hill.

The authors appear in the same format as before, followed by the year of publication. The book title, as always, is italicized with only the first word (and the first word after the colon) being capitalized.

The main difference is that in this case, the edition number appears in parentheses right after the book title, and it is followed by a period. This is because the edition number is part of the “sentence” in which the book title appears. Again, the last element is the publisher.

Chapter in an Edited Book. Sometimes you will come across a book in which each chapter was written by different authors, and the people listed on the cover are the editors rather than authors of the book. In this case, you will cite the particular chapter(s) from which you are using content. Here is the format for a chapter in an edited book:

Cegala, D. J., & Broz, S. L. (2003). Provider and patient communication skills training. In T.

Thompson, A. M. Dorsey, K. I. Miller, & R. Parrott (Eds.), *Handbook of health communication* (pp. 95-120). Lawrence Erlbaum.

The authors of this particular chapter appear at the beginning of the citation, in the same format as described above, followed by the year in which the book was published. In this example, however, the next element is the chapter title (Provider and patient communication skills training). Note that this chapter title is not italicized, but the first word is capitalized. This formatting style tells you this is the title of the chapter, and not the title of the book. Following the word “In,” the book’s editors are listed next. Note that their initials come first (unlike the typical format for authors, in which the last name came first). The fact that they are the editors is noted in “(Eds.),” which appears before the title of the book. The book title is formatted the same way as in our previous examples: italicized with only the first word being capitalized. Next, the chapter’s page numbers are included in parentheses to help the reader locate the chapter if needed. Again, the last elements are the city and publisher. The

in-text citation for this source would include the authors of the chapter (Cegala & Broz, 2003), not the editors of the book.

If the source you need to refer to appears as a chapter in an edited book that is in an edition other than the first, the citation combines the elements of these last two examples and looks like this:

Spitzberg, B. H. (2008). Perspectives on nonverbal communication skills. In L. K. Guerrero & M. L. Hecht (Eds.), *The nonverbal communication reader* (3rd ed., pp. 21-26). Waveland.

In this case, the edition number is listed right before the page numbers.

Periodicals

A periodical is any kind of publication that is published on a regular basis. Periodicals include magazines (e.g., *Sports Illustrated*), newspapers (e.g., *New York Times*), scholarly journals (e.g., *Journal of Health Communication*), and other regularly published sources. In order to cite any kind of periodical, you will need to know the author or authors' names, the full title of the article, the full title of the periodical, the date of publication, the volume and issue number, and the page numbers on which the article appears. As with books, different kinds of periodicals require slightly different citations, but the general format remains the same.

Magazine Article. Magazines feature articles on timely topics and are intended for the general public. They may contain information from research or experts, but the authors of these articles may not be experts on the subject. This differentiates magazine articles from scholarly journal articles (discussed later). Here is an example of a citation for a standard print magazine article:

Kenny, P. (2015, August). The food addiction. *Scientific American*, 24(2), 46-51.

The first element, as always, is the author, followed by the date. In this case, however, the date reflects the nature of this particular publication – it is published monthly and therefore the citation

includes the month as well as year. The year comes before the month, with a comma in between them. The article title comes next, and it is not italicized, underlined, or placed in quotation marks. Also, only the first word is capitalized (along with any proper nouns and the first word after the colon, if there is one). The title of the magazine comes next, and it is both italicized and all words are capitalized. Periodicals are the only kind of source that is both italicized and the first letter of all significant words are capitalized in APA format. In this example, you can see that the comma after the title is italicized, and it is followed by the volume number, which also appears in italics. Immediately after the italicized volume number is the issue number, which appears in parentheses and is not italicized. The page numbers of the article appear at the end of the citation.

Of course, students will often find magazine articles online rather than printed hard copy. In these cases, you will include all of the elements identified above plus either the URL where you obtained it or the DOI (digital object identifier) where it may be accessed. Here are examples of citations for magazine articles that were obtained from each of these magazine's websites:

Bergeson, S. (2019, January 4). Really cool neutral plasmas. *Science*, 363(6422), 33-34.

