

## Guidelines For Writing Research Papers

### Title page

- Create an original and informative title.
- Put your name on the title page.
- Put your affiliation on the title page.
- Put a date on the title page.
- Use one staple in the upper left hand corner to fasten all pages together.

### Body of text

- Start off with a general statement (or paragraph) describing the problem.
- State your thesis in the opening paragraph.
- Focus in on the details; write with conviction.
- Wrap up the discussion with a thought provoking summary.
- Use sections and section headings – denote level of heading with a unique style.
- Possible headings:
  - Abstract, Thesis, Introduction, Laboratory Methods and Materials, Observations, Interpretations and Discussion, Summary and Conclusions, References.

### Figures

- Refer to each figure in the text – Figure is capitalized when referred to in text.
- Discuss each figure in the text.
- Figures should have a label, title, and reference, for example: Figure 1. Title (author, year)
- All figure labels should face the same way.

### References

- Keep a properly formatted reference list and use hanging indents.
- Title the section: References or Works Cited.
- Give credit where credit is due – if you did not do the work, then it is not yours.
- Be consistent with your style of referencing.

### Numbers

- Use words to write out numbers less than ten; use numbers for all values  $\geq 11$ .
- Put a zero in front of a decimal point (example: 0.1 not .1).
- Be aware of significant figures and rounding errors.

### Be careful

- Use a spell checking program.
- Use the apostrophe appropriately.
- Use the hyphen (-) and the dash (–) appropriately.
- Do not use the word “you” in the text.
- Watch out for subject and verb agreement (eg. there is vs. there are).
- Use <sub>subscripts</sub> <sup>superscripts</sup> and symbols ( $\Delta$   $\alpha$   $^{\circ}\text{C} \pm$ ) where appropriate.
- Use page numbers on all pages except the title page.
- Use fonts sparingly.
- Watch use of capitalization.
- Proofread on paper – not on the screen.