

GCU STYLE TUTORIAL - PART ONE - INTRODUCTION TO WRITING STYLES

Hello and welcome to Grand Canyon University's GCU Style Tutorial. This tutorial will contain two parts, the first addressing the purpose for writing styles and the expectations you will encounter during your studies here at Grand Canyon University. Part Two will cover details regarding the GCU Style formatting requirements and how to utilize the templates available in the Student Success Center.

What Are Writing Styles?

Some of you may remember learning about writing styles in high school or in previous college courses. Others may have little to no experience with writing styles. This tutorial is intended to introduce you to the purpose of a writing style and a few of their common elements. When you begin courses at Grand Canyon University, you will likely use the GCU Style and then shift to other writing styles that are appropriate for your field of study, such as APA, MLA and Turabian. With a basic understanding of the purpose and nature of writing styles, this transition will be easier and more intuitive.

Writing Styles are formalized conventions that govern the structure of a scholarly paper. Essentially, they are the rules one follows for the formatting of a paper, the mechanics of writing, and the citing and documentation of sources of evidence. The rules can include the size and type of font to use, whether a paper should be single or double spaced, and what information to include on the title page. In addition, the style will explain exactly how to cite the information included in the paper that does not originate from the author. Writing styles are an essential tool for preventing plagiarism.

Why Does It Matter How A Paper Is Formatted?

Proper formatting provides consistency and clarity to a paper. Consider it the framework for organizing and presenting your information in a way that can be easily understood and evaluated. Once you know exactly how to format your papers and cite your references, then you can focus most of your effort on writing the paper. In addition, a properly formatted paper is easier for your instructor to read, allowing them more time to focus on your content and provide useful feedback to enhance your learning experience.

Why Do I Have To Cite My Sources?

Even the most brilliant scholar discovers information from outside sources. Part of the academic experience is sharing knowledge, evaluating the work of others, and providing new perspectives on the information. However, academic integrity is an essential component to this process, requiring that scholars credit those that provided the information they are utilizing in their own work. This is where citing comes in. A well-documented paper indicates what information within the text comes from another source and then provides information on how a reader can find that source. In-text citations and the references page are designed to provide all the details required to retrieve the original source of the information used in a paper.

As a student at a University, you are expected to learn these essential skills and are required to adhere to the ethical standards of academic integrity. Throughout your introductory courses, you will learn about the perils of plagiarism. It is essential to understand how plagiarism harms the academic community and the consequences if you commit plagiarism in the papers you submit in class. Citing your sources properly is one of the key components to avoiding plagiarism and so is a key aspect to ensuring your academic success.

But I Need Help!

There are a number of resources available to help you become familiar with and use writing styles at GCU. Templates for each of the writing styles used at GCU are available in the Student Success Center. The Templates provide the proper formatting, so you may simply type over the text. Using a template should help ensure that your paper is correct according to the style required, as stated in your assignment instructions.

The Student Success Center also contains tutorials for the other styles used in GCU courses, including APA and Turabian. In conjunction with these tutorials are expanded instructive guides for each style. For instance, you will want to utilize the GCU Style Guide located in the Student Success Center for additional questions you may have regarding GCU Style, especially when citing specific types of sources.

A number of services are available to assist you with writing styles. The Center for Learning Advancement provides resources in their Writing Center as well as tutors who will work with you to improve your writing and your usage of writing styles. You can learn more about this excellent service at the Center for Learning and Advancement website.

The GCU Library will also assist with citations, specifically with identifying types of sources and how a specific resource should be listed on the reference page of a paper. They also provide a Guide to Citation Styles, with instruction and examples for citing different types of sources.

Conclusion:

This concludes Part One of the Grand Canyon University GCU Style Guide Tutorial. Part Two will walk you through GCU style and using the GCU style Template. Please remember there are numerous resources available to assist with any of your questions.

GCU STYLE TUTORIAL - PART TWO - GCU STYLE FORMATTING

PART 2: TUTORIAL INTRODUCTION

Welcome to Part Two of the Grand Canyon University's GCU Style Tutorial. In Part One, you learned about the purpose of writing styles. This section will cover the basic format required for all papers submitted to GCU courses that require the use of GCU style. This demonstration will utilize Microsoft Word 2013. Most of the features demonstrated in this tutorial are available in other versions of Microsoft Word but may be found in different locations. If you do not have Word installed on your computer, you can get it for free by going to the GCU Technical Support website and clicking on Software and then clicking on Microsoft Office 365 ProPlus Installation. If you have questions regarding installation of this software, please contact GCU Technical support.