<https://doi.org/10.1126/science.aau7988>

Bustillos, M. (2013, March 19). On video games and storytelling: An interview with Tom Bissell. *The New Yorker*. <https://www.newyorker.com/books/page-turner/on-video-games-and-storytelling-an-interview-with-tom-bissell>

It's important for you to be able to identify the type of source you are dealing with – in this case, whether the source is a periodical or simply a website – so you can format your citation appropriately.

Newspaper Article. Here is an example of a citation for a print newspaper article:

Morales, N. (2006, October 8). Wittenberg student takes pride in her Ecuadorian roots. *Springfield News-Sun*, p. A9.

Once again, the author comes first, followed by the date. As with the magazine article example above, this citation features more than just the year. Because this newspaper is published daily, the date is provided along with the year and month. The article title, as always, is neither italicized nor underlined, and only the first word (and the proper noun) are capitalized. The newspaper title is both italicized and all words are capitalized. There is no volume number. Lastly, because this is a newspaper article, the “p.” is included before the page number. This is the only time you will use “p.” on the reference page. When you obtain a newspaper article from that newspaper’s website, the citation should include the URL:

Guarino, B. (2017, December 4). How will humanity react to alien life? Psychologists have some predictions. *The Washington Post*. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/speaking-of-science/wp/2017/12/04/how-will-humanity-react-to-alien-life>

Periodical Sources with No Named Author. Sometimes you will come across magazine or newspaper articles that have no person named as the author. We discussed the in-text citation for this kind of source on p. 14. As with the in-text citation, the reference page citation also looks different from the standard format:

Poll finds Americans’ priorities shifting in the new millennium. (2007, January 22). *New York Times*, pp. B9, B12.

Because there is no named author, the title of the article comes first. As with all article titles, this one is not italicized, boldfaced, or put in quotation marks, and only the first word (and the proper noun) are capitalized. The date still comes second in the citation, but in this case the day of publication also is specified. Note the order of the elements of the date: the year comes first, followed by the month and date. In instances where the periodical is published monthly, you would only include the year and month, in that same order. The title of the periodical appears next in italics and with all words

capitalized. The last element of this citation is the page number. In this case the article appears on two different pages in this newspaper; therefore, the double “pp.” is used to indicate there are multiple pages.

Scholarly Journal Article. In many courses in the Communication major, you will be expected to find, read and properly cite academic literature. Scholarly journals are different from other periodical sources, like magazines. This literature typically describes original research that has gone through a rigorous peer-review process and was published in one of our discipline’s journals. Here is a citation for an article in a scholarly journal:

Waggoner, C. E. (2004). Disciplining female sexuality in *Survivor*. *Feminist Media Studies*, 4(3), 217-220.

As with other kinds of periodical citations, the author’s last name is followed by their initials. The title of the article is not italicized or underlined, and only the first word is capitalized (but note that the name of the television program is capitalized and italicized to set it apart from the rest of the title). The name of the journal (the periodical in which this article appeared) is both italicized and capitalized. The journal title is followed by a comma and the volume number (both of which also are italicized). After the volume number is the issue number in parentheses and another comma (not italicized) and the page numbers on which the article appears. As with the magazine example above, note that there is no “vol.” or “pp.” in the citation. We know that this article appears in volume 3 of this journal because of where and how the number four appears in this citation. We also know that the article is on pages 217-220 because the page numbers always come at the end of the citation for a periodical source; as with most other citations, there is no need to include “pp.”

It is important to note that even though you may have located and accessed a scholarly journal article online (perhaps using a database like CommAbstracts or Social Science Citation Index),

it is not a website but rather an electronic document. In most cases it will be the electronic version of an article that appears in print, and the citation should follow the format shown above. However, the latest APA guidelines also require inclusion of the DOI (digital object identifier) when it is provided, which is a unique and permanent link to the article on the internet, as the very last element of the reference page citation. This information can be found on the article itself. Here is what a citation for a scholarly journal article looks like with the DOI included:

Fox, J., & Warber, K. M. (2014). Social networking sites in romantic relationships: Attachment, uncertainty, and partner surveillance on Facebook. *CyberPsychology, Behavior, & Social Networking, 17*(1), 3-7. <https://doi.org/10.1089/cyber.2012.0667>

Digital Sources

Website content and other digital materials generally follow the same basic format as you would use for citing any other type of source, with some additional information. It is important to determine who the author is, what the title of the page or article is, and the date the material was posted/authored/updated, if possible. You also will need to specify the full URL where you obtained it.

