Comprehensive Checklist for Successful Academic Writing

**Basic APA Formatting Guidelines**

___ 1. Did you format your paper to have 1” margins?

___ 2. Is your paper double-spaced?

___ 3. Is the font of your paper 12 point?

___ 4. Is the running head in all capital letters?
    ___ 4a. Is your running head less than 50 characters?

___ 5. Does your page header include the first two or three words of your title?
    ___ 5a. Are the page numbers 5 spaces to the right of your page header?

___ 6. Does your title suggest the nature of your study?
    ___ 6a. Are the important words capitalized in the title?
    ___ 6b. Is your title centered? Along with your name and the name of the college or university you attend?

___ 7. Does this assignment require that you have an abstract?
    ___ 7a. Is your abstract less than 120 words?
    ___ 7b. Is your abstract formatted in a block style and on its own page?

___ 8. Is your title at the beginning of the body of your paper?

___ 9. Did you report and format your statistics in your results section?

___ 10. Did you cite all of your references?
    ___ 10a. Is your reference list in alphabetical order?
    ___ 10b. Are your references credible sources?

___ 11. Did you correctly label and format all figures and tables in your paper?

___ 12. Does your paper flow consistently and concisely?
    ___ 12a. When reading your paper, does it have an active voice and is interesting to read?
12b. Did you consistently write in present or past tense and not a mixture of the two?
12c. Did you proofread your paper to check for any spelling errors, run-on sentences, or missed punctuation?

* See *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* or *Writing for Psychology Handbook* for further detailed information.

**Proper Citation and Plagiarism**

1. Did you use in-text citations for the material that was not your own thoughts or is not common knowledge?
   1a. Are your in-text citation consistent with your references on your reference page?
   1b. Are the authors’ last names and the year of the publication included in the in-text citation?
   1c. If you got information from a professor’s lecture or some other informal source did you cite it as an personal communication?

2. Did you correctly site information obtained from the internet?

3. Did you put direct quotes in quotation marks and use parenthetical citation to cite them?
   3a. Example: According to Dr. Smiles, “Laughter is the best medicine” (Smiles, 2009).

4. Did you use “et al.” only when there were six or more authors?

5. Did you correctly capitalize the title of the article or book chapter?
   4a. Did you italicize the name of the journal and the volume number?

6. Did your professor require a certain number of references? If so, did you meet the requirement?

7. Did you proofread your paper to make sure that you did not inadvertently leave out quotation marks for direct quotes or skip over any missed citations?

8. Did you talk with your professor about any questionable citing or possible plagiarisms situations?

This information was adapted from the following sources: