

## Guide to APSA Style Basics<sup>2</sup>

Proper bibliographic citation in your research paper is of the utmost importance. You must provide citations under three conditions:

1. When you quote someone else.
2. When you summarize someone else's words or ideas.
3. When you paraphrase someone else's words or ideas.

*Failure to provide complete citations, or improper citations, can constitute plagiarism. Plagiarized assignments will receive an F grade, without exception.*

I request that you use American Political Science Association bibliographic style in your research. This handout summarizes APSA style. This style requires two components in your paper (both of which are described in detail below):

1. A properly formatted reference list at the end of your paper.
2. In-text parenthetical citations.

### Formatting the Reference List

1. APSA style generally follows Chicago Manual of Style's author-date citation practice. It requires **parenthetical references within the text** of the paper *and* a **list of references** at the end. See the end of this guide for examples of "reference citations in text."
2. Reference lists begin immediately following the conclusion. Type the word "References" flush against the left margin.
3. Use hanging indent form. First line of each reference is set flush left and subsequent lines are indented. References are single-spaced with one empty line between references.
4. Arranged **alphabetically**, not by format of publication (book, journal, etc.), and not numbered.
5. The author should be first element. If no author is present, use the editor's name. If no editor is present, start with the book title or article title.
6. List author's last name, followed by a comma then the author's first and/or middle name. Spell out authors' names. Do not use initials unless they are used by the author.
7. Book and periodical titles should be in italics.
8. Chapter and article titles should be contained in quotation marks.
9. The date is always the second element in a citation.
10. Capitalize each word in the titles of articles, books, etc. This rule does not apply to indefinite or definite articles (a, an, the), short prepositions, or conjunctions unless one is the first word of the title or subtitle.

### Examples of Citations In Text (Parenthetical References)

#### Author's Name in Text (no page number):

Walker (2000) compared reaction times...

#### Author's Name in Reference (no page number):

In a recent study of reaction times (Walker 2000)...

<sup>1</sup> This document has been adapted from "Guide to APSA Style Basics, Meriam Library – California State University, Chico" available at <http://www.csuchico.edu/~kfountain/guides/APSA.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> For more information, consult the *Style Manual for Political Science*, revised edition (Call number: JA86.A52 2001), or the *Chicago Manual of Style*, 15th edition (Call number: Z253 U69 2003). More examples are provided in Kate Turabian's *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, 7th edition (Call number: LB2369 .T8 2007).

**Author's Name in Text (page number):**

According to Jones (1998), "Students often had difficulty using APSA style" (199).

**Author's Name in Reference (page number):**

She stated, "Students often had difficulty using APSA style" (Jones 1998, 199).

**Legal Citations (no page number):**

The U.S. Supreme Court ruled that foreigners currently held in U.S. custody at Guantanamo Bay are entitled to habeas corpus rights. (*Rasul v. Bush* 2004).

**Government Report (page number):**

Although many schools report incidents of violence, far fewer experience "serious violent incidents" (U.S. Department of Education 2004, 2).

**Article with no author**

Class participation is correlated with academic performance ("Student Performance..." 2009).

**Reference Examples****Books:****One Author**

Hertsgaard, Mark. 1988. *On Bended Knee: The Press and the Reagan Presidency*. New York: Schocken Books.

**Two Authors**

Decker, Scott H., and Barrick Van Winkle. 1996. *Life in the Gang: Family, Friends, and Violence*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

**Basic web citation:**

"Athens Preps for Olympic Homecoming." [CNN.com](http://www.cnn.com/2004/TRAVEL/DESTINATIONS/05/24/greece.athens.ap/index.html). Cable News Network. 24 May 2004.  
<<http://www.cnn.com/2004/TRAVEL/DESTINATIONS/05/24/greece.athens.ap/index.html>>

**Journal article, two authors (print, microfilm, PDF):**

Herrmann, Richard K, and Jonathan W. Keller. 2004. "Beliefs, Values, and Strategic Choice: U.S. Leaders' Decisions to Engage, Contain, and Use Force in an Era of Globalization." *Journal of Politics* 66 (May): 557-80.

**Newspaper article, one author (print, microfilm, PDF):**

Talev, Margaret. 2004. "No Budget Accord in Cards This Week." *Sacramento Bee*, 9 July.

**Newspaper article, no known author (print, microfilm, PDF):**

*Sacramento Bee*. 2004. "Eyes on Sudan: Victims of Racist Repression Need Help Now." 9 July.

**Newspaper article, one author (online version):**

Balz, Dan. 2007. "Mixed Reviews for Clinton in Iowa." *Washington Post*, January 29.  
<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/01/28/AR2007012801321.html> (January 29, 2007).

**Report from a private organization available on organization Web site:**

Death Penalty Information Center. 2005. "Crimes Punishable by the Death Penalty."  
<http://www.deathpenaltyinfo.org/article.php?did=144&scid=10> (January 29, 2007).