

Fayetteville State University
SACS Writing Style and Format Guidelines

Please refer to the following guidelines to be used for formatting and writing documents and reports for the FSU SACS reaffirmation of accreditation process. Note that these guidelines include excerpts from the **Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (APA), 6th edition**. Please refer to this publication for additional information and details.

Visit the **FSU SACS Self-Study website** (<http://www.uncfsu.edu/sacs/index.htm>), click on **Timelines** and note the FSU Self-Study Timeline for preparation and submission of reports. Also, click on **Reports and Forms** and select **Compliance Reports** for the template each Standards Committee should use. Finally, be advised that the SACS documentation will utilize an online software tool, Xitracs. Reports and reference materials that can be MS Word or Acrobat pdf files will be uploaded into this system. For more information about the Xitracs systems, contact your Standards Committee Chairperson or the FSU SACS Liaison Office.

The SACS Writing/Editing Committee

Ms. Marsha McLean, Chairperson

mmclean1@uncfsu.edu ~ (910) 672-2217

Dr. Anthony Booker

Dr. Trela Anderson

Dr. Marion Gillis-Olion, SACS Liaison (Ex-Officio)

mgillis-olion@uncfsu.edu

For more information or questions, please contact Ms. McLean or Dr. Gillis-Olion.

GENERAL INFORMATION		
Word Processing	Use Microsoft Word 2007 or 2003	File type: .doc or .docx
Portable Document Format (pdf)	Use Adobe Acrobat 7.0 Professional to create .pdf documents of documents originally created in another application so the format can be “frozen” and viewed by anyone, regardless of platform.	File type: .pdf Use Adobe Acrobat 7 Pro on FSU Citrix Virtual Office if you do not have this software version on your own computer.
Style Guide	Refer to APA 6 th Edition	
Paper	8/5” X 11”	
Files File Names	Use the name of the document in full or abbreviated with spaces Note: For Xitracs users, uploaded file names should be the full name of the document.	“FSU Report XXX”
FORMAT		
Orientation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Portrait (Preferred) • Landscape (Optional) 	
Margins	1” Left/Right/Top/Bottom Note: ½” margins for scanned documents are acceptable	
Font	Arial - 12 pt	
Alignment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Justify (align) – text left • Do Not justify full or right • Do Not auto hyphenate lines • Do Not indent first line of paragraphs 	<p>This first paragraph is not indented. It is not full or right justified either.</p> <p>This second paragraph follows the same guidelines as the first.</p>
Spacing (Page)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Single space all text • Single space between title of figure and figure • Double space between paragraphs • Double space between text and lists • Double space between headings and text 	

Paragraphs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Align text Left Do not justify full or right Single space all text within paragraphs Double space between paragraphs 	
Pagination	Justify center in footer Format: - # -	- 1 -
Footnotes / Copyright Permission	<p>Number footnotes consecutively in the order they appear in the narrative. (Footnote numbers should be superscripted.)</p> <p>Authors must obtain permission to reproduce or adapt material from a copyrighted source.</p> <p>Place each footnote or copyright permission footnote at the bottom of the page on which it is discussed with the appropriate number.</p>	<p>Example: Footnote numbers in text should be superscripted like this¹.</p> <p>Copyright permission footnote:</p> <p>From "Title of Article," by [author's name], [year], [source/publication]. Reprinted [or adapted] with permission.</p> <p>See APA Manual, Sixth Edition, for more details.</p>
Appendices and Supplemental Materials	<p>An appendix or supplemental material can be added:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> At the end of the document (for print) Add link in Xitracs (for online) 	<p>Label it: <i>Appendix A, Appendix B</i>, etc.</p> <p>Discuss with Committee Chair</p>
Headings and Sections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number headings according to SACS guidelines <p><i>Note: Do <u>NOT</u> use the numbered list function in MS Word; number all sections manually</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> First Level Section Headings: 	<p>Use "Compliance Report" template (MS Word)</p> <p>http://www.uncfsu.edu/sacs/reports.htm</p> <p>Example of First Level Heading:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ USE ALL CAPS ○ Bold ○ Center ○ Arabic numerals ○ Line space before and after <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Second Level Headings on first page: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Initial caps ○ Bold ○ Center ○ Line space before and after • All Other Headings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Initial Caps ○ Bold ○ Justify left ○ Arabic numerals ○ Line space before and after 	<p>Section 3: COMPREHENSIVE STANDARDS</p> <p>Example of Second Level Heading on first page of section:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Institutional Mission, Governance, and Effectiveness</p> <p>Example of Other Heading:</p> <p>3.1 Institutional Mission</p>
Citations in Text	Identify the source of each quotation, paraphrase, or data.	<p>(See APA Manual, Sixth Edition)</p> <p>Examples:</p> <p>Anderson and Young (2009) found that ...</p> <p>A national study (Doe and Rae, 2009) demonstrated that...</p>
Capitalization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specific department names • Academic Courses with Course Number (Psychology 101) • “University” when referring to the UNC system (lower case when referring to FSU) 	
Numerals	Use Arabic numerals	1, 2, 3, 410, etc.
Years	Use four digit year	Singular: 1951, 2000

