

## Final Paper

### Complete APA Style Report

Your task is to complete an **APA style** research report based on your study (see [http://www.vanguard.edu/faculty/ddegelman/index.cfm?doc\\_id=796](http://www.vanguard.edu/faculty/ddegelman/index.cfm?doc_id=796) for an example). Proofread your paper. I will grade your paper on what you write and how well you write it.

Be careful to guard against plagiarism. Be sure to cite references when you express an idea that is not your own. Further, paraphrasing requires that you express an idea **IN YOUR OWN WORDS. CHANGING THE ORDER OF THE WORDS IN AN EXISTING SENTENCE OR FINDING SYNONYMS FOR THOSE WORDS IS NOT PARAPHRASING--IT IS PLAGIARIZING. PLAGIARIZING OF ANY SORT WILL RESULT IN AN "F" FOR YOUR COURSE GRADE; THERE WILL BE NO SECOND CHANCES.**

**YOU MAY NOT USE ANY DIRECT QUOTATIONS IN YOUR PAPER (EVEN IF APPROPRIATELY CREDITED). IF YOU DO, YOU WILL RECEIVE LOSE 30% OFF THE PAPER GRADE**

You will turn in an APA-style write-up of the research project you've designed and completed. In Research Methods I, you learned how to complete this kind of write-up (for a review, check chapter 14 of your textbook—but DO NOT FOLLOW THE FORMAT of the sample paper in your text's Appendix D, use the sample paper at this link [http://www.vanguard.edu/faculty/ddegelman/index.cfm?doc\\_id=796](http://www.vanguard.edu/faculty/ddegelman/index.cfm?doc_id=796) instead).

Your introduction section must contain a review of 5 peer-reviewed, scholarly journal articles. For each missing scholarly, journal article, your grade on this assignment will be dropped by 20%.

### Other Help for Final Research Reports

1. Write the paper in language that anyone can understand—avoid jargon.
2. Whenever you present a mean, also report the associated standard error. This allows the reader to judge how representative the mean is of your sample.
3. Don't forget to include an abstract—limited to 120 words. Write this section last, you can cut and paste sentences from other parts of your paper. Your abstract should describe the purpose of your study, the method, the results and the implications of your results.
4. Never use the word "Prove" when referring to research findings. This word is too strong because science is probabilistic.
5. Always explain what variable you are describing with descriptive statistics. Say "The mean number of problems solved by participants in the experimental condition was 15 ( $SD = 2.23$ )". Not, "The mean in the experimental condition was 15 ( $SD = 2.23$ )".
6. If you are reporting more than 2 means (or 2 correlation coefficients), use a table or figure, but be sure to refer to it in the text of the results section. For example, "There was a significant difference in number of problem solved for across the three experimental conditions ( $F(2,36) = 15.23, p=.02$ ). See Table 1 for mean problems solved by condition and associated standard deviations."
7. When referring to the study on which you are reporting call it the present study: "Participants in the present study responded to 15 multiple-choice questions".
8. Be sure to report the possible range and obtained range on important variables. Also be sure to include information that tells the reader what a high score indicates (e.g., a high score indicates high self-esteem).
9. The pages that make up an appendix should have the same headers (short title & page number) as all of the other pages. In addition, they should be labeled with the word Appendix centered and under that should be a title that describes what is contained in the appendix.

## General Outline

Abstract: 120 word (maximum) summary of your research project

- A. State Hypothesis
- B. Briefly discuss methods
- C. Briefly discuss results
- D. A sentence or two on implications

### Introduction:

Here, you will provide a logical argument, set in the context of a literature review that will lead the reader directly to your hypothesis. You must base your writing in this section on ***at least 5 scholarly articles***. ***You may supplement those sources with any others that you choose (including textbooks)***. ***You may not, however, base your hypothesis on findings reported in the popular press that is not also supported by scholarly work. For each missing scholarly journal article, your grade on this assignment will be dropped by 20%.***

- Introduce the topic in general terms:
  - Show how the topic is important for basic and/or applied reasons; Grab the reader's interest! Why would anyone care about you topic?
- Briefly review the research findings and/or theories related to the topic
  - Give some background to the reader so they can put your hypothesis in a context
  - Educate your reader on what is generally known about your topic by reviewing research conducted by others
  - Review previous empirical work in enough detail that the readers have a general idea about how the studies were completed, but be wary of getting bogged down in the details.
- State the problem that the present project addressed (e.g., a gap in the literature, contradictory findings in the literature, test of a theory in a new situation, pit two theories against one another) **Be sure to show how the problem you have identified is indeed important. BE CERTAIN TO PROVIDE A LITERATURE BASED RATIONALE FOR YOUR PREDICTION(S)!!!**
- State your hypothesis in terms of the CONSTRUCTS of interest **and be explicit about the logic that led to your hypothesis**
  - Briefly describe the method you used to test your hypothesis; how and in what type of situation did you test the hypothesis and describe predictions about the outcome and show how those predictions are related to your hypothesis

Method: This section provides a step-by-step description of what happened during the research sessions. This section should be explicit enough that another researcher could read this part of the paper and replicate your study.

Participants

- Who were they? Describe all relevant demographics
- How many did you use?
- How were they recruited? How many refused to participate?

Materials/Apparatus: Here is where you describe any questionnaires, instructions or equipment that you used to measure/manipulate variables. If possible, it is always a good idea to attach your actual materials in an Appendix.

- Which construct did you manipulate? How did you operationalize the construct?
- Which construct did you measure? How did you operationalize the construct?
- Give sample items
- Describe possible range of scores and scoring

Procedures:

- If you conducted an experiment describe how subjects were assigned to conditions and what those experimental conditions were
- What did you ask subjects to do?
- How much time was allotted for each task?
- How were surveys distributed and collected?

Results: This section simply describes the statistical results. Note: you do need to write complete sentences to describe the results. **Be sure to attach the SPSS output--I cannot grade your paper without seeing that output.**

1. Summarize what you found using appropriate statistics
2. include any necessary charts or graphs

Discussion: Here is where you interpret the results.

1. Did your data support your hypothesis? How was your research question answered?
2. How do the results of your study relate to previous research? Are the findings consistent or inconsistent with existing literature? If they are inconsistent, come up with possible explanations of the contradiction
3. Acknowledge any flaws or limitations in your research? Assess reliability, construct validity, external validity and internal validity
4. Suggest methods for improvement
5. Propose ideas for future research
6. Discuss implications for theory/practice

Grading Criteria for Final Paper

Paper Section	Points Achieved	Points Possible
Abstract		5
Introduction		25
Method		15
Results		10
Discussion		25
APA Style		10
Writing Style		10
<b>TOTAL</b>		100