

# INTRODUCTION TO COMMUNICATION RESEARCH: BECOMING A SCHOLAR

## A Workbook

by

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### Introduction to Communication Research: Becoming a Scholar (2022 Revision)

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"The common facts of today are the products of yesterday's research."

-Duncan MacDonald

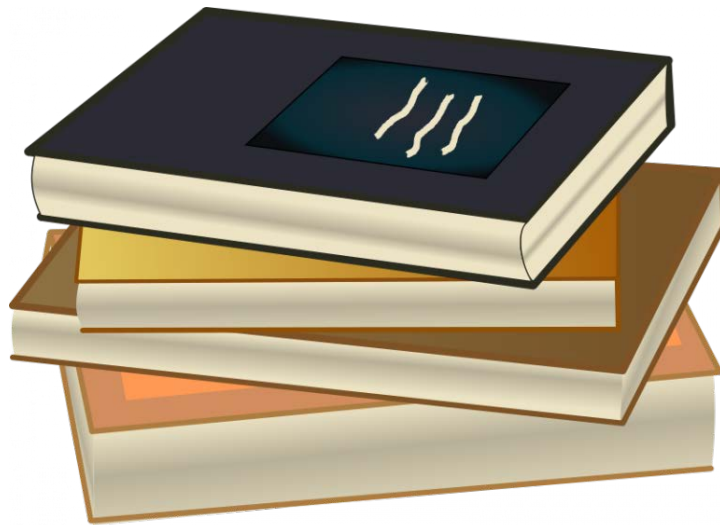


## Introduction

Welcome to your journey to becoming a communication scholar! We developed this workbook to guide you through the semester as you learn how to understand and conduct scholarly research. What does it mean to be a *scholar*? A scholar is someone who specializes in a particular area of study. For you, this area is communication. And how do you become a scholar? By doing research.

But why is it important for you to learn research skills? You might be thinking, I want to be a journalist or make TV shows or work in public relations, why do I need to learn how to do research? Well, if you want someone to watch your TV show, read your article, or listen to your campaign, you will need to conduct research to see if the audience you're targeting even exists. You will need to research to find out if your ideas are original, what the person you're interviewing for an article has done in the past, or what makes a successful public relations campaign. You'll need data in order to pitch your new TV show idea. To be successful in organizational and business communication, it is essential that you learn how to effectively promote successful communication in any institution. This may include writing training manuals, employee handbooks, or conducting in-depth personnel research to ensure overall satisfaction of employees. Also, scholarly research is the foundation of any discipline, and many of the core principles of this field are derived from scholarly research.

Because we want you to succeed in the industry, we will spend the semester learning how to conduct research in the field of communication. We'll start by providing you with a short history of communication research, show you how to gather academic research, and teach you how to write a literature review. Let's get started!



# Chapter 1

## What Is Communication Research?

**W**hen we consider rhetoric, the study of the art of persuasive speaking, the history of communication research can be traced back to the days of Aristotle. You will learn more about rhetoric in your public speaking and communication theory courses, so we won't take a deep dive into it here, but the larger point is that humans have been interested in studying communication since 300 B.C. Modern communication research and efforts to define and "model" the process of communication, however, is typically traced back to the early 20th century.

**W**alter Lippmann's (1922) book *Public Opinion* is a seminal piece in the early study of communication. Lippmann's (1922) focus on communication and democracy might sound familiar to you; his objective was to highlight problems facing democracy by discussing how public opinion consists of "pictures inside people's heads [that] do not automatically correspond with the world outside" (p. 19). He argued that people's access to facts are often limited, thus public opinions are often misleading and inaccurate, but yet we still tend to collectively act upon them. John Dewey's (1927) book *The Public and its Problems* took a similar view of the communication process, but he had a more optimistic view, "When communication occurs, all natural events are subject to reconsideration and revision; they are re-adapted to meet the requirements of conversation, whether it be public discourse or that preliminary discourse termed thinking" (p. 132). Both Lippmann and Dewey set the stage for future study of communication by highlighting its importance in social life, democracy, and community.

**U**pon the founding of the Annenberg School of Communication at the University of Pennsylvania in 1958, publisher and ambassador Walter Annenberg wrote:

*"Every human advancement or reversal can be understood through communication. The right to free communication carries with it responsibility to respect the dignity of others – and this must be recognized as irreversible. Educating students to effectively communicate this message and to be of service to all people is the enduring mission of this school."*

The scholars who helped establish the Annenberg School set the stage for the future of teaching and researching communication. Under George Gerbner, the second dean of the school from 1964 until 1989, the school moved communication research beyond either a strict medium (radio, television, speech) or professional training basis to a more theoretical understanding of communication. The mission of the Annenberg School at the University of Pennsylvania is to produce cutting-edge research, sharing the work to help expand the public's and policy makers' understanding of communication, educate graduate and undergraduate students to move forward the discipline as well as encourage students to be better consumers of communication.

