APA Style Dissertation Guidelines:
Formatting Your Dissertation

for
Doctoral Candidates and Doctoral Faculty

Academic Year:
2021 – 2022
Preface

This guide was created by The Graduate School to help you prepare your dissertation in APA Style, 7th Edition.
Contents

Page and Text Requirements ................................................................. 1
  Page Size ......................................................................................... 1
  Margins ......................................................................................... 1
  Spacing ......................................................................................... 1
  Font and Point Size ......................................................................... 1
  Bias-Free Language ......................................................................... 1

Required Dissertation Order ............................................................... 2

Supplemental Materials: Tables, Figures, & Appendices ......................... 2
  Tables and Figures ......................................................................... 2
  Appendices .................................................................................... 3

Pagination .......................................................................................... 3
  The Title Page .............................................................................. 3
  The Prefatory Pages ...................................................................... 4
  Dissertation Content ..................................................................... 5

Inserting Page Numbers into Your Dissertation ..................................... 5

Automate Your Table of Contents & Lists of Tables and Figures ............... 6

APA Style, 7th Edition: A Brief Overview ................................................ 6
  Headings ....................................................................................... 6
  In-Text Citations .......................................................................... 6
  References .................................................................................... 7

How to Organize Your Dissertation ....................................................... 8
  Dissertation Outline ..................................................................... 8
  Dissertation Outline Breakdown .................................................... 9

Appendix A: Resources for Writers ....................................................... 11

Appendix B: Chapters-Based Dissertation Template ............................... 12
APA Style Dissertation Guidelines:
Formatting Your Dissertation

Page and Text Requirements

Page Size
It is recommended that Standard Letter page size (8.5 x 11 inches) is used, unless otherwise specified.

Margins
1 inch for all margins (top, bottom, left, right) throughout the entire document.

Spacing
All text should be double-spaced. This rule also applies to all block quotations.

Font and Point Size
Black, Times New Roman, 12 pt. font is required for all text.

Bias-Free Language
Avoid language that perpetuates prejudicial beliefs or demeaning attitudes towards people on the basis of their:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender
- Racial or Ethnic Background
- Sexual Orientation
- Intersectionality
- Socioeconomic Status
- Educational Background
- Religious or Spiritual Beliefs
- Political Beliefs

*Please Note: The aforementioned list is not a comprehensive one. Biased language in any shape or form will not be condoned nor tolerated by Montclair State University.
Required Dissertation Order

The Graduate School requires that you arrange your dissertation proposal and final dissertation in the following order:

1. Title Page – *Required*
2. Signature Page – *Required*
   - The signature page must be approved by The Graduate School prior to being circulated among your dissertation committee members and the Dean of The Graduate School for signatures.
3. Copyright Page – *Required*
4. Abstract – *Required*
5. Acknowledgements - *Optional*
6. Dedication - *Optional*
7. Contents Page – *Required*
8. List of Tables – *If Applicable*
9. List of Figures – *If Applicable*
10. Dissertation Text – *Required*
11. References – *Required*
12. Tables – *If Applicable*
13. Figures – *If Applicable*
14. Appendices – *If Applicable*

**Supplemental Materials: Tables, Figures, & Appendices**

**Tables and Figures**
Tables and figures should be embedded within the text after they are first mentioned or “called out.” A blank single-spaced line should be used to separate the top and bottom of a table or figure from the adjacent text. Tables and figures that take up too much space on the page or that cover multiple pages should be placed on separate pages after the references. Keep all tables and figures within the margins of the page. If it is not possible to keep the table or figure within the margins, then place the table or figure on a separate page after the references and change the orientation of the page to landscape.
Appendices
Appendices are always placed on separate pages at the very end of the dissertation after the references, tables, and figures. Appendices can include but are not limited to: screenshots, emails, letters, surveys, and interview transcripts. All appendices should retain the original formatting they were given upon their creation.