Here is a sample reference page citation for an article located on the CNN website:

Asmelash, L. (2019, August 14). Social media use may harm teens' mental health by disrupting positive activities, study says. <https://www.cnn.com/2019/08/13/health/social-media-mental-health-trnd/index.html>

Notice that the elements appear in the same order and formatting as other source types we have discussed. The author is listed first, followed by the date. Use the date information provided on the site, which in some cases may only be a year. If no date is provided, then you simply list "(n.d.)" where the date would normally appear. The next element, as always, is the title of the source. For web content, this may be difficult to discern, but there should be a title at the top of the page you are

accessing. The title is not italicized, boldfaced, or put in quotation marks, and only the first word and any proper nouns are capitalized. The last element is the full URL (location) of the webpage, which is important because it enables your readers to access the original text if needed.

If no author is listed, then the citation follows the same format as a periodical with no author, described above. This is frequently the case on websites, where an unnamed staff writer may have authored the piece. Here is a reference page citation for an article located on the CNN website that has no named author but does list a date:

More Americans Googling themselves. (2007, December 17). <http://www.cnn.com/2007/TECH/12/17/personal.search.ap/index.html>

In this case, the title of the article goes where the author normally would appear, followed by the date of the article and the time and place of retrieval.

Sometimes the author of the website content you wish to use is an organization rather than a person. Here is an example of the reference page citation for some content from the World Health Organization website:

World Health Organization. (2007). Avian influenza: Situation in Pakistan. http://www.who.int/csr/don/2007_12_15/en/index.html

Because the organization is the author of this content, it is named in the place where we indicate the author. The article title is provided exactly as it appears on the webpage itself. We have specified exactly when and where we located it, enabling the reader to find the same content if needed. The first in-text citation would follow the same format as for other types of sources, spelling out the name of the organization:

There have been 8 suspected human cases of avian influenza infection in the Peshawar area of Pakistan (World Health Organization [WHO], 2007).

All subsequent in-text citations would use the organization name's abbreviation followed by the year: Pakistan's Ministry of Health is taking steps to investigate and contain this event (WHO, 2007).

This is only an issue when the author is an organization whose name is frequently abbreviated. In other instances where the organization may not be widely known by the abbreviation, the organization's name should be written out every time.

Note that some print publications are available online. In these cases, it is acceptable to cite them as if they were a print source. You may have obtained the full text of an article online via a search database, but your citations would still follow the basic format for an article. If it is content that only appears online, however, then you need to follow the guidelines for electronic sources.

Personal Communications

Sometimes you may need to cite information that comes from an interview or phone call, some electronic communications (e.g., e-mail messages or non-archived discussion groups), or other sources that do not provide recoverable data. As unpublished sources, these are cited in the text of the document but not on the reference page. The in-text citation provides the source's first initial, last name, and date:

T.K. Lutes (personal communication, April 18, 2007) notes the applicability of uncertainty reduction theory across multiple contexts.

Media Sources

Sometimes you may want to refer to content from various media sources, such as a television program, a film, or a radio broadcast. The basic format is the same, except the producer, writer, and/or director is listed in place of the author, that person's job title is explicitly identified, and the type of media content is specified. Here is an example of the full citation for a motion picture:

Scorsese, M. (Producer), & Lonergan, K. (Writer/Director). (2000). *You can count on me* [Motion picture]. Paramount Pictures.

The names and functions of the primary contributors are provided at the beginning of the citation, followed by the year the film was released. The film title is italicized but only the first word is capitalized, and it is immediately followed by the type of media in brackets. The film studio appears last. The in-text citation would look like any other kind of in-text citation, treating Scorsese and Lonergan as if they were the authors.

There may be times when you need to make reference to a single television broadcast. Here is an example of the full citation for this kind of media:

Crystal, L. (Executive Producer). (1993, October 11). *The MacNeil/Lehrer news hour* [Television broadcast]. Public Broadcasting Service.