USING THE GCU STYLE TEMPLATE

The easiest way to format your paper correctly is by beginning with the GCU Style Template provided in the Writing Center section of the Student Success Center. Note that there are a number of templates available in the Writing Center and that different level classes and disciplines have unique formatting requirements. You should select and use the correct template for your assignment. If you are unsure which template to use, consult your instructor.

When you click on the template, your computer will ask you to open and save the file. Choose **Save** and save it with your other Word documents or somewhere that you will easily remember.

Once you save the template, double click on the file to open it. The file template may also open automatically depending on your computer's settings.

If there is a yellow bar at the top of the page that says **Protected View** you will need to click **Enable editing** before you can make changes.

Now that the template is open, you will be able to simply insert your information into the paper by highlighting the text you want replaced and typing over it.

MAIN BODY

To begin, add your name, course code (e.g. UNV-103), the date, and your instructor's name in the upper left side of the page. Next you will add a title for your paper. Highlight the entire example title and then type in your own title. The title is centered and is one line above where you will begin writing your introduction.

You are now ready to write your paper. Notice that the first line of the paragraph is indented. Each time you start a new paragraph, the first line will automatically indent. In addition, you should notice the size

and font has been automatically set to 12 point Times New Roman and that the entire paper is double spaced.

In general, your papers will begin with an introductory paragraph, followed by several paragraphs that make up the main body of your paper and then finish with a concluding paragraph. Most of your papers will not need section headings or subheadings (e.g. Introduction, Methods, and Conclusion). However, if you feel headings would improve the clarity of your paper, ensure that there is a clear break in the flow of the text and that the heading is easy to spot.

If you find you are struggling with writing your paper you can contact the Center for Learning Advancement. Not only will you find excellent resources to assist you with your writing, but they also offer tutoring which can help you significantly improve your writing. Another excellent resource to help with your writing is The Writing Process tutorial; a step-by-step guide to writing a college essay. You can find a link to this in the Student Success Center.

IN-TEXT CITATIONS

As you type your paper, you must cite any content that is from another person or another source—whether a direct quote, or just an idea. This is an essential component to academic writing and is a key step to preventing plagiarism. Please refer to Part One of this tutorial for more details on the role citing plays in preventing plagiarism.

Citations will go in two places. The in-text citation will immediately follow the quote, paraphrase or summary within the actual text of your paper. A full reference will then be added to the References page, located at the end of your paper. The References page will be addressed in the next section of this tutorial.

In-text citations will in general be provided in a parenthesis, with the last name of the author and the date of the publication enclosed within. If you use a direct quote, you will also include the page or paragraph number where the quote was found in the original source. If you are unsure about how to provide a specific type of in-text citation, refer to the GCU Style Guide, located in the Student Success Center. You can also learn more about how to use in-text citations in the “Citing Sources Correctly” segment of The Writing Process tutorial.

REFERENCES PAGE

The References list is located at the end of your paper. Each reference you include on this page must correspond with an in-text citation you have included in the body of your paper. The correct format for the references on this page is located on page three of the template. You will notice that each reference begins as left justified and the subsequent lines for that reference entry are indented half an inch. This is called a hanging indent. When you utilize this page of the template, your references will be correctly

formatted. You should also notice that the Reference page is 12 point Times New Roman font and double spaced.

Each reference on this page will be listed alphabetically and include the author, listed by their last names first and then by their first initials. This will then be followed by the publication date in parentheses, and then the title of the source. In addition, each source type requires that specific information be included. For instance, a journal article will also require the title of the journal, the volume, issue, and page numbers. A book will require the publisher and location. Websites require the URL address. To learn what information is required for each type of source used in your paper, refer to the GCU Style Guide located in the Student Success Center.

TUTORIAL CONCLUSION

There are a variety of resources at your disposal to assist you with writing your papers, this tutorial being only one. If you encounter any questions related to citation styles, utilizing the templates and guides provided in the Student Success Center, or writing your papers, don't hesitate to ask for help. You can contact your instructor through your email or the Questions to Instructor forum located in your classroom. The Library has a number of ways to contact them, including email, phone and chat, all located on the Library website at <http://library.gcu.edu>. In addition, you can contact The Center for Learning Advancement for help with writing your papers and citing your sources. Learn more about how The Center for Learning Advancement can help you at <http://www.gcu.edu/Learning-Resources/Center-for-Learning-and-Advancement.php>

This concludes the Grand Canyon University GCU Style Tutorial. If you have any further questions about GCU style, please refer to the various resources described throughout this tutorial.