## Fields of Communication

For a comprehensive overview of the fields of communication (and career options for each category) visit <https://www.communications-major.com/>. Reading through this list will help you understand the skills required in the communication professions, and you can discover which types of jobs appeal to you the most. Many of these fields overlap. Regardless of what career path you choose, you will need to be a skilled writer and speaker, understand digital technology, and develop the ability to analyze information and think critically. When you determine which path is a good fit for you, choose from one of the four majors in the School of Communication and Media:

### **Journalism and Emerging Media** (<http://chss.kennesaw.edu/socm/programs/bsjem.php>)

Whether you are navigating the media-rich culture as a critical thinker, learning to write and produce news and feature stories as a journalist, or are gaining hands-on experience in digital video and audio as a social media expert, Kennesaw State's Journalism and Emerging Media program offers endless possibilities.

Learn the latest industry trends from faculty members who are award-winning professionals, including reporters, editors and international correspondents at the Associated Press, the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, CNN, NPR, commercial radio stations and various newspapers. The Journalism and Emerging Media major offers a professionally-focused, marketplace-relevant, and theoretically-rigorous program. It includes courses in news writing, media law, digital media production, sports reporting, investigative reporting, and community-based capstone experience. It encourages students to enroll in a for-credit internship.

### **Media and Entertainment** (<http://chss.kennesaw.edu/socm/programs/bsmes.php>)

The Media and Entertainment major invites students to explore the critical ways in which communication and converged media connect with and affect our lives, society, and culture. The program focuses on the forms and effects of media, including radio, film, television, print, and electronic media, and requires that students demonstrate basic digital media production skills. Our students are critically engaged with creative analysis, production, and research into traditional and emerging forms of media. The curriculum emphasizes media history, media institutions, theory and research, production, ethics, policy, management, and technology and their effects on contemporary life.

The program offers both theoretical and applied approaches to the study and production of media. We define "entertainment" as "any media or communication function that is used for entertainment purposes" when considering areas of study. Thus, the field of media and entertainment is very broad and includes everything from film, television, and radio pre-production, production, and post-production; to corporate, government, and non-profit communications and digital media production; to jobs in theater, music, museums, theme parks, sports, travel and tourism, and gaming.

## **Organizational and Professional Communication** (<http://chss.kennesaw.edu/socm/programs/bsopc.php>)

Organizational and Professional Communication professionals study the role of communication in increasing corporate productivity and employee satisfaction. KSU is the only Georgia institution offering an undergraduate concentration in Organizational and Professional Communication. Organizational and Professional Communication students learn the skills they need to develop employee training programs, training manuals, and employee handbooks. Students also conduct communication audits at area companies to measure employee satisfaction with company communication practices. Students often intern in corporate human resources or training and development departments.

## **Public Relations** (<http://chss.kennesaw.edu/socm/programs/bspr.php>)

The Public Relations major at Kennesaw State University offers a professionally-focused, marketplace-relevant, and theoretically-rigorous academic program for aspiring public relations communicators throughout Metro Atlanta and Northwest Georgia. Kennesaw State is one of only three universities in the state of Georgia to offer a specific major in the ever-evolving discipline of Public Relations. The major offers students a public relations education that includes public relations principles, case study analysis, public relations writing, crisis communication, graphic design for organizational publications, persuasion methods and strategies, and use of social media and other multimedia communication strategies in public relations. Internships and study tours to New York and Atlanta public relations agencies supplement the traditional classroom and online learning settings.

For a list of potential communication-based employers in the state of Georgia, check out this page: <https://www.communications-major.com/georgia/>

## **Professional Organizations**

**I**n the field of communication research, there are several regional, national, and international professional organizations for educators, students, and communication practitioners. Each organization has a code of ethics, or best practices, for the profession and for training and developing the next generation of researchers and professors. These nonprofit organizations hold conventions/conferences where communication students and scholars come together to present research, have roundtable discussions, and discuss recent innovations in the field. Typically, these organizations have divisions and interest groups devoted to the various categories of scholarship that fall under the “communication” umbrella. Examples include divisions devoted specifically to journalism, public relations, mass communication and society, communication theory, advertising, health communication, technology, cultural and critical studies, history, law and policy, ethics, gender/women’s studies, entertainment studies, children and media, and communication education.

