

Writing a Scientific Lab Report According to APA Guidelines

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Introduction

At Goodwin College, papers are expected to be written according to APA Style. This is a set of guidelines, established by the American Psychological Association (APA), to standardize writing in the scientific community. These guidelines are very specific regarding how to write and format a paper, and how to properly acknowledge all references used. The following presentation is a basic introduction to APA Style. It is not, by any means, a comprehensive description.

Method

Reports should be divided into sections, and labelled with appropriate headings (Table 1). In some situations, an instructor may choose to modify or eliminate certain sections. For instance, in this particular section of Chemistry 101, it is not required that the report contain an abstract. Always refer to an instructor's specific guidelines when writing and formatting a paper.

The APA guidelines for formatting specify the use of a serif font for the text and a sans-serif font for figure labels (Figure 1). Text should be aligned at the left margin and double-spaced, with the first line of each paragraph indented at one-half inch. Page numbers should appear in the upper-right corner of every page.

All sources must be cited within the text, as appropriate (Author, Date). Failure to acknowledge sources of information is plagiarism, regardless of whether or not the information has been paraphrased. In a scientific paper, direct quotations are to be avoided. All sources of information should be included in the References section, using the appropriate citation format. There are many resources available to assist in creating proper citations. The Academic Success Center has a copy of the *Norton Field Guide to Writing* (Bullock, 2008), and there are tutors who can assist with writing and formatting your paper. Included in the reference section that follows is the correct format for citing the Chemistry 101 Lab textbook (*Experiments in Chemistry*, 2014).

References

APA Style. (n.d.). Retrieved April 21, 2016, from <http://www.apastyle.org/>

Bullock, R. H., Goggin, M. D., & Weinberg, F. (2008). *The Norton Field guide to writing: With readings and handbook*. New York: W.W. Norton & Co.

Citation Machine automatically generates citations in MLA, APA, Chicago, Turabian, and thousands more! (n.d.). Retrieved April 21, 2016, from <http://www.citationmachine.net/>

Chapter Title for Experiment. (2014). In *Experiments in Chemistry* (p. # - p. #). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education. Custom Edition for Goodwin College

Appendix 1.

Table 1. Sections Included in APA-style lab report

Title Page
Abstract
Introduction
Method
Results
Discussion
References
Appendices

Appendix 2.

Figure 1. Examples of Serif and Sans-Serif Fonts

Serif Fonts	Sans-Serif Fonts
Cambria	Arial
Century	Calibri
Garamond	Century Gothic
Georgia	Corbel
Palatino Linotype	Tahoma
Times New Roman	