Political Science

Style Sheet for Political Science
Ole J. Forsberg, Ph.D.
University of Tennessee

Rationale

For all assignments not written during class, the following style sheet must be followed. Your grade depends on presentation of ideas, not just the ideas themselves. Make sure your assignments represent what you wish to portray about yourself. I will say this here:

<div align="center">

Effort is irrelevant. Product is everything.

</div>

Mechanics

- All Margins: 1.00–1.25 in. This is the standard setting for all major word processing programs.

- Spacing: 1 ½ or double-spacing—your choice.

- Font: 12 point, Arial or Times New Roman.

Yes, I *can* tell the difference between most font styles and sizes.

Citations and References

- We do not use the MLA style; we use APSA.

- Inline citations and reference list must be done using APSA style. If you do not have the latest edition of the APSA Style Manual, you may download the relevant parts from the web at: http://web.utk.edu/~oforsber/common/docs/Reference_List.pdf

- The reference list is *not* a bibliography. In the reference list, you give full reference of all works you cite in your paper.

- Remember to cite (and reference) your sources of information, not just your quotes. Failure to do so is considered plagiarism.

Headers

- First page: Full name in the upper-right corner, Assignment title beneath that, Date assignment done beneath that.

- Others: Last name and page number in upper-right corner.

Headings

- First-level headings are base font, bolded.

- Second-level headings are base font, italicized.

Miscellaneous

- For multi-page papers, make sure you *staple* it together; paper clips cause more problems than they are worth.

- You may print front-to-back if you wish, especially if you want to kill as few trees as possible.

General Caveats

- Proofread the paper at least twice. Have someone else proofread the paper. When you proofread the paper, make sure it makes sense. Specifically, watch the logic, the spelling, and the grammar. Read what you wrote, not what you intended, since I cannot grade your intentions, only your product.

- Always make sure your assertions are backed up with cited facts.

- When used as an adjective, use 'US', when used as a noun, use 'United States'.

- Beware of dangling (and unnecessary) prepositions.

- Avoid unnecessary adjectives and adverbs. Do not use two words when one will do.

- Try to write in the active voice.

- Use a thesaurus to enrich your vocabulary, though not to excess.

- We do not 'say' things anymore, we 'state' them, or 'assert' them, or even 'proffer' them.

- Do not procrastinate. Doing so will limit your ability to follow these warnings.

Some Helpful Books

These books are available in the library. All college students should have a copy of either Chicago or Strunk, as both are invariably helpful in writing better.

- Chicago Manual of Style (15th edition).   Call Number: Z253 .U69 2003

- The Elements of Style, William Strunk, Jr.   Call Number: PE1408 .S772 2000

- Style Manual for Political Science.   Call Number: JA86 .A52 2001

Some Online Aids

In addition to the above books, these three websites should be bookmarked on your computer.

- William Strunk, Jr., "The Elements of Style." Online at:

    http://www.bartleby.com/141/

- The University of Wisconsin writing center. Online at:

    http://www.wisc.edu/writing/Handbook/index.html

- The Purdue University writing center. Online at:

    http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/general/index.html