**F**or a typical yearly conference, the organization puts out a “call for papers” online 3-6 months before the conference, and scholars upload their original research to the website into the division that best fits their research topic. Each paper is then reviewed by peers in that field (typically two or three reviewers) who score the paper on dimensions such as quality of writing, importance of the topic, soundness of methodology, and impact of findings. Papers that gain high scores are then slated for presentation at the conference. Some presentations are done on posters whereas others are orally presented to small groups, typically using a visual aid such as PowerPoint. Presenting at an academic conference is a great way to get feedback from peers in your field before attempting to publish your work in an academic journal. And aside from presenting or attending research sessions, conferences offer an opportunity to connect and network with fellow scholars in your field. Conferences also typically have a “job fair” where representatives from various universities interview prospective new professors for academic positions.

**T**here are several well-known and well-respected professional communication organizations in the United States. The Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (AEJMC) is one of the largest organizations, holding small regional conferences and one large conference each year. AEJMC has 18 divisions, 10 interest groups, and two commissions (or areas of broad concern that cut across divisional lines): Commission on the Status of Minorities and Commission on the Status of Women. Most divisions and interest groups have their own academic journal (i.e., *Journal of Advertising Education*, *Electronic News*, *International Communication Research Journal*, *Mass Communication & Society*, etc.) and AEJMC publishes three scholarly journals: *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly*, *Journal & Mass Communication Educator*, and *Journalism & Communication Monographs*. More information about AEJMC can be found at [www.aejmc.org](http://www.aejmc.org).

**T**he National Communication Association (NCA) is another large organization, and its annual convention attracts roughly 5,000 attendees. NCA has 48 divisions and six caucuses (Asian/Pacific American; Black; Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer Concerns; Disability; La Raza; and Women's Caucus). In addition to journalism and mass communication, NCA features research divisions in activism and social justice, argumentation and forensics, ethnography, family communication, group communication, interpersonal communication, nonverbal communication, organizational communication, peace and conflict communication, public address, spiritual communication, and training and development. NCA publishes 11 academic journals: *Communication and Critical/Cultural Studies*, *Communication Education*, *Communication Monographs*, *Communication Teacher*, *Critical Studies in Media Communication*, *First Amendment Studies*, *Journal of Applied Communication Research*, *Journal of International and Intercultural Communication*, *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, *The Review of Communication*, and *Text and Performance Quarterly*. More information about NCA can be found at [www.natcom.org](http://www.natcom.org).

**T**he largest international organization in our field is the International Communication Association (ICA). ICA boasts more than 4,500 members from 80 countries and is officially associated with the United Nations as a non-governmental NGO. They host an annual conference, switching between a US destination and an international destination each year. ICA has 23 divisions and nine interest groups, including divisions in Children, Adolescents and Media; Environmental Communication; Feminist Scholarship; Game Studies; Global Communication and Social Change; Philosophy, Theory and Critique; and Popular Communication in addition to divisions devoted to journalism, PR, and mass communication. ICA publishes six major peer reviewed journals: *Journal of Communication*, *Communication Theory*; *Human Communication Research*; *Communication, Culture & Critique*; *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*; and *The Annals of the International Communication Association* (formerly *Communication Yearbook*). There are also two affiliate journals: *Communication & Society* (a leading Chinese-language journal in journalism and communication) and *Studies in Communication & Media* (an open-access journal published by the German Communication Association). More information about ICA can be found at [www.icahdq.org](http://www.icahdq.org).

**I**n addition to national and international professional organizations, there are several regional organizations that hold conferences. In our geographical area, we have the Georgia Communication Association (affiliated with NCA; [www.gacomm.org](http://www.gacomm.org)), the Southern States Communication Association which publishes the *Southern Communication Journal* (also affiliated with NCA; [www.scca.net](http://www.scca.net)), and the Eastern Communication Association (ECA) which hosts conferences along the east coast of the US, and publishes *Communication Research Reports*, *Qualitative Research Reports in Communication*, and *Communication Quarterly* ([www.ecasite.org](http://www.ecasite.org)). There are also regional meetings of the larger organizations, such as the AEJMC Southeast Colloquium, which is held at a different university in the Southeast each March.

**T**here are also professional organizations associated with specific fields within the communication discipline. The Public Relations Society of America (PRSA; <http://prsa.org>) is the largest communication-based professional organization in the US, boasting more than 30,000 members, and has a mission to “make communications professionals smarter, better prepared and more connected through all stages of their career.” They also support the Public Relations Student Society of America (PRSSA; <http://prssa.prsa.org>) with university chapters across the US. Kennesaw State’s School of Communication & Media has a PRSSA chapter, so if you’re a PR-Interest student you should check it out: <http://www.ksuprssa.org>.

