How to Write a Research Paper
Psyc 245: Drugs and Behavior

Please read these instructions before you begin your paper. Please read, retain and follow these requirements.

1. A minimum of three (3) pages of content are required. These three pages do not include: the reference page or the title page. The paper should not be more than 5 pages long. Keep the paper short and succinct. It should contain only information that is pertinent to the topic.

2. All term papers are to be typewritten. No hand written papers will be accepted (this applies to the rough draft as well). Papers are to be double-spaced. A 12 point font is required such as times, times new roman, courier, arial or any standard type font. The paper should be stapled in the upper left-hand corner. Please do NOT use fancy folders or binders.

3. Citation and references are required. DO NOT PLAGIARIZE. Plagiarism will result in an F in the course and/or further disciplinary action. Please check syllabus for plagiarism rules. Citations and references must be included in the paper. You are free to use any style of writing that you are familiar with. If you are not familiar with any particular style then you can use APA style. The following is some guidelines for using APA style:

Citation must include author and year (Author, Yr) (i.e.: (Lewellen, 2000)).
References must include author/book/article/journal/interview, etc. used, the date of the article, the publisher (if available), and the page on which the quote (if used) was found. List only references that you used to write your paper. Appropriate references include: books, journal articles, popular articles, interviews, internet, etc. For help with APA style citations you can visit the library for the APA manual or go to the following website http://www.apastyle.org/previoustips.html.

References should look similar to the following:

Author’s last name, initial. (year). Title of Article. Title of Journal, vol, #, page #.


4. **Purchased papers are definitely forbidden! Term papers must be original works of your own, and thus plagiarism and purchased papers will result in an F for the paper, the course and/or further disciplinary action.

5. An outline is not required. However it allows you to organize and coordinate your materials and ideas, and present them in the clearest, most coherent fashion. An outline should include the following:

I. Main Idea
   A. Supporting Material
      1. 1-2 words of detail
   B. More supporting Material
      1. 1-2 words of detail

II. Another Main Idea

ETC…
EXAMPLE:

I. What is the drug controversy?
   A. How did it start?
   B. Why is this a controversy?
II. Biological and Psychological Impact on the Individual
   A. Biological effect
   B. Psychological effect
   C. Any other effects that are related to the individual
III. Societal Impact
   A. Societal Effects
       1. Economics
       2. Crime
       3. Any other issues necessary
IV. Possible Solutions

6. A good paper has an opening statement about the topic, and a closing summary/conclusions section. This allows for organization to the paper and shows that you have thought it out carefully. It is nice to see a bit of creativity. An analysis of the topic can include a final comment or section of personal notions or observations (within the context of the field and the course, and relevant to the paper’s topic). Personal opinions about an issue or area are important, but keep them relevant to the topic and data-supported. Choose your references carefully. DO NOT make up your own data or over-interpret the available data in an area that is new or lacks a lot of data. If you do this it can lead to the wrong conclusions or direction, doing harm to what might otherwise be a good paper. This paper is reporting research. Lists of things are not a good idea. A research paper cannot be a series of lists or cryptic notes. Controversial topics are allowed and acceptable, but if you disagree with something support your argument with real data and good logic, not just “feelings” or “reactions”. You must show clearly what you disagree with by using an alternative concept, or standard ideas, it cannot be a short disagreement with no support.

7. Every effort should be made to use the best possible grammar, sentence structure and paragraph construction, etc. Make your paper clear and readable. Present your topic, support and discuss it clearly, discuss it well in the body of the text and come to a conclusion. Spelling counts, use your spell checker, but make sure that you are replacing your misspelled word with the appropriate spelling. Do not copy the language style of some other author to impress the instructor (or just to get away with not doing your own work), I will see right through this. Contractions are not generally used for formal papers (i.e. can’t instead of cannot). Finally, PROOFREAD, PROOFREAD, AND PROOFREAD AGAIN.

8. I will going over all of these issues in class and other issues pertaining to writing a good paper. This is a great learning experience for you and I will be here to support and encourage you. Be sure to take advantage of the resources available on campus. Assignments are required throughout the semester. These assignments are not to make your life miserable. They are aids in which you and I both can observe the work and determine if you are on the right track. In addition, with these assignments there will be no waiting until the last minute. If you need help or advice ask your instructor and/or classmates. The library is a great source of information, not only for reading material, but the librarians are available to assist you in anyway possible. Do not wait until the last minute to do this paper.

9. If you have any questions about topic selection, outline organization, writing, typing, resources, etc., please ask the instructor. I am more than willing to help you with a paper that is not only acceptable but exceptional.