

Here is more information about the Term Paper and Term Paper Summary Requirements

Each student must submit a paper, approximately 3,000-3,500 words in length (equivalent to about 12-15 pages of traditional double-spaced text, but because you will be submitting your paper electronically, I will be asking for it to be mostly single-spaced, which means 6-8 pages)). The focus of the paper will be a critical analysis of current theory, scientific thinking, and research evidence in psychology and related fields about some specific issue related to addictions and addictive behaviors. Students must obtain the instructor's approval of their paper topic in advance. Note that page/word limit is *exclusive* of words used for title and or listing of references.

In choosing a topic for your paper, you should think in terms of a very specific question pertaining to the nature, causes, or treatment/prevention of some specific form of addictive behavior for which you would propose an answer that would then be supported by the information you draw from your sources.

For example (and yes, you may choose one of these, or come up with one of your own):

- Are children who grow up with an alcoholic parent more at risk for drinking problems?
- Is methadone maintenance an appropriate form of treatment for heroin addiction?
- How effective is cognitive-behavioral therapy in the prevention of relapse?
- Is peer influence a significant contributor to the onset of drug use among adolescents?
- Is there some chemical "imbalance" in the brain that causes or contributes to any form of addiction? (focus on just one or two specific theories and one specific addiction)
- Can alcoholics ever learn to drink safely?
- Is D.A.R.E. an effective program for preventing substance abuse among young people?
- Is marijuana a "gateway" drug that leads to more serious drug abuse or addiction?
- With more and more states promoting lotteries and allowing new casinos to be built, is this contributing to an "epidemic" of gambling addiction?
- Should binge-drinking by college students be regarded as more than just a "phase" they go through?
- Does the use of stimulant drugs in the treatment of children with ADHD put them at risk for drug abuse?
- Is the use of prescription pain-killers such as oxycodone a leading cause of subsequent heroin addiction?
- Are children with a family history of addiction more likely to develop some form of addiction themselves (i.e., how strong a role does heredity play in addiction)?
- Has the proliferation of X-rated sites on the Internet contributed to any increase in "sexual addiction"?
- Is there a particular type of person who will escalate from legitimate medical use of opioid pain-killers into an opioid addiction?

- How much at risk are children who are born to mothers who were using [specify the substance] during their pregnancy?

In thinking about possible questions, you must also consider the degree of challenge associated with the question. In other words, you must pose a question for which there is no simple or obvious answer, a question about which there is meaningful debate, even controversy, among professionals and researchers in the field, a question that might have various possible answers and for which there is an ample amount of scientific research to examine..

The Preliminary Proposal

As soon as you have a clear idea about the question you would like to investigate, send it to me as your preliminary proposal in a Mail message (not as an attached document), ideally no later than the end of Week 2.

The Final Proposal

Once you have my approval for your preliminary proposal, you should also start to think about your answer to the question. Do some preliminary searching for references to make sure that the question is one that psychologists and other social and behavioral scientists have looked at and that there are enough good quality sources available for you to use. I will be asking you to submit a final proposal to me by the end of Week 4 that includes the following:

- In several sentences, describe for me your question as well as the possible answer you hope to investigate and a brief explanation of why you favor that answer.
- A list for me of at least three recent references you think you might use that will provide support for your answer; by "recent," I am looking for sources that have appeared within the past 10 years or so. Because I am requiring that at least *two* of your sources must be research studies published in scientific journals (see below), *at least one such study* must be among your list of proposed references, and ideally 2 or even 3. Submit these in proper APA style: authors (last name plus initials), year, exact title of source, where published—consult my Guide to APA Style here in Course Resources folder in Start Here, specifically the Term Paper and Presentations folder. However, because you will send your proposal to me as a text message in Mail, do not worry about the formatting that APA also requires (italics, indents, etc.).
- Regardless of where you locate the sources (PsycInfo/Ebsco, Google Scholar, the website of a government or professional organization), *I need authors-year-title-publication venue, not a URL*. Providing me with the Digital Object Identifier number (DOI) would also be very helpful.
- Along with each reference, please also include a sentence or two that summarizes the information that you think you will be able to get from this source to help you with your paper.
- Do NOT send as an attachment.

