General Technical Requirements for Written Assignments

All written assignments are expected to satisfy the following:

1. Have a cover page consisting of a completed Commitment to Academic Integrity Form (you sign it by typing your name).
2. Be double-spaced.
3. Be written in 12 pt, “Cambria” (the default MS Word font), or another similar serif-type font.
4. Have side-margins of 1 inch.
5. Have horizontal alignment that is fully justified.
6. Have no extra space between paragraphs.
7. Have each paragraph begin with a tab indentation.
8. Have the paper’s total word count at the top left corner of the title page.
9. Have a descriptive title (see section on title pages below).
10. Have page numbers (see section on page numbering below).
11. Follow the APA-style for (a) in-text citations and (b) the last page’s list of all references (see section on citing your sources below).

Yes, this is boring, and yes, it is pedantic. The point of these requirements, however, is to allow me to focus more on the contents of your paper and not on your skills (or lack thereof) in design. Besides these should also be trivial to follow when using most word processing software. To help, I have included a template satisfying these requirements on the course website.

Title Pages

For the purposes of this course, your title information should occur at the top of the second page of your paper (after your completed copy of the Commitment to Academic Integrity Form) and consist of (i) your paper’s word count, (2) the assignment’s name, (3) a descriptive and meaningful title, and (4) your name. The word count should be at the top left, while the rest should be centered. Everything should be single-spaced in the same font, size, and style as the rest of your paper. The following is an example:

Word Count: 1,203

Debate #2 Position Paper
Piracy Encourages Innovation
By Troy McClure

Since the dawn of time, mankind has enjoyed pirates. In the days of

In order to be descriptive and meaningful, the title should give a good indication as to the contents of the paper—and you will have a better idea of this once you complete the paper. So do it last. Feel free to personalize it but do not go crazy.

While a title like “Higher Wages are a Good Thing” is not very exciting, it is perfectly adequate for a debate position paper: it specifies the issue and the stance you take on that issue. Keep it simple and direct, being clever and witty takes up time better spent writing the paper itself.

Page Numbers

Page numbers should appear on the top-right of each page, starting on the second page (i.e., there should be no page number on the cover page with the Commitment to Academic Integrity Form). Page numbers should otherwise be in the same font, size, and style as the rest of your paper, and have your name followed by a hyphen and the page number. The following is an example:

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pirates, like we have today, it was mixed with shredded tobacco.

Citing Your Sources

You are required to properly cite all your sources (see pages 2 and 16 of the syllabus for the academic integrity policy). Do this whenever you find yourself quoting or otherwise using the ideas of another person. Please follow APA-style citation guidelines, keeping in mind that you must cite all sources, even if you are only putting their ideas into your own words.

In-Text Citations: When you reference any source, you need to do an in-text citation with (i) the author and (2) the year of publication, as in:

Shareholders are the most important (Friedman, 1970).

If you are directly quoting the source, then please include the page number when available:

Because it is “someone else’s money” (Friedman, 1970, p. 33).

If no year of publication is available, use n.d. (for “no date”) instead, as in:

Construction regulations are struggling to keep up (Kunji, n.d.).

If no author is credited, use the first few words of the source’s title, as in:

Negligence was a problem. ("Villaggio Fire Investigation", 2012).

List of References: The last page must include a “References” section. For each reference, you need to cite, as they are relevant/available, (i) the author, (2) the date of publication, (4) the chapter, article, or webpage title, (5) the book, periodical, journal, or website title, (6) the volume and issue of publication, (7) book publishing location and publisher, and (8) the URL with date of retrieval. Some examples:


Negligence was a problem. (“Villaggio Fire Investigation”, 2012). 

The course schedule contains the full reference for each assigned text, which should make this process much easier for you, while providing you with lots of examples for additional outside sources you may use.

Other People: You must also cite ideas coming from classmates, friends, family members, course assistants, or anyone else. In-text citations must reference (i) the person whose idea it was, and (2) when you got that idea from them, as in:

Executive compensation is unfair (Al-Thani, 2016).

When listing these references, you need to cite (i) the person’s name, (2) when you got the idea from them, and (3) how you got the idea from them, as in:

Al-Thani, F. (2016, November 30). [Class notes].


The Academic Resource Center (ARC): If you receive assistance from the ARC, then you must also acknowledge their help. Do this on the last page, after the references, with an “Acknowledgments” section. For instance:

Thanks to Hope from the ARC who helped me with my spelling.