

Guidelines for preparation of scholarly papers and papers for publication

Writing Papers: The following outline suggests an effective way of organizing a paper:

- (1) Describe the problem;
- (2) Explain what you did, how you did it, and what obstacles you encountered;
- (3) List the resulting benefits, both quantitative and qualitative; and
- (4) If applicable, provide an appendix giving the particulars of the model or data.

In writing your paper, explain your work so readers outside the field can understand it. If you must use a specialized term, abbreviation, or acronym, make sure you define it; write out an acronym or abbreviation the first time it appears and enclose it in parentheses immediately afterwards. Use the active voice rather than the passive, the first person rather than the third. Don't hesitate to take credit or blame for your work.

Here is a step-by-step breakdown:

- Choose an area of interest to you to start your topic selection
- Search for publications—both in print and online—related to your topic
- Narrow your topic to refine your search results
- Formulate a research question(s) to guide your research
- Scan books to see if they are relevant
 - ◊ Use the Table of Contents & index to quickly locate useful information
 - ◊ The table of contents for many books is now available online at the publisher or on amazon.com
 - ◊ If you find a book you need at Border's or Barnes & Nobles, go to our library and odds are that if they don't have it that they can get it on interlibrary loan.
- Make notes on, or photocopy, interesting passages as you encounter them
- Make notes as you read to capture thoughts, questions, and ideas
- Refine your research question and do further information gathering
- Compose and write down your working thesis or research question
- Review and reflect on work done in the field already
- Construct your argument, with the main points organized in an outline
- Write a rough draft, expanding the outline to fulfill paper length requirements
- Include quotes that support your points
- Revise your rough draft to ensure a strong, logical argument
- Document referenced works by creating a bibliography
- Revise your paper for spelling, punctuation and grammar errors
- Print out the final revision of your paper and bibliography

Formatting: Please submit your paper typed in 10, 11, or 12-point type (no larger than 12-point), double-spaced, with 1" margins on one side of 8½" by 11" paper. Quotations, figure captions, the list of references, and the abstract should all be double-spaced for ease in typesetting. Devote separate pages to each figure, each table, the list of references, and the abstract, and number all pages after the first. Attach a cover sheet listing the paper title and the name and mailing address of each author. Please include a short, informal note (under 100 words) about the author's life, activities, and interests, not a professional vita.

Length: Make papers as concise as possible; papers for publication are typically 15 to 20 pages. Please do not cram your papers onto 15 pages by using tiny type, meager spacing, and miniature margins. When a minimum number of pages required is specified, please count only pages containing body text; figures, tables, the abstract, references and bibliography do not count in this instance.

Title: Make your title short and specific. Instead of "Systems analysis and order processing in a multiechelon system," try "Systems analysis speeds telephone orders." When we are told we're going to read about a telephone company, we probably have a vivid image that includes the notion of a "multiechelon system." Preferably, titles should be five or six words long, never more than 10.

Abstract: Please write a brief abstract (no more than 150 words) that functions as a miniature version of the paper, setting forth the main points of the paper. The abstract should not be an introduction nor should it be a prediction of what readers will find if they read on. Many people decide whether to read the paper on the basis of the abstract. Write the abstract in a clear and vigorous way in the active voice. Eliminate all unnecessary words. Instead of "This paper describes the application of a vertex coloring procedure to ..." say: "We applied vertex coloring to"

Headings: Please use only one level of heading.

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Figures and Tables: Please submit copies of any figures and tables on separate sheets of paper. They should have captions that are interesting, that are written in complete sentences, and that fully explain and interpret the exhibit without forcing the reader to refer to the text. Conversely, the reader should not have to refer back and forth from the text to the figures to understand the paper. You should refer to figures where appropriate with "(Figure 1)," but you should explain the meaning and implications of your data fully in the text. Do not require the reader to interpret the figure to understand what you have done, as in "Figure 1 shows the outcome of this survey." Tables should list information in some obvious logical order.

Machine-readable graphics should be provided in EPS, Acrobat or TIFF and be laser printed and suitable for photographic reproduction.

Equations: Write the body of the paper in words and use an appendix for mathematical details. If equations will be referred to elsewhere, they should have numbers enclosed in parentheses flush with the right margin.

References: Cite references in the body of the text: "Thrupp (1998) quibbled that ..." or if 1998 was a prolific year for Thrupp, "(1998b)." If the author is not cited in the text, then use (Thrupp 1998). Alphabetize the list of references according to the name of the first author.

For articles use the form

Smith, James Q. (1978) Title of article. *Title of Journal or Periodical*, 10(5) 45-50.

and for books,

Toklas, Alice B. (1947) *Book title*. Publisher's name, City, State (or Country).

and for collections of papers,

Beedle, Albert A. (1979) Title of chapter. J.J. Fox, ed. *Book title*. Publisher's name, City, State (or Country), 556-572.

and for material online,

Bly, Laura (2000) Upstart airfare site beats the big boys. *USA Today.com*, April 21, retrieved on October 23, 2000 from (www.usatoday.com/life/travel/leisure/2000/lt1227.htm).

Please note that the styles above are standards from the American Psychological Association (APA), very common styles in use for scholarly publications and academic papers. The one exception is that we are asking you to italicize the titles of books, journals, periodicals and web sites rather than underlining as the APA style would require. Note also that the APA style requires indentation of the second lines of citations, and that only the first word of a book title should be capitalized unless subsequent words would otherwise be capitalized (i.e. proper nouns, etc.). Also, if there is no author given for online resources, cite the title.

Avoid references to your own publications; you may use your same ideas again without fear of plagiarism. Refer to your previous publications only if the current subject absolutely requires it.

Footnotes: Avoid footnotes. If what they contain is important, it deserves a place in the text. If not, don't distract the reader from what is important.

Additional Information: For a fine discussion of writing, read Strunk, William, Jr., E.B. White, *The Elements of Style*. For a more complete, formal treatment of the process of preparing a paper for publication, see The University of Chicago Press *The Chicago Manual of Style*. For sound advice on figures, refer to the series of books by Edward R. Tufte: Tufte, Edward R. (1983) *The Visual Display of Quantitative Information*. Graphics Press, Cheshire, CT.; (1990) *Envisioning Information*. Graphics Press, Cheshire, CT.; (1997) *Visual Explanations*. Graphics Press, Cheshire, CT.

Sources & Resources: Adapted from *INTERFACES* Instructions to Authors, online at <http://www.interfaces.smeal.psu.edu/submission/instructions.pdf> (Link now dead but available at <http://waybackmachine.org>)

Other very useful resources for preparing papers:

<http://www.fahamu.org.uk/WFCEng/sitemap.html>

<http://www.degreetutor.com/library/online-assignments/termpaper-writing>

<http://www.indiana.edu/~wts/pamphlets.shtml>

<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/>

<http://leo.stcloudstate.edu/>