**J**ournalists have a professional organization as well: The Society for Professional Journalists (SPJ; [www.spj.org](http://www.spj.org)). SPJ is the most broad-based journalism organization in the US, dedicated to “encouraging the free practice of journalism and stimulating high standards of ethical behavior.” SPJ was founded in 1909 and currently has roughly 7,500 members. The state of Georgia has an SPJ chapter (<https://spjgeorgia.com/>) and Kennesaw State has a very active student chapter. You can check them out via their Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/KennesawStateSpj>. Interested in journalism and mass communication history? The American Journalism Historians Association (AJHA; <https://ajha.wildapricot.org/>) holds a national conference and a Southeast symposium every year and publishes the academic journal *American Journalism*.

**A**re you a media production enthusiast? The Broadcast Education Association (BEA; [www.beaweb.org](http://www.beaweb.org)) is a great resource. BEA is an international academic media professional organization focused on excellence in media production and career advancement for educators, students, and professionals in the industry. The organization holds a massive annual convention in Las Vegas in April, with over 250 sessions on teaching media courses, collaborative networking events, hands-on technology workshops, and research and creative scholarship, in addition to the Festival of Media Arts. The BEA convention is co-located with the National Association of Broadcasters (NAB) Show, where attendees can learn about (and try!) all of the new media production technology. BEA also publishes the *Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media*, *Journal of Radio & Audio Media*, *Journal of Media Education*, and the *Electronic Media Research* book series.

**F**or scholars interested in film and media studies, The Society for Cinema & Media Studies (SCMS; <https://www.cmstudies.org/>) is dedicated to the scholarly study of film, television, video, and new media. They hold an annual conference where students and teachers of film and media studies present research and attend networking events. SCMS also publishes the peer-reviewed academic publication *Cinema Journal*, focusing on digital media, sound studies, visual culture, video game studies, fan studies, and avant-garde/experimental film and media practices.

**O**r perhaps you’re interested in health communication? The American Public Health Association has a Health Communication working group (<https://www.apha.org/apha-communities/member-sections/public-health-education-and-health-promotion/who-we-are/hcwg>) and the National Public Health Information Coalition (NPHIC) partners with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to host a national conference on health communication, media, and marketing (<https://www.cdc.gov/nchcmm/index.html>).

Are you an organizational and professional communication scholar? Try the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM; [www.shrm.org](http://www.shrm.org)). They host an annual conference with nearly 200 sessions in six categories: business & HR strategy, HR compliance, global HR, professional development, talent management, and total rewards. They also host conferences on diversity & inclusion, employment law & legislation, leadership development, and recruitment & talent management. There is a local Atlanta chapter here: <https://www.shrmatlanta.org/default.aspx>. Another great resource is the Association for Talent Development (formerly “training & development) or ATD ([www.td.org](http://www.td.org)). They host conferences in the US and abroad as well as training workshops called “LearnNow” on topics such as game design for instruction, employee engagement, and getting started with augmented reality and virtual reality.

## References

Dewey, J. (1927). *The public and its problems*. New York: Holt.

Lippmann, W. (1922). *Public opinion*. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company.

***"In much of society, research means to investigate something you do not know or understand. "***

**-Neil Armstrong**

# Chapter 2

## Learning to Analyze and Write Scholarly Works

***"Research means that you don't know, but are willing to find out."***

**-Charles F. Ketterling**

The foundation of every field of study within communication begins with academic research and systematic inquiry. The principles and best practices followed in communication career fields are dictated by this scholarly research, so learning how to make sense of research can help you apply what you've learned in a professional setting. Communication research, no matter what discipline (journalism, public relations, media and entertainment, or organizational and professional communication), requires above average skills in written communication and critical thinking. Regardless of the field in which you work, as a communication professional you will have to learn to be flexible and adaptable. You will write in various voices, contexts, and formats. Think of this class as an addition to your skill set or toolbox.

When we set out to determine the "state of the art" in our field, where do we begin? As communication scholars, we start by gathering academic research and then we try to make sense of it. This academic literature can be found in scholarly books and journals; our job is to locate and read through this literature to look for recurring themes, find the latest data, and identify any missing pieces. As we read and re-read the literature, these themes, data, and "holes" in the research emerge. Once we're confident in our analysis of the existing literature, we write a paper called a Literature Review, which organizes the research in such a way that tells a story about the topic we're studying. It's a handy guide to your particular topic. This is always the first step in scholarly communication research.

Your literature review should summarize the publications you've read, but it is not the same as an annotated bibliography. If you have ever been assigned an annotated bibliography, you know that it is simply an alphabetical list of publications you've read and a short recap of what each publication was about. The annotated bibliography gives your instructor an idea of the accuracy, relevance, and quality of the sources you found. The literature review is more in-depth and is written like an essay, organized around ideas and not the sources themselves. You won't simply list your sources and give some detail about each one, one at a time.

