



Introduction to International Relations

Checklist

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This checklist is hardly exhaustive. It is, in fact, a quick checklist of some of the more basic issues in writing. There is actually nothing in this list that you should not already know.

Headings

- ❑ Headings are either centered or flush left. Either is acceptable; just be consistent.
- ❑ First-level headings are **bolded** (and in base font) and on separate line.
- ❑ Second-level headings are *italicized* (and in base font) and on separate line.
- ❑ If you decided to have third-level headings (and you may not have decided to), they are *italicized*, punctuated with a period (even though they are not a complete sentence) and on the same line as the next paragraph (this is called 'lead in').

Punctuation and Grammar Rules

- ❑ In general, Bill Gates is correct with both spelling and grammar. If you get a red underline, double check the spelling with an outside source. If you get a green underline, you need to make sure that he is in error, otherwise change it.
- ❑ Then again, a section may still be wrong if he does not underline it. He seems to have a hard time picking up on illegal adverb use.
- ❑ To wit: Adverbs modify verbs; adjectives modify nouns.
- ❑ No contractions.
- ❑ Number or amount? Less or fewer? These words are not interchangeable. To figure out which to use, ask yourself if it makes sense to pluralize the singular noun. If so, then use number and fewer. Otherwise, use amount and less. I want less ice cream. I want fewer ice cream cones. However, this rule only works when you know what your noun is. For instance, do we have more resources or a greater number of resources than Mexico? The answer is yes. The first says the total sum of our resources is more (singular noun = resources) than Mexico has. The second says that the number of types of resources (oil, lumber, coal, water) is greater (singular noun = resource) than Mexico has.
- ❑ Without exception, introductory phrases also need to have a comma following them. For instance, "After World War II the world seemed to be divided by two superpowers" is not correct, as the introductory phrase is not set off by commas. The sentence should be "After World War II, the world seemed to be divided by two superpowers."
- ❑ Colons introduce a list, but they never follow a 'to be' verb.
- ❑ Nonrestrictive clauses, also known as parenthetical statements, are set off by commas.
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- ❑ In extended lists, separate the items with commas or semi-colons. Semi-colons tend to be used for lengthier items than commas. As instance with commas:

There are at least nine names for the forward slash. These are solidus, oblique, diagonal, separatrix, shilling mark, virgule, scratch comma, slant, and forward slash.

An instance with semi-colons:

A hegemonic power provides three services: (1) security for global markets; (2) a large market for the export of goods to other countries; and (3) a dominant currency with which international relations can be conducted.

- ❑ In America, we use serial commas (British Commonwealth states do not). This means that, in lists, there is a comma (or semi-colon for that type of list) before the last ‘and’ (or ‘or’). For an example, see previous point.
- ❑ No space before, and one space after, any punctuation mark.
- ❑ No contractions.
- ❑ Possessive pronouns do not have apostrophes. All other possessive nouns are formed by adding an apostrophe-s to the singular noun. Thus: the cow’s horns; its horns; the bird’s song; the taxi’s whistle; ones thoughts; the Jones’s house; the Williams’s car; the United States’s territory. There is one exception to this: If the possessive results in three ‘s’ sounds together, then the possessive is formed by merely adding the apostrophe. Thus: Moses’ staff; Jesus’ disciples. Also note that the possessive form is an adjective. As such, because of the aversion to using apostrophes properly, “US” (adjective) is preferred to “United States’s”.
- ❑ Do not dangle prepositions; it leaves the sentence feel unfinished. According to Wiktionary, prepositions are words that are

employed to connect a noun or a pronoun, in an adjectival or adverbial sense, with some other word; a particle used with a noun or pronoun to make a phrase limiting some other word; — so called because it is usually placed before the word with which it is phrased; as, a bridge of iron; he comes from town; it is good for food; he escaped by running.