Use this format (copy it into your Mail message and complete it):

QUESTION AND PROPOSED ANSWER:

THREE REFERENCES (cited APA style)

BRIEF SUMMARY OF HOW EACH REFERENCE SHOULD HELP:

I will only be looking for three references with your proposal, but as you look for these, make sure that other good sources will also be available, because in your final paper I will expect to see at least 6 separate quality sources. You can also use any of this course's required readings, but those must be *in addition to* the minimum of six. *Except under unusual circumstances, popular magazines, self-help books, popular/mass-audience Internet sites, dictionaries and encyclopedias (including Wikipedia), and basic textbooks, should not be used as references.*

Please note that using Internet references can be especially tricky, because some of the sites are maintained by reputable educational, professional and scientific organizations, but many are of no more value than something you might read in some tabloid newspaper or on someone's Facebook page! If you locate any Internet site that you would like to use for your paper, ***you should seek my approval.*** And here, too, I need authors and title, and I need the full URL for whatever specific pages from an Internet you propose to use. *Simply identifying the person or organization that maintains the site, or simply giving the URL of its homepage, is not sufficient.*

The final proposal is critical to your success in this paper, so I strongly suggest you consider attending Chats early in the semester so that we can use that time to talk about term papers. The more quickly you can understand what I look for and get my approval, the more quickly you can get started on the paper.

The Proposal is worth 16 points, and you will earn all of those points if I have approved your proposal by the end of Week 4 and if you have followed my guidelines; proposals approved after that or that do not conform to guidelines will earn fewer points. This is not a lot, but I hope it encourages you to take the proposal seriously, because *you may not submit a draft of your paper or the final paper itself until you have obtained my approval of your proposal.* I will respond quickly, and I will keep working with you as needed until we get it in shape.

The Term Paper Draft (Follow Formatting instructions that appear at the end of this document)

By the end of Week 7, I am hoping you have a good amount of the work done for your term paper. I want you to be able to share it with us, both because you might get some useful feedback, and because I want your fellow students to learn from what you have done. So by the end of Week 7, you have the option of submitting a Term Paper Draft,

which might be complete even if rough, or it might be only a partial effort so far. At the very least, it should be at least 2-3 pages long and include the following:

1. Working Title
2. Introduction: present your specific question and your proposed answer.
3. Major Findings: offer a summary of your major findings, primarily focusing on evidence from published scientific studies. Cite them by authors' last names and year of publication.
4. Analysis and Conclusion: Briefly summarize the degree of confidence you have in the credibility of the findings you summarized and then state your conclusion regarding the answer to your question that you believe can be supported.
5. Include an APA-style listing of References, including each of the sources you cite in your Major Findings (and only those).

You will send your draft to me attached to a Blackboard Mail message so that I can post it in a folder I've created in Week 8. I want everyone to be able to read your draft, and you will all be able to earn bonus points by posting some constructive criticism and suggestions to the Term Paper Draft Feedback Discussion.

The Term Paper (Follow Formatting and Submitting instructions that appear at the end of this document)

Your paper will be based on references that you are able to locate, using books or book chapters, articles from professional and scientific periodicals, and appropriate Internet sites that I have approved. Among your references (of which there should be a total of at least 6), you will be required to locate at least *two research studies published in scientific journals* that provide some hard data that are directly supportive of your answer to the question you have chosen to investigate. Use my guide to locating references that is available here in Supplementary Materials.

The paper itself should be organized as follows (no title page, and *no page breaks between the sections, and use headings only for 4-7*):

1. **Title:** Include your name, the title of your paper (which should be up to 15 words long and should clearly indicate the precise focus of your paper), and your name.
2. **Abstract:** Following APA style, this will be approximately 150 words and represents a brief summary of your question, your answer, information presented in support of your answer, and your conclusion. The entire abstract should be indented one tab.
3. **Introduction** (usually only a page or so): Begin with a brief discussion of the question you will be looking at. Maybe include a few statistics, some descriptive information, key definitions, perhaps some background or history. Be sure to also include a brief summary of some of the different ways that psychologists and others have been thinking about this question and the possible answers that have been proposed, as well as some consideration of how the issue is important. Then clearly state exactly what you intend to do in the pages that