In the literature review, you give an overview of your topic, you summarize and evaluate your academic sources, and you determine what is important. Rather than presenting your summaries in a bibliography, the literature review tells a story, where each summary transitions into the next in a logical manner. You analyze the arguments made in the literature you've read, looking for consistent findings across these publications, and pointing out any inconsistencies. How does each author's insights on your topic differ from or conform to previous arguments? Once you've analyzed your literature, do you see something missing? Are there any irregularities? A good literature review discusses all of these. See Figure 1 for a comparison of the literature review to the annotated bibliography.

A literature review can be a stand-alone work (often called a "review article") or it can be one part of a larger research paper. The main focus of a literature review is to summarize and synthesize other authors' arguments and ideas (without adding new contributions), and often this can stand alone as an assignment or paper. It can give a great overview of a topic. For communication professionals, such papers help them keep up with what's current in the field. Research papers, however, are larger undertakings. Since the main focus of a research paper is to develop a new argument on your topic, such a paper will contain a literature review to offer a foundation or support for the research topic. When students do their own original research studies (for a capstone paper, thesis, or dissertation), they first write the literature review before proposing their own research questions, designing a methodology, and carrying out their own research (perhaps a survey, focus group, or content analysis). Literature reviews are crucial to the foundation of a larger research study.

	<b>Annotated Bibliography</b>	<b>Literature Review</b>
<b>Purpose</b>	Provides the reader with an ordered list of sources for additional reading. Usually also provides brief explanations of why each source is credible and relevant to the topic.	Provides an overview of a particular topic or problem by summarizing and explaining the most significant sources in the field.
<b>Structure</b>	Sources are separated from each other and are arranged alphabetically, so they will be easy to locate.	Sources are integrated into paragraphs based on the progression of the topical overview, and they may be mentioned more than once.
<b>Components</b>	Each item in the list uses the formal citation style (usually APA, MLA, or Chicago) to cite a single source and includes a short paragraph with a summary explaining its credibility and relevancy.	Uses an introduction to explain the topic, synthesizes sources progressively as the topic is explained through the body, and then concludes by summarizing the overall background presented.

Figure 1. Comparing the Annotated Bibliography to the Literature Review (Buttram, MacMillan, & Koch, 2012)

## References

Buttram, C., MacMillan III, D., & Koch Jr., R. T. (2012). Comparing the annotated bibliography to the literature review. UNA Center for Writing Excellence. <https://tinyurl.com/gn8apar>

# Chapter 3

## APA Format

**B**efore getting started on the research process, let's learn a little more about formatting and structuring papers. Scholarly research within communication studies typically uses American Psychological Association format, or APA. APA style provides scholars with a uniform way to present and understand research. While it takes some time to learn, this formatting style will help you keep your papers organized and most importantly, will aid you in properly citing your sources in order to avoid plagiarism. This chapter will walk you through a series of exercises intended to familiarize you with APA style. First, we will briefly discuss the general structure of a paper written in APA format. Then we will practice in-text citations and reference list citations. As you complete these exercises, make sure you have your APA manual handy. You may also find the Purdue Online Writing Lab (OWL) at <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/1/> helpful, as this site stays current on APA formatting as well.

### Paper Structure

**T**he structure for a literature review is somewhat standard and involves several components, which are listed in Figure 2. While exercises following this chapter will walk you through writing each section, we're going to give you a quick explanation of what each paper section entails.

***"Research is formalized curiosity. It is poking and prying with a purpose. It is a seeking that he who wishes may know the cosmic secrets of the world and they that dwell therein."***

**-Zora Neale Hurston**



### ***Title Page***

**T**he title page is the first page of your paper. As illustrated in your APA manual and the APA sample paper provided by OWL Purdue, the title page should include the following, a page number, the paper title (bolded and in title case), your name, the school department, the course name, your professor's name, and the assignment due date.

### ***Introduction***

**T**he introduction informs the reader on what your topic of inquiry is. You give the reader background information on your topic such as definitions or statistics illustrating the significance of your topic. Here, you describe what the purpose of your paper is. For an 8 to 10 page paper, this section is typically 1 to 3 paragraphs.

### ***Abstract***

**T**he abstract is placed on the page after the title page and provides a brief summary of the whole paper along with keywords used in your library source searches. Since it's a summary of your whole paper, it should be the last part of the paper you write. This section is typically 5 to 7 sentences.

## ***Literature Review***

**Y**our literature review section should be an overview of research that has already been conducted on the topic you are researching. This is the main section of the paper and is intended to give the reader an idea of what the state of knowledge is on the topic. It's important to remain objective and rely solely on your sources for information. Make sure you leave personal observation and personal knowledge out of your literature review. For an 8 to 10 page paper, this section is typically 4 to 6 pages.