The name follows the same format as for all other kinds of citations. The next element is the job title, followed by the date. The program title is italicized but not capitalized (except for the first word and proper nouns). The type of media content again is specified between brackets, followed by the city and the name of the network that produced the broadcast. When you cite this program in the text of your document, it looks like any other kind of in-text source citation: last name and year.

The format differs slightly when the television program you wish to cite is either a series or a single episode from a series. When referring to the entire series, only the producer is needed:

Miller, R. (Producer). (1989). *The mind* [Television series]. WNET.

The in-text citation for the series is simple: use Miller as the “author” and 1989 as the date.

When citing a single television episode from a series, you will need to acknowledge the writer and director of that particular episode as well as the producer of the series from which it comes. Here is an example of a reference to a particular episode from a television series:

Hall, B. (Writer), & Bender, J. (Director). (1991). The rules of the game [Television series episode]. In J. Sander (Producer), *I'll fly away*. New York Broadcasting Company.

The in-text citation for this single episode would list Hall and Bender as the “authors” and 1991 as the date.

Note that the same basic format has been used throughout all of the media and broadcast citation examples. If you are citing content from a different kind of media, just follow these basic guidelines, making sure to specify the nature of the media, as shown in these examples. When in doubt about how to cite a particular kind of media content, however, you should consult the full APA style manual.

Rare and Unique Citation Situations

It is not possible in this short document to cover all of the possible citation needs you may have in your Communication coursework. When you have a situation that is not covered here, you should consult the latest official APA style manual (available at the library’s reference desk). However, here we describe a few issues that students may encounter along the way.

In rare instances you may find and wish to use two sources by the same author(s) and with the same date. In that case, you simply assign an “a” to one and a “b” to the other right after the year, and make sure that letter appears both in text and on the reference page, so it is clear to which source you are referring. How do you know which source gets the “a”? That depends on which appears first on the reference page. In this case, you would use the book or article title to determine which should come first alphabetically (since the first author’s last name does not help you decide which of these two entries to list first). Here is an example of two sources by the same authors that were published in the same year. If you were using both of these sources in your paper, you would add the “a” and “b” based on these two sources’ alphabetical order on the reference page:

Gudykunst, W. B., & Ting-Toomey, S. (2005a). Effects of culture on communication. *Journal of Intercultural Communication, 45*, 23-40.

Gudykunst, W. B., & Ting-Toomey, S. (2005b). Value orientations as a medium for cultural transmission. *Communication Monographs, 89*, 59-73.

Here is what these sources would look like in the text of the paper:

Gudykunst and Ting-Toomey (2005a) noted that a person's culture can have a significant effect on communication expectations and preferences. Their work also suggests that these effects occur through particular cultural value orientations that a person develops as a result of being raised in that culture (Gudykunst & Ting-Toomey, 2005b).

You may never be in a situation like this where you need to assign a letter to sources that have the same author(s) and year, but it is helpful for you to know what these letters mean should you come across them in your research.

Second, you may wish to cite sources by two different authors that have the same last name. In the text of your paper, you can help the reader determine which content came from which author. Imagine you had the following two sources listed on your reference page, both of which are cited in your paper:

Jones, G. R. (2003). Violent media images as primary sources for understanding conflict. *Journal of Media Studies, 22*, 123-135.

Jones, P. E. (2005). Pro-social video games and the common good: Understanding how young girls experience socialization. *Journal of Applied Communication Research, 52*, 443-455.

In this case, it helps that these two sources are from different years, but you can do more to ensure that your reader does not confuse these two authors when they encounter them in the text of your paper:

G. R. Jones (2003) studied the effects of violent media images on young boys, while research by P. E. Jones (2005) focused on the role that pro-social video games play in young girls' socialization.

This is the only situation in which initials may be included in your in-text citations. This makes it clear to the reader which is which. Again, this is a rare situation but it is helpful for you to know what it looks like when it occurs.

