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 subscripts superscripts and symbols (\( \Delta, \alpha, ^\circ C, \pm \)) 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.