## ***Analysis and Discussion***

**T**his section is where you discuss the literature you just reviewed and summarized. What does it all mean? Identify patterns and ideas that your sources seem to agree on. Were there any discrepancies or contradictions? What did your sources miss, and what questions still need to be answered regarding your topic? After identifying this information, you will need to suggest future research possibilities and what scholars should investigate next. For an 8 to 10 page paper, this section is typically 1 to 3 pages.

## ***Conclusion***

**Y**our conclusion will wrap everything up by restating the purpose of your paper and reiterating your main points. For an 8 to 10 page paper, this section is typically 1 to 3 paragraphs.

## ***References***

**T**his section is where you cite all of the sources you used in your paper. Make sure you have your APA manual handy as you complete your citations.

## **Citations**

### ***Avoiding Plagiarism***

**W**e provide citations in academic works in order to let the reader know that our information and claims are supported by evidence and to avoid plagiarism. Whenever you share information or an idea that is not your own, the source of that information must be cited. Please see the list below from the University of Pittsburgh (2008) to get a better understanding of what plagiarism is and what types of plagiarism exist:

- Copying text "as is" without quotation marks and with no citation or source.
- Reordering the elements of the source text without citation.
- Copying pieces (sentences, key phrases) of the source text without citation.
- Paraphrasing without citation.
- Reproducing information that is not common knowledge or self-evident without citation.
- Incorporating an idea heard in conversation without citation.
- Using your own past material or another student's material as a new idea without citation.
- Paying for another to contribute to your work without citation.
- Using software or online translators to translate material without citation.
- Paying someone else to do your work, purchasing material, or translating from someone else's material (Calvano, 2011, p.1).

## ***In-text Citations***

The in-text citations you provide in your written work help the reader understand where your information came from and ensure that the information you are sharing is credible. Below are some examples of common in-text citation styles you will use in your paper. For these examples, we'll use the following citation:

Stiles, M., & Hand, L. (2017). APA format: You can do it. *Kennesaw State University Journal*, 1(3), 4-19.

<https://doi.10.3920958039>

**Paraphrasing--** There are two ways to do this:

According to Stiles and Hand (2017), APA format can be a little complicated and takes time and practice to learn.

APA format can be a little complicated and takes time to time and practice to learn (Stiles & Hand, 2017).

**Direct Quotes--** There are two ways to do this:

According to Stiles and Hand (2017), "APA formatting is nuanced and consists of many rules, and fully learning this format takes time" (p. 2).

"APA formatting is nuanced and consists of many rules, and fully learning this format take time" (Stiles & Hand, 2017, p. 2).

**3 Authors or More--** Use the first author's name and "et al." :

***What the citations would look like:***

According to Stiles et al. (2017), APA formatting highlights publication dates because recent research is important in social science disciplines.

APA formatting highlights publication dates because recent research is important in the social sciences (Stiles et al., 2017).

According to Stiles et al. (2017), "APA formatting takes consistent practice to fully learn" (p. 3).

"APA formatting takes consistent practice to fully learn" (Stiles et al., 2017, p. 3).

## ***Reference List Citations***

These types of citations are listed in the references section of your paper. Please see the list below from [OWL Purdue](#) (2019) for basic rules on constructing a references list.

- All lines after the first line of each entry in your reference list should be indented one-half inch from the left margin. This is called hanging indentation.
- All authors' names should be inverted (i.e., last names should be provided first).
- Authors' first and middle names should be written as initials.
- For example, the reference entry for a source written by Jane Marie Smith would begin with "Smith, J. M."
- If a middle name isn't available, just initialize the author's first name: "Smith, J."
- Give the last name and first/middle initials for all authors of a particular work up to and including 20 authors (this is a new rule, as APA 6 only required the first six authors). Separate each author's initials from the next author in the list with a comma. Use an ampersand (&) before the last author's name. If there are 21 or more authors, use an ellipsis (but no ampersand) after the 19th author, and then add the final author's name.
- Reference list entries should be alphabetized by the last name of the first author of each work.
- For multiple articles by the same author, or authors listed in the same order, list the entries in chronological order, from earliest to most recent.
- When referring to the titles of books, chapters, articles, reports, webpages, or other sources, capitalize only the first letter of the first word of the title and subtitle, the first word after a colon or a dash in the title, and proper nouns.
- Note again that the titles of academic journals are subject to special rules.
- Italicize titles of longer works (e.g., books, edited collections, names of newspapers, and so on).
- Do not italicize, underline, or put quotes around the titles of shorter works such as chapters in books or essays in edited collections.