Pagination
The Title Page
The title page should not include a page number or header.

The Role of Compulsive Texting in the Academic Functioning of Adolescents

A DISSERTATION

Submitted to the Faculty of
Montclair State University in partial fulfillment
of the requirements
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

by
John P. Smith
Montclair State University
Montclair, NJ
August 2021

Dissertation Chair: Dr. Michael S. Silverman
The Prefatory Pages

All prefatory pages (except the title page) should be numbered using romanettes, or lowercase roman numerals (i.e., i, ii, iii, etc.). The romanette page number should be aligned to the upper right margin of the page with a running head aligned to the upper left margin. The running head should be a shorter version of the dissertation title and no longer than 50 characters in total.

Required Signature Page Example

Montclair State University
The Graduate School
Dissertation Approval

We hereby approve the Dissertation

The Role of Compulsive Texting in the Academic Functioning

of

John P. Smith
Candidate for the Degree:
Doctor of Philosophy

Graduate Program: Counseling
Dissertation Committee:

Certified by:

Dr. Michael S. Silverman
Dissertation Chair

Dr. Scott Horrass
Vice Provost for Research and Dean of the Graduate School

Dr. Patricia X. Smith

Date

Dr. Frieda F. Friedman

1. *Title Page → Pagination differs for this page.
2. Signature Page
3. Copyright Page
4. Abstract
5. Acknowledgements
6. Dedication
7. Contents Page
8. List of Tables
9. List of Figures
Dissertation Content
When the content of the dissertation starts, the page numbering should restart at page one using Arabic numbering (i.e., 1, 2, 3, etc.) and continue throughout the dissertation until the end. The Arabic page number should be aligned to the upper right margin of the page with a running head aligned to the upper left margin. The running head should be the same shortened version of the dissertation title that was used for the prefatory pages and remain no longer than 50 characters in total.

Inserting Page Numbers into Your Dissertation
It is highly recommended that Microsoft Office Word be used to insert page numbers into your dissertation. For more information on how to correctly format and insert page numbers into your dissertation using Word, please visit the “Doctoral Students” webpage on The Graduate School website for a video tutorial under the “Resources for Writing Your Dissertation” tab.
Automate Your Table of Contents & Lists of Tables and Figures
For information on how to insert an automatic table of contents, list of tables, and list of figures, please visit the “Doctoral Students” webpage on The Graduate School website for video tutorials under the “Resources for Writing Your Dissertation” tab.

APA Style, 7th Edition: A Brief Overview
This section provides a very brief overview of APA Style formatting. For more thorough information about APA Style, 7th edition, please refer to Appendix A (on page 11) of this guide for additional APA resources.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Heading Level</th>
<th>Formatting</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Bolded, Centered, Title Case Capitalization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Text begins as a new paragraph.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Bolded, Left-Aligned, Title Case Capitalization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Text begins as a new paragraph.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Bolded, Left-Aligned, Italicized, Title Case Capitalization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Text begins as a new paragraph.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Bolded, Indented, Title Case Capitalization, Ends with a Period.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Texts begins on the same line and continues as a regular paragraph.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Bolded, Indented, Italicized, Title Case Capitalization, Ends with a Period.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Texts begins on the same line and continues as a regular paragraph.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: “Title Case Capitalization” refers to capitalizing a heading as you would a book title; most words will be capitalized and articles will be lowercased.

*This table was adapted from the: American Psychological Association. (2020). Publication manual of the American Psychological Association (7th ed.). https://doi.org/10.1037/0000165-000

In-Text Citations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Authors</th>
<th>Parenthetical Citation</th>
<th>Narrative Citation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>One Author</td>
<td>(Author Last Name, Year)</td>
<td>Author Last Name (Year)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two Authors</td>
<td>(Author 1 &amp; Author 2, Year)</td>
<td>Author 1 and Author 2 (Year)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three or More Authors</td>
<td>(Author 1 et al., Year)</td>
<td>Author 1 et al. (Year)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*This table was adapted from the: American Psychological Association. (2020). Publication manual of the American Psychological Association (7th ed.). https://doi.org/10.1037/0000165-000
**References**
Your references should always be alphabetically organized by authors’ last names. Each reference should have a hanging indent. All references should be double-spaced.