Formatting the Reference Page

Once you have all of the source citations properly formatted, it's time to put the reference page together. Under the heading "References" (centered, boldfaced and capitalized), you will organize your sources into alphabetical order according to each source's first author's last name. Do not change the order of authors within any of your citations; only the reference page list overall should be alphabetized. In the case where there is no author, you will use the first word of the article title for alphabetical order. Your reference page appears at the end of your paper and is on its own separate page (complete with running head and page number). See the last pages of this document for the full listing of all sources cited within this document; the references listed there appear exactly as they do in the examples above.

Note that the heading for the reference page is simply centered, boldfaced and capitalized. It should not appear in quotation marks, it should not have italicized or underlined font, and it should not be any larger than any of the other text in your document. The only time the word itself changes is when only one source is listed – in that case, the singular "Reference" is a more accurate portrayal of what appears on that page. Recall that for each entry, the first line is left-justified and all subsequent lines are indented. Finally, note that everything is double-spaced on your reference page, just as the rest of your text was throughout the entire document.

APA Requirements for Style

There are many style considerations in a single composition, and APA has rules for nearly all of them. When you should write out numbers (as opposed to using the number itself), how you should format a table, and what kind of content to put in an appendix are just a few examples of the many types of style-related guidance APA provides. This section is not intended to be an exhaustive list of every style issue you will face in your written work; instead, it functions to highlight some of the issues with which students most often struggle. For full information about other kinds of style issues, please see the full APA style manual.

Use of Italics

Italics should be used sparingly and with clear intention. Use of italics for emphasis should be strategic and limited to situations when the significance might otherwise be lost. If possible, it is preferable to use the surrounding text (syntax) to help draw attention to the word you might be tempted to italicize; for example, you may wish to use contrastive words or phrases, such as “however, ...” or “contrary to what was expected, ...” instead of italics.

Italics also may be used in cases where you are intentionally introducing an important key term, concept or terminology that you will be discussing or addressing in some way, as in the following example:

First-order effects refer to the learning of facts from media sources (Gerbner, Gross, Morgan, & Signorelli, 1986, as cited in West & Turner, 2018).

The term is italicized the first time it is mentioned but not thereafter.

While you typically should not include the title of books or periodicals in the text of your paper, there may be times when you want to mention a title because the title itself or the work

overall is the subject of discussion. In these cases, italics are used for representing book and periodical titles in your paper:

Hofstede's (2001) landmark work, *Culture's Consequences*, provides an in-depth look at more than fifty cultures' rankings on four major cultural value orientations. ...

While other newspapers still largely were ignoring the crisis, the *New York Times* painstakingly reported on all of the issues and events related to the genocide occurring in Darfur. ...

In both of these cases, we are not directly using specific content from these sources, but rather discussing the sources themselves. These are the only kinds of cases in which you are justified in listing the book or periodical title in the text of your document. Note, however, that in the first case (Hofstede, 2001), you would need to include the full citation on your reference page because you are referring to a particular publication that your reader may wish to access for her- or himself. In the second case, you need not (and in fact you cannot) provide a full citation on the reference page because you are not referring to a particular article or issue. The in-text mention can stand alone because the reference is to the entire periodical as a whole.

When it is necessary to mention the title of a film or television program in the text of your document, these titles also should be italicized, just as they are in the full citation that appears on the reference page (discussed above).

Use of Quotation Marks

As with italics, quotation marks should be used sparingly and only when the situation explicitly calls for them. Of course, direct quotations require quotation marks around the borrowed text. However, there are other uses as well.

While italics are used to identify a key term when it is introduced for the first time, quotation marks may be used to introduce a word or phrase used as an ironic comment, as slang, or as an

invented or coined expression (e.g., the slang term “phat” or the coined expression “Generation X”). As with italics, the quotation marks appear only when the expression is first used, and not thereafter.

Recall from our discussion above that it is sometimes acceptable to mention book and periodical titles in the text of your paper, and that they should be italicized. The same is true for the titles of published articles and book chapters, except that these kinds of titles, when mentioned in the text of your paper, appear inside quotation marks.

Use of Capitalization

You already have learned that APA does not always want every word of every title capitalized. As noted above, only the first word of (and proper nouns within) book and article titles get capitalized, while all major words in periodical titles are capitalized. Likewise, some headings require all major words to be capitalized, while for other headings only the first word is capitalized. It is important to note that there are rules about capitalization for other kinds of text as well.