### **Scholarly Journal Article Citation Example**

Stiles, M., & Hand, L. (2017). APA format: You can do it. *Kennesaw State University Journal*, 1(3), 4-19.  
<https://doi.10.3920958039>

### **Scholarly Book Citation Example**

Sichler, K., & Ryan, E. (2018). *The joys of APA format*. New York, New York: Cengage

## **References**

Calvano, B. (2011). Plagiarism in higher education. <http://www.examiner.com/adult-education-in-pittsburgh/plagiarism-higher-education>

Purdue Online Writing Center (2019). Reference list: Basic rules. <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/05/>

University of Pittsburgh. (2008). Undergraduate plagiarism policy. <http://www.frenchanditalian.pitt.edu/undergrad/about/plagiarism.php>

## APA Format Source Exercise

Let's practice. Conduct a quick search on your library's website. Use the key words "media", "effects", and "cultivation theory". Find one scholarly article and one scholarly book. List their information in the form below to the best of your ability. Use this form to keep track of your sources and to ensure your citations include all required information.

### Scholarly Journal Article

Author name(s):

Publication date:

Title:

Publication/journal name:

Volume number:

Edition number:

Page numbers:

Doi number or url:

Full Citation:

## APA Format Source Exercise

### Scholarly Book

Author name(s):

Editor name(s) (if applicable):

Publication date:

Title:

Publication name:

Publication location:

Edition number (if applicable):

Full Citation:

# Chapter 4

## Writing Your Paper

**T**his chapter of your workbook is all about walking you through the process of researching and writing a literature review. Use these exercises as guides while you write your paper. Good luck!

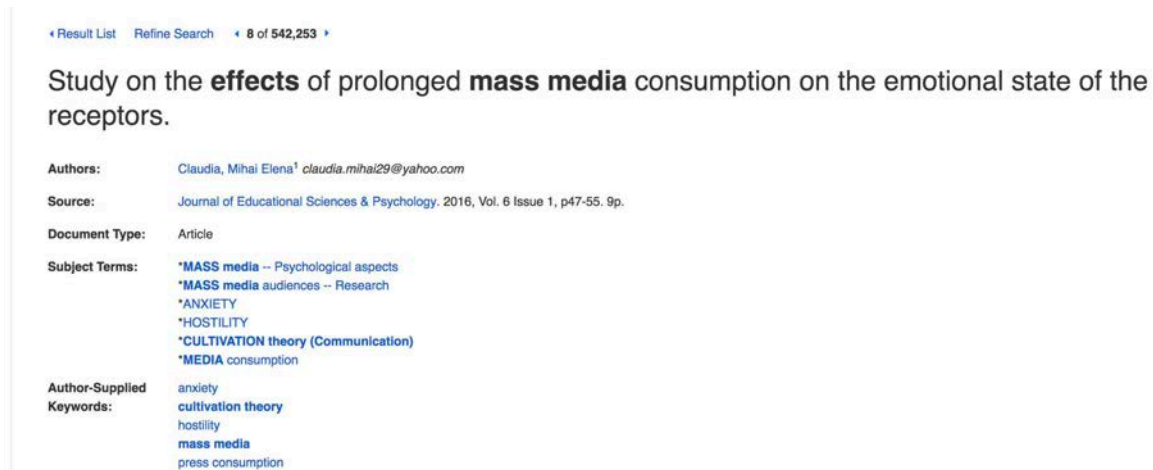
### **Choosing a Topic**

**C**hoosing a topic for a research paper is research. In order to write a thorough, comprehensive literature review, you must ensure that your topic isn't too broad or too narrow. Start with something that interests you and conduct a quick library search. From there, narrow your topic down (or broaden it) by continuing to find scholarly sources that pertain to your topic.

**Topic Ideas:**  
List 3 Potential Topics

## Finding Sources

Once you have chosen a topic, you will need to begin a more in-depth search for sources. Make sure you are looking for **peer-reviewed, scholarly journal articles** or **peer-reviewed, scholarly books**. Identifying key terms for your digital library searches will be essential to finding exemplary sources for your literature review. By conducting preliminary research in the process of narrowing down your topic, you probably already have two or three good sources. What keywords or subject terms (see figure 3) are listed in the source descriptions located in the database you are using? These will come in handy as you begin a more deliberate, strategic search for sources.



◀ Result List   Refine Search   8 of 542,253 ▶

Study on the **effects** of prolonged **mass media** consumption on the emotional state of the receptors.

