Writing for Criminology

Basics


Citations Basics

- APA uses parenthetical citations and footnotes for all sources, and includes a reference list at the end of all essays.
- APA’s parenthetical citation format when citing large ideas is (Author, year of publication). When citing or paraphrasing specific quotes, include page numbers: (Author, year of publication, page number).
  - Example #1 from Purdue OWL: According to Jones (1998), "Students often had difficulty using APA style, especially when it was their first time" (p. 199).
  - Example #2 from Purdue OWL: She stated, "Students often had difficulty using APA style" (Jones, 1998, p. 199), but she did not offer an explanation as to why.

APA Stylistic Suggestions

- “Less is more.” Make your writing as clear and concise as possible. Make sure your argument is specific. Often, condensing your paper can make it better.
- APA prefers paraphrasing to direct quotations and italics instead of underlining for titles.
- Shorter words and sentences are preferred. Avoid wordiness and say only what is necessary.
- Avoid colloquial expressions, jargon, and pronouns.
- Use gender appropriate pronouns and be specific with gendered words in regards to the person you are writing about. (Example: If author is a woman, “She believes…” instead of “They believe…”)
- Use active rather than passive voice.
- Use consistent language and wording rather than changing or alternating words frequently when using topic-specific terms and ideas.
Format of an Essay
For specific instructions on how to format an APA essay, see the Purdue OWL’s page. Here are some basic elements to include:
- **Title page**
  - This page should include the title of your paper, your name, and your class information.
- **Abstract**
  - This page will be a summary of your paper.
- **Main body**
  - The main body of your paper will include your introduction, body paragraphs, and conclusion.
- **References**
  - Your references page will include the full citation information for each source you use in your paper.

Some Suggested Journals and Databases
- Randall Library’s Database and Tutorial Guide for Education: http://library.uncw.edu/subjects/criminology
- Criminal Justice Abstracts
- Academic Search Complete
- JSTOR
- SAGE Journals Online
- Oxford Journals