		Plural: 1950s, 2000s
Seriation (Lists)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indent lists 5 spaces • Use Arabic numbers for numeric lists that show order • Use bullets (round) for lists that have equal status 	
Seriation (within a sentence)	Identify elements in a series by lowercase letters in parentheses.	The three choices were (a) writing the report individually, (b) writing the report as a team, or (c) using an external writer.
TERMS AND ABBREVIATIONS		
Use abbreviations sparingly (in general) unless commonly used and understood		
Abbreviations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spell out abbreviations initially, and abbreviate thereafter (at a minimum) • Consider spelling out periodically in a long paper (intermingling use of the abbreviation) 	
Degrees	Bachelor's degree Master's degree Doctoral degree	
Degree Abbreviations	Use periods	B.A., B.S., B.F.A., M.A.Ed., Ed.D., Ph.D., J.D., M.D.
Fayetteville State University	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spell out first usage in a major section • Use FSU or the University thereafter • Never use Fayetteville State 	
University of North Carolina (system)	Spell out first usage in major section, then abbreviate UNC Use UNC or the university system	
State of North Carolina	Initial capitalization	
SACS	Spell out first usage in major section	Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS)

	Thereafter, use the abbreviation	
Provost	Use Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs first usage, then may be abbreviated to Provost	
Gendered language	Use the word “gender” in most cases rather than “sex.”	
PUNCTUATION		
Spacing after punctuation	Insert one space after period at end of the sentence.	
Comma	Use comma between elements (including before <i>and</i> and <i>or</i>) in a series of three or more items	
Semicolon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use to separate two independent clauses • Use to separate elements in a series that already contain commas 	
Quotation Marks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use to introduce a new word or phrase that is ironic, slang, or invented. • Use to set off the title of an article or chapter from a periodical book when the title is mentioned in narrative. • Use to reproduce words that are verbatim from some other source 	<p>considered “normal” behavior</p> <p>The article, “Epistemological Debates...”</p> <p>The guidelines stated that “all reports are due to the SACS office by December 9.”</p>
Italicize	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use to introduce a technical or key term 	<i>zero-base budgeting</i>
Hyphenation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compound adjective 	<p>role-playing technique</p> <p>anxiety-arousing condition</p> <p>two-way analysis</p> <p>12th-grade students</p>
COMMONLY CONFUSED WORDS		
Data	Data is plural Datum is singular	
Alumni	Alumnus – is singular for male Alumna – is singular for female	

	Alumni – is plural for male and female combined Alumnae – is plural for female	
WRITING STYLE (See APA Publication Manual – Chapter 3)		
Brevity (Conciseness)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economy of expression • Eliminate redundancy, wordiness, jargon, evasiveness • Weed out overly detailed description • Elaborate the obvious (standards, etc.) • Consider placing lengthy information in an online, linked supplement/attachment 	
Active Voice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preferably use active voice • Minimize use of the passive voice • Use past tense to express an action that occurred at a specific time in the past (was, presented) • Use past perfect tense to express a past action that did not occur at a specific time (have used, had completed) 	<p><i>Active Voice:</i> Faculty submit mid-term and final grades each semester.</p> <p><i>Passive Voice:</i> Mid-term and final grades are submitted by faculty each semester.</p>
Subject-Verb Agreement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Verbs should agree with singular or plural nouns • Use verb tenses consistently; stay within the chosen tense 	
Transition words	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To avoid writing that is abrupt or choppy. • To amplify the discussion. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time links: then, next, after, while, since • Cause-effect links: therefore, consequently, as a result • Addition links: in addition, moreover, furthermore similarly <p>Contrast links: but, conversely, nevertheless, however, although</p>
Wordiness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Change “<u>based on the fact</u>” to “<u>because</u>” • “<u>at the present time</u>” to “<u>now</u>” 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “<u>for the purpose of</u>” to “<u>for</u>” or “<u>to</u>” • “<u>there were several students who completed</u>” to “<u>several students completed</u>” 	
Eliminate Redundancy (words in italics)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • they were <i>both</i> alike • <i>a total of</i> 68 participants • <i>absolutely</i> essential 	
Sentence length	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short sentences are easier to comprehend than long ones. • Varied sentence length within a paragraph helps readers maintain interest and comprehension. 	
Avoid Jargon	Use of vocabulary that is familiar only to a specialized area should be avoided or explained for clarification.	
Avoid Plagiarism	<p>When quoting an author directly, you must credit the source.</p> <p>Note: It is also a good practice to credit the source when paraphrasing.</p>	See Quotations