What does this mean? Certain verbs take prepositions to make them complete. This preposition completes the verb by tying it to a noun through a directional attribute. The sentence “I ran over” does not feel complete. What did I run over? Did I run over a cat? Did I run over here?

- ❑ Sentence fragments are not always wrong. Sometimes, the period is used as an extremely strong comma (even stronger than a semi-colon or a dash). If the sentence fragment is short and immediately follows the thought that spawned it, then it should be acceptable. Or not.

Notice the sentence fragment I just wrote. It follows from the previous sentence’s thought without pause. To determine if the sentence fragment works, ask yourself if the period can be replaced with a dash for a similar effect. If so, then the sentence fragment can stand. However, remember that the fragment must be short. Four words should be the upper limit.

- ❑ Remember to indent the first line of your paragraphs. Technically, the paragraph immediately following any heading can avoid the indent, but be consistent with this.
- ❑ Finally, no contractions.

Reference List

The reference list also needs to follow the APSA guidelines.

- ❑ The reference list needs an appropriate title.
- ❑ The reference list needs to be alphabetized.
- ❑ The references need to be in the correct format.
- ❑ The proper way to list the city is not Washington, D.C., it is Washington, DC. Federal postal abbreviations do not use periods.

Citations

Your citations need to follow the APSA guidelines. If it is deficient, expect a major point reduction. The guidelines are *still* online on the course website. At this point, I should not have to even mention this.

- ❑ (Name Year) or (Name Year: Page)
- ❑ The citation comes after the quotation mark and before the ending punctuation.

Parts

There are basically five parts to this project. The first part (and most important) is the writing of the chapter itself. The other four parts are the outline, the thought questions, the key terms list, and the reference list. All five parts will start on new pages. Only the body of the chapter has the page limit (7 – 10 pages). When you submit your chapter, you should submit it in the following order, all stapled together.

- ❑ Outline: This should be brief and should provide the headings you utilize in the chapter.
- ❑ Chapter: This is the main section of the project.
- ❑ Key Terms: These just need to be listed here. You do not have to define them at this point. You *may* define them if you wish, but it is not expected.
- ❑ Thought questions: You do not actually need to provide answers to the thought questions, since the answers to the thought questions should be a couple paragraphs in length. These thought questions should provoke open-ended thoughts, not closed-ended answers. A good thought question would be “How has Callenbach’s vision of an Ecotopian future been realized?” A poor thought question would be “How many years has it been since the Turkish Republic was founded?”
- ❑ Reference list: Make sure you properly format this. There are no excuses.

Key Words

Since you are highlighting key terms, be consistent with how and when you highlight them. The usual method for highlighting the term is to put them in **bold face**. You may *italicize* them if you wish, just be consistent. Also, only highlight the terms once—where they are explained/defined.

- Additionally, make sure your explanation/definition of the key terms is correct (in the text).
- You may put the page numbers where you highlighted them, but that is optional, too.

Miscellaneous

- Make sure your history is correct.
- Make sure that states you mention actually existed when you mention them. For instance, Russia did not exist in 1986, nor did Austria in 1914, and neither existed in 1943.
- Do not confuse ‘nation’ with ‘state’; they are not the same thing (see POL 451 for a thorough explanation of the consequences of this fact).

And Finally...

- Do not write a chapter where you are throwing as much information at the problem with the hope that enough something will stick. If I see a chapter that is not focused, I will know that you do not really understand how the parts fit together. The general rule is that if it does not fit with the topic, it needs to be dropped. Thus, a discussion of polarity in conjunction with globalization is a red flag that you do not understand, unless you are focusing on how globalization is merely another facet of a realist world and that globalization is being used as another type of power.
- Also, this is your chance to shine. I am not dictating what you have to include, what you have to exclude, or what order you have to present the material. Use your knowledge of 14+ years of textbooks and school. This list is here to help your paper shine. It does not feel good to spend hours upon hours on writing something and have it trashed because of simple little mistakes.