Writing in Communication Studies, unless otherwise instructed, is best approached as an argument. The writer must have a clear claim and make the evidence and reasoning that support that claim quite clear to the reader. In some courses you may write in a more personal style, in others a professional style and others an academic style. In each case it is still important to use proper grammar and be error free in your expression. It is also always important to give credit to the sources that inform your thinking and writing.

Basics
- Online Style Manual Reference: Purdue OWL APA Formatting and Style Guide
- Online Peer Review Journal: *American Communication Journal*

Style Basics
- Paraphrase whenever possible. APA prefers paraphrasing to quoting. Use direct quotes only when necessary.
- Use gender-neutral language.
- Avoid ambiguity. Aim for precise, clear and logical language.
- Utilize a professional, non-combative tone that also reflects your involvement with the topic/issue.
- Avoid first person when possible.

Basic Format/Organization
- Title Page
- Introduction
- Literature Review
- Methodology
- Results
- Discussion
- Conclusion
- References

References
- Last Name, First Initial. (Year). *Title*. Publication City: Publisher.
- Last Name, First Initial. (Year). Title of article. *Journal*, issue (#), page-page.
- Reference entries should be alphabetical.
- Italicize (not underline) titles of longer works such as books and journals.
- Indent all lines of an entry after the first line by one-half inch. This is called a hanging indentation and can be found in the Paragraph drop down menu in MS Word.
Suggested Databases

- Academic Search Complete
- Communication and Mass Media Complete
- PsycARTICLES
- PsycINFO
- Sociological Abstracts
- JSTOR
- Sage Journal Online
- LexisNexis Academic

Links for References and Handouts

- Purdue OWL, APA Style Formatting— [http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/](http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/)
- Randal Library’s eResources/Database for Communication Studies— [http://library.uncw.edu/subjects/communication-studies](http://library.uncw.edu/subjects/communication-studies)
- APA Style Formatting Tutorial— [http://flash1r.apa.org/apastyle/basics/index.htm](http://flash1r.apa.org/apastyle/basics/index.htm)