- follow - the question you are asking and the particular answer you intend to argue for.
4. **Review of Literature** (the main body of the paper): Present what you have learned from the reference materials you have located, organized *thematically* around appropriate sub-topics. Discuss in some detail the various opinions, arguments, research findings, and theories that deal with your question, with particular emphasis on those that provide support for the answer you are arguing for. Remember that at least *two* of your sources must be *research studies published in scientific journals* and that you need to present them in some depth, with careful attention to the methods used; be sure to present specific results. Especially important here is that you clearly identify the sources you are using. Keep using such phrases as "According to...," or "In a study conducted by...," or "In the opinion of...," or "So-and-so has argued that...," or "So-and-so believes that...."
 5. **Analysis:** Begin with a summary of the key findings from your review of literature, clearly identifying any important similarities or differences in these findings. Now you also need to analyze the information you presented and the sources for it, objectively and critically, to enable you to decide how believable and consistent is the information and whether it strongly supports the answer you are arguing for. How sound are the arguments? How logical and consistent are the opinions? How much supporting evidence is there from research studies? How solid is this evidence? For the research studies, was the methodology sufficiently rigorous? What are the possible counter-arguments? Especially important here is your appreciation of the difference between *opinion* and statements that have a reasonable amount of consistent and reliable *scientific support*, and your recognition that you can't always believe everything you read.
 6. **Conclusion and Discussion:** Flowing directly from your analysis, you should now be ready to end with your conclusion. Summarize what you now believe to be a supportable answer to your question. Are there other possible answers? What sort of additional research would help? What are the implications of this question and its possible answers? Especially important here is your appreciation for the complexity of the issues involved and your ability to think through these issues carefully and critically before arriving at a conclusion that is supported by the information you have presented and your analysis of it.
 7. **References:** At the end of your paper, attach a list of all references you cited in your paper—and only those references, along with full bibliographical information for each (authors' or organizations' names, year of publication, title of book or article or Internet page, book publisher information or name, volume and page of article or URL for Internet site), arranged alphabetically by first author's last name. Look at any of our texts to see how this is done.

Note that the requirement of 3,000-3,500 words *does not include* the words in the Title, the Abstract, and your References.

[This type of term paper is kind of like all those lawyer shows you've seen on television. Imagine you are member of the jury and that the answer you have chosen is like the defendant. The information you have obtained from your sources is like all the evidence that the lawyers presented during the trial. Your conclusion in your paper is like the verdict you would have to reach as a juror after carefully weighing all the evidence: guilty

or not guilty = supported or not supported. And just as in a trial you always know who is testifying and as a juror you have to decide how much confidence to have in that person's testimony, so, too, in your paper you must be sure to cite your sources very carefully, and in your analysis you have to carefully weight their credibility to help you reach your "verdict."]

NOTES ABOUT CITING SOURCES:

General Principle: Correctly citing sources in the text of a paper is very important for at least two reasons. First, citing sources lets your instructor appreciate the amount of work you have done to locate and use good sources.

Second, it is a matter of *academic honesty*. Every time you make reference to an idea, opinion, fact, theory, argument, research study, finding, etc., that you have found in some source, you must clearly indicate that source to show that it is the work of another. This applies not just to direct quotes; every single time you are drawing from, or paraphrasing, one of your sources, you must cite it as your reference. To present the material without citing the source is dishonest because it suggests that the material is your own. Such dishonesty constitutes what is known as **plagiarism**, one of the most serious of academic offenses, and one which can lead to charges being brought against a student and/or a failing grade for this paper.

Rules for Citing Sources in APA style (look at your texts to see how it is done, and consult my Guide to APA Style here in Course Resources):

1. What to cite: A reference is cited by giving the last name of the author(s) or organization and the year of publication. The name(s) and year should correspond exactly to the listing on the References list at the end of the paper. When using a direct quotation (which should be done only if exceptionally important), use quotation marks, and also include the page number(s) where the quote appeared in the source. *Use only last names and year of publication; no first names, initials, degrees, or affiliations of the authors, and no titles of publications or where they were published.*

IMPORTANT NOTE: A paper is your work and should be IN YOUR OWN WORDS; using quotations is generally not appropriate, unless there is some very special reason why you want to use someone else's exact words. And it is also important to note what we mean by "your words": you may not simply "cut and paste" wording from any source and pass it off as your own. You must either put the words in quotation marks and cite the source precisely (but as I have said, I don't really want you to use quotations at all), or you must significantly rephrase to make sure you are using your own words. Failure to do so constitutes **plagiarism**, one of the most serious of academic offenses, and I will severely penalize any such instance of academic dishonesty.