First, proper nouns always are capitalized, regardless of where they appear. This includes names of people (e.g., Everett Rogers) and trade and brand names of drugs, equipment and food (e.g., Xerox). It also includes names of university departments when you are referring to a particular department (e.g., Wittenberg University’s Department of Communication, as opposed to a nonspecified department).

Second, even in cases that call for capitalization of all major words, such as a Level One heading or the title of a periodical, the non-major words are not capitalized. Articles (e.g., *a*, *an*, *the*) and prepositions (e.g., *in*, *of*, *between*) are non-major words that are never capitalized except when they appear as the first word in a title. Note the differences and similarities in capitalization in the following examples:

In his book, *The Art of Happiness*, the Dalai Lama argues that it is our attachment to things that causes much of our suffering.

Two books I read in high school were *The Call of the Wild* and *Of Mice and Men*.

Lastly, do not ever use ALL CAPITALS for any kind text, except for the running head in the upper left corner of all pages of your document. This is the only time all capitals are acceptable.

Use of Bias-Free Language

In the latest version of its style manual, the APA states its commitment to bias-free language:

As an organization, APA is committed both to the advancement of science and the fair treatment of individuals and groups. These principles require that authors and students who use APA Style avoid perpetuating demeaning attitudes in their writing. It is unacceptable to use constructions that might imply prejudicial beliefs or perpetuate biased assumptions against persons on the basis of age, disability, gender, participation in research, racial or ethnic identity, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, or some combination of these or other personal factors (e.g., marital status, immigration status, religion). Instead, authors should use affirming and inclusive language. (APA, 2020, p. 131)

This requires several things of you as an author. First, you should aim to describe things at the appropriate level of specificity. Using *man* to refer to all human beings simply is not as accurate or specific as the word *human* or the phrase *men and women*. It also asks that you use terms and labels that people prefer to call themselves. Because such terms may change over time, it is important to keep up-to-date on the current acceptable terminology. Avoiding labels whenever possible is generally desirable because it helps prevent us from making unwarranted generalizations about those groups. The final and most important lesson to take from this is that all authors should carefully check their work for unintended meanings and implications. For example, it may seem innocent

enough to refer to an unknown nurse as *she*, but it also may imply to the reader that only women are nurses. These kinds of implications are both unnecessary and undesirable. When in doubt about the gender of a particular person, when using a non-gender-specific example, or when one wishes to be gender-inclusive, it is acceptable to use *they* as a singular pronoun.

Final Thoughts on APA Format for Communication Majors

You will be required to use APA format for nearly every paper you write in nearly every Communication course you take. We do not expect students to memorize all of the details of APA formatting, but we do expect students to use this valuable resource to ensure their work is correctly formatted. As you have seen from the explanations and examples provided above, there is nothing magical or mysterious about APA formatting, and the rules do not change arbitrarily or without warning. Paying close attention to detail and following the format guidelines to the smallest detail will result in correct APA format every time. While other courses may require other citation formats, as a Communication major it is essential for you to be able to adhere to APA guidelines. This document itself is formatted according to APA requirements, and we expect you to refer back to it when it comes time to write your next Communication paper.

Lastly, please keep in mind that APA formatting should not be your only consideration when composing a paper. It is a tool to help you format your paper correctly. You should put the greatest time and effort into ensuring that you have good, quality sources, that your writing is clear, accurate, and concise, that your paper is well organized into distinct main ideas, and that your paper is free from grammatical and typographical errors. Your professors will help prepare you for written work by describing the requirements for the assignments in their courses, but these are the hallmarks of good writing regardless of the topic or discipline.

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Morales, N. (2006, October 8). Wittenberg student takes pride in her Ecuadorian roots. *Springfield News-Sun*, p. A9.

More Americans Googling themselves. (2007, December 17). <http://www.cnn.com/2007/TECH/12/17/personal.search.ap/index.html>

Poll finds Americans' priorities shifting in the new millennium. (2007, January 22). *New York Times*, pp. B9, B12.

Rogers, E. M. (1994). *A history of communication study: A biographical approach*. The Free Press.

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