**Reference Example: Journal Article Source**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Format</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

*Note: “Sentence case capitalization” refers to capitalizing a heading/title as you would a regular sentence.*

*This table was adapted from: [https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/apa_style/apa_formatting_and_style_guide/reference_list_articles_in_periodicals.html](https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/apa_style/apa_formatting_and_style_guide/reference_list_articles_in_periodicals.html)
How to Organize Your Dissertation

*Please Note:* This section offers one example of how to organize a chapters-based dissertation. Articles-based dissertations may be organized differently. **Always be sure to check with your program advisor for more information regarding your program’s specific guidelines for dissertation structure/organization.**

Dissertation Outline

- Abstract
- Chapter 1: Introduction
- Chapter 2: Literature Review
- Chapter 3: Methodology
- Chapter 4: Results/Findings
- Chapter 5: Discussion
Dissertation Outline Breakdown

Abstract - (Maximum of 300 Words)
Short, factual, and includes a brief overview of the introduction, results section, and purpose statement of the study. Complete this section last. May or may not include keywords.
  • Write this section in: PAST TENSE

Chapter 1: Introduction
  • Introduce Your Dissertation Topic
  • Research Question/s: What unanswered questions led you to conduct your study or research?
  • Problem Statement: What do you seek to address by conducting your study or research? This is your dissertation’s thesis statement.
    Example: “The aim of this study was to investigate how participating in an expressive writing activity impacts the moods of adolescent participants with a prior diagnosis of major depressive disorder.”
  • Hypotheses: What do you predict will happen by conducting your study or research?

Chapter 2: Literature Review
  • Critically Evaluate: Deeply analyze and critique past research related to your dissertation topic; do not simply summarize the research.
  • Find Common Threads and Themes: Draw connections between previous research studies and your own. What do they have in common? How do they differ?
  • Locate Discrepancies: Have you identified any gaps in the past research you have collected?

Chapter 3: Methodology
  • Research Design: Was your study/research qualitative, quantitative, mixed methods, descriptive, or action research?
  • Materials Used: What apparatuses did you use to conduct your study or research?
  • Procedure: What steps did you take to conduct your study or research?
  • Theoretical Framework/s: What theories will you use to analyze and interpret the data you collect? Why?
  • Addressing Potential Biases and Limitations: Are there any potential confounding variables? Are there any potential factors that may alter the results of your study or research? How will you address these concerns and promote reflexivity?
Chapter 4: Results/Findings
Present the data you collected in a clear, organized, and factual manner. Use tables, figures, and any other visuals to illustrate the information you accumulated. **DO NOT** analyze the data in this section.

Chapter 5: Discussion
- Analyze and synthesize the results that you have collected. Is this data significant?
- Connect everything back to your research questions, purpose statement, and hypotheses.
- Use any theoretical framework/s to interpret the data collected.
- Discuss the potential biases or limitations that may have impacted the results of your research or your conclusions.
- Talk about the implications for future research.
Appendix A: Resources for Writers

The Center for Writing Excellence (CWE) at Montclair State University offers free and confidential writing consultations for all students, including doctoral students. For additional help with writing/formatting your dissertation, please email cwe@montclair.edu or call (973)-655-7442 for more information on how to schedule a writing consultation at the CWE.