2. When to cite: The citation should occur *as soon in the sentence or paragraph as possible*, to immediately draw the attention of your reader to the fact that you are drawing material from an outside source. If you continue over the course of several sentences or even several paragraphs to draw from the same source, it is not

necessary to continue to cite it. The general rule is that whenever your reader may not be sure of the source of your information, you should cite the source.

3. Where to cite: Right in the text of the paper. Do *not* use footnotes or endnotes. References should be cited as part of the natural flow of text, and as soon as you begin to present information from the source. Do *not* just stick a citation at the end of a paragraph.

NOTE: You can only cite as a reference the book or article that you yourself read. If that book or article contains a reference to some other work, you may *not* cite that other work as a reference. Thus, if you are reading a book by Smith (1996), and Smith describes a study by Jones (1992), and you want to also mention Jones's study, your reference is Smith. You could say, "In a 1992 study by Jones (Smith, 1996)..." or, "According to Smith (1996), Jones conducted a study..." but you cannot simply cite Jones. In similar fashion, your References page at the end of your paper will list only the actual works that you located and used.

I am providing you the opportunity to revise and resubmit. If you want to take advantage, I am asking for an initial submission of your paper by the end of Week 7. I will grade and return the paper within a week, and you then will have the opportunity to use my feedback and to discuss the paper with me to enable you to make appropriate revisions. The deadline for the final version of your Term Paper is the end of Week 10.

Formatting: Please adhere to the following guidelines when writing the paper and the draft:

- Use Microsoft *Word*, or, if you don't have it, any word processing program with the document saved as Adobe PDF
- Use 12 point font, black, and stick to common font styles (i.e., New Times Roman, Courier, Arial, Tahoma, Calibri)
- Use 1" margins all around
- Do not use a separate title page
- Center your working title and under it your name; double-space between title and your name, between your name and beginning of text, before and after any headings/sub-headings, and between paragraphs; **all text within paragraphs should be single-spaced**
- Align all text as well as all headings/subheadings to the left; do not center any text or justify the margins
- The first line of each paragraph should be indented one tab
- The entire Abstract should be indented one tab
- Do not use any page breaks or headers or footers; this also includes References, which should appear right after the end of your Analysis and Conclusion
- Unlike APA style, do not include a Running Head
- References should be cited properly in the text and listed at the end under the heading 'References'; do not use any footnotes
- Please write the paper entirely *in your own words*; unless *absolutely necessary* to make a key point, **do not use any direct quotations** from any of your sources (and do not take words verbatim without quotation marks and citing the source because that constitutes plagiarism, a serious form of academic dishonesty).

- The References list also be single-spaced, aligned left, with double-spacing between each reference; you do not need to use the “hanging indents” called for in APA style
- Citing references in the text and listing them in the References section should be done in accordance with APA style, as briefly described above and more fully in my Guide to APA Style here in Supplementary Materials
- Do not insert any page numbers or footnotes
- Refer to my "Guide to Common Writing Errors" included in this Course Resources folder.
- Proofread your paper carefully

Submitting: When your paper is ready, go to the **Assignment in the Week 10** folder to upload your paper:

- Prepare document as described above
- Make sure your file name includes your name, and make sure your name appears on the document itself
- Save it to wherever you store files
- Go to Week 10 and click on the Assignment tool there
- Ignore the “Write Submission” button
- Next to "Attach File," click "Browse My Computer" and navigate to locate your paper wherever you stored that file
- In the navigation window that opens up for you to locate your file, click "Open," and your file will appear
- If you select the wrong file, you can remove it by clicking "Do Not Attach" to the right of your attachment and start over.
- Optional: type Comments
- Click Submit.

I will grade it in Blackboard, and once I finish, it will be available to you with all my grading and comments.