**Authors:** Claudia, Mihai Elena<sup>1</sup> [claudia.mihai29@yahoo.com](mailto:claudia.mihai29@yahoo.com)

**Source:** *Journal of Educational Sciences & Psychology*. 2016, Vol. 6 Issue 1, p47-55. 9p.

**Document Type:** Article

**Subject Terms:**

- \*MASS media -- Psychological aspects
- \*MASS media audiences -- Research
- \*ANXIETY
- \*HOSTILITY
- \*CULTIVATION theory (Communication)
- \*MEDIA consumption

**Author-Supplied Keywords:**

- anxiety
- cultivation theory
- hostility
- mass media
- press consumption

Figure 3. Subject Terms and Keywords

### Key Terms:

List 10 to 12 Key Terms Related to Your Topic

### **Bibliography Mining:**

Take a look at the references sections of the sources you have already found. Find 3 to 5 potential sources for your paper and list them below.

### **Writing the Introduction**

**T**he introduction should give the reader a brief overview of what the purpose of the paper is and why the topic is important. Introduce your topic and give any background information that may be necessary. This is the section in which you will define key concepts or share statistics illustrating the significance of your topic.

#### **Introduction:**

Fill in information below that you might need for your introduction.

Background Information:

Statistics/Data to Show Importance of Topic:

Key Concepts to Define:

Purpose of Paper:

## Writing the Literature Review Section

This is the main section of your paper and will require the most preparation. Remember, you are summarizing and synthesizing information from your sources. The exercises below are intended to help you stay organized as you compile sources for this section.

### **Annotated Bibliography:**

Cite each of your sources in APA format and write a 5 to 7 sentence summary underneath each citation. Focus on the purpose and main findings/conclusions of each study.

#### **Source 1**

Citation

Summary

#### **Source 2**

Citation

Summary

**Source 3**

Citation

Summary

**Source 4**

Citation

Summary

**Source 5**

Citation

Summary

**Source 6**

Citation

Summary

**Source 7**

Citation

Summary

**Source 8**

Citation

Summary

## **Writing the Analysis/Discussion Section**

**T**his section is where you tie everything together and discuss the overall patterns and findings from the research studies you just reviewed in the previous section. You will also make suggestions for future research in this section.

### **Analysis and Discussion:**

Answer these questions as you brainstorm for this section.

**What overall conclusions can you make about your topic based on the research you just summarized?**

**What points do the authors agree on?**

**Were there any contradictions between authors' conclusions/findings?**

**What questions still need to be addressed (knowledge gaps), and what should future research studies address to better understand your topic?**

## Writing the Conclusion

**T**he conclusion section typically restates the purpose of the paper, the importance of the topic, and overall assumptions you can make about your topic based on the reviewed research. Try to be concise with this section.

### **The Conclusion:**

Write a rough draft of your conclusion below.

## **Writing the Abstract**

**T**he abstract comes before the body of the paper and after the title page of your paper. However, the abstract is typically written last because this section is a summary of your whole paper. For an 8 to 10 page literature review, the abstract is typically 4 to 7 sentences long. This section should tell the reader what the purpose of the paper is and what the main findings were. Don't forget to place your key terms under the abstract.

### **The Abstract:**

Summarize your paper in 4 to 7 sentences in the space below. Then, list the keywords from your paper.

### **Keywords**

# CONGRATULATIONS!!!

You have finished the workbook and are more than likely putting the finishing touches on your final paper. As you complete your paper, make sure you proofread your work and make edits based on your instructor's feedback. As you are completing your final paper, please see below for a few helpful hints adapted from Rubin, Rubin, and Haridakis (2010). You may also find your university's writing center helpful.

Learning how to write scholarly papers is difficult, but learning how to read, write, and analyze this type of work will aid you in better understanding the foundations of your discipline, will sharpen your research skills, and will make you adaptable as a communication professional. As a student of communication studies, you will be writing scholarly papers regularly, and we hope you can use what you have learned in this class to help you along the way!

- Research papers are typically written in a formal style and use third person.
- Avoid using an overly descriptive or provocative writing style .
- Use active voice.
- Avoid jargon in place of common terminology.
- Language should be gender-neutral and sensitive to stereotypes.
- Be economical in expression (concise yet clear).
- Clarify conclusions as well as contradictions you find in the literature.
- Use pronouns that have clear references to their antecedents.
- Use short rather than elongated sentences (avoid run-ons).
- Move smoothly from section to section (transition sentences and headings).
- Use correct punctuation.
- Use proper grammar and spelling.
- PROOFREAD YOUR WORK. Never submit a paper you haven't checked for spelling and typographical errors.
- Use consistent tense, topic, and person.
- Never plagiarize. Always give credit, even when paraphrasing. If it's not your original idea, then you need to cite your source.
- Do not quote from an abstract; quote or summarize from the original source.
- Pay attention to the structure and form of published articles. You will learn a lot about formatting and what each section entails.

## References

Rubin, R., Rubin, A., & Haridakis, P. (2010). *Communication research: Strategies and sources* (7th Ed.). Boston, MA: Wadsworth Cengage