For doctoral students, the Center for Writing Excellence offers the following writing resources:

- Writing Your Thesis, Prospectus, or Dissertation
- APA 7th Edition CWE PowerPoint Presentation
- APA 7th Edition Sample Paper
- Purdue Owl Style Guide: APA 7th Edition
- APA Style Official Website
- Guidelines for Writing a Literature Review
- Literature Review Handout
- General Resources for Writers
Appendix B: Chapters-Based Dissertation Template

(Dissertation Template Starts on Next Page)
The Role of Compulsive Texting in the Academic Functioning of Adolescents

A DISSERTATION

Submitted to the Faculty of
Montclair State University in partial fulfillment
of the requirements
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

by
John P. Smith
Montclair State University
Montclair, NJ
May 2022

Dissertation Chair: Dr. Michael S. Silverman
We hereby approve the Dissertation

The Role of Compulsive Texting in the Academic Functioning

of

John P. Smith

Candidate for the Degree:

Doctor of Philosophy

Graduate Program: Counseling

Dissertation Committee: Dr. Michael S. Silverman

Certified by: Dr. Scott Herness

Vice Provost for Research and Dean of the Graduate School

Date Dr. Patricia X. Smith

Dr. Frieda F. Friedman
Abstract (Required)

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit, sed do eiusmod tempor incididunt ut
labore et dolore magna aliqua. Ut enim ad minim veniam, quis nostrud exercitation ullamco
laboris nisi ut aliquip ex ea commodo consequat. Duis aute irure dolor in reprehenderit in
voluptate velit esse cillum dolore eu fugiat nulla pariatur. Excepteur sint occaecat cupidatat non
proident, sunt in culpa qui officia deserunt mollit anim id est laborum.

Keywords: texting, academic functioning, compulsive behavior, counseling, academic
achievement scores
Acknowledgements (Optional)


Dedication (Optional)


Contents

Chapter 1 (Heading 1) ................................................................................................... 1
   Sub-heading (Heading 2) ........................................................................................... 1
   Sub-heading (Heading 3) ............................................................................................ 1
References ....................................................................................................................... 4
Appendix 1 ...................................................................................................................... 5
List of Tables

Table 1: Title of Table ....................................................................................................................................................... 2
List of Figures

Figure 1: Title of Figure ..................................................................................................................... 2
Chapter 1 (Heading 1)


Sub-heading (Heading 2)


Sub-heading (Heading 3)

Figure 1: Title of Figure
(Use the “insert caption” option from the References menu in Word and this will help to create an automated list of figures)

[insert figure here]

Sub-heading (Heading 4). Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit, sed do eiusmod tempor incididunt ut labore et dolore magna aliqua. Egestas dui id ornare arcu odio ut sem. Dignissim enim sit amet venenatis urna cursus eget.


Table 1: Title of Table
(Use the “insert caption” option from the References menu in Word and this will help to create an automated list of figures)

[insert table here]


Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit, sed do eiusmod tempor incididunt ut labore et dolore magna aliqua. Egestas dui id ornare arcu odio ut sem. Dignissim
enim sit amet venenatis urna cursus eget. Pellentesque pulvinar pellentesque habitant morbi
tristique senectus et. Aliquam eleifend mi in nulla posuere. Imperdiet nulla malesuada
pellentesque elit eget gravida cum sociis natoque. Egestas fringilla phasellus faucibus scelerisque
eleifend donec pretium vulputate.
References


https://doi.org/10.1378/chest.08-1569


https://doi.org/10.7748/nop.18.12.6.s9
Appendix 1

Interviewer: Robin Scherbatsky (RS)

Interviewee: Sales manager Carl MacLaren (CM)

Date and time: May 21st, 2021 at 7:00 pm

Location: Sky Mall Headquarters

RS: Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit, sed do eiusmod tempor incididunt ut labore et dolore magna aliqua.

CM: Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit, sed do eiusmod tempor incididunt ut labore et dolore magna aliqua.

RS: Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit, sed do eiusmod tempor incididunt ut labore et dolore magna aliqua.

CM: Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit, sed do eiusmod tempor incididunt ut labore et dolore magna aliqua.