Title

Author Name(s)

University Name

[Sample template for Paper 1. Any text in red should be customized, updated, or deleted. All text in the final document should appear in black. If anything here conflicts with the APA style manual, consult with the lab instructor. This is only an example of one type of APA-style paper, so make sure your paper conforms to the specific instructions of the assignment.   
Delete this bracketed information.]

**Abstract**

The abstract should be 120 words or slightly less, and do not indent the first line. Begin by describing why the research is important. Summarize the introduction of the paper (what variables you’re looking at and why) and your hypotheses, without getting into too much technical lingo. Give a brief description of the sample, such as the number of participants or the setting (college, community, hospital, etc.). Summarize the key findings from the study. Provide at least one reason why the findings are interesting or important. If you haven’t exceeded 120 words yet, describe what future researchers could do to build on or continue with this line of research.

Title

The introduction always begins on a separate page from the abstract. Unlike most other sections, the introduction is labeled by the title of the paper, rather than “Introduction”. For this assignment, the introduction should be 500-700 words in length and have at least 5 in-text citations from empirical research articles that describe specific research studies that the researchers carried out themselves. It’s okay to cite books, magazines, and newspapers if you already have at least 5 references to empirical research articles. Do not use web pages or dictionaries.

Usually Introductions have four paragraphs. The first paragraph makes the case that the topic of study is important. Usually, this goes from general to specific. For example, if a paper is focused on personality predictors of depression, the first paragraph might begin by describing the importance of mental health, then the importance of depression, and then the importance of understanding individual differences in who is at-risk for depression. The first sentence of the paper often begins by describing the overarching theme or assumption of the paper. The final sentence of the first paragraph often summarizes the goal of this particular study.

The second paragraph reviews the relevant literature. The most relevant studies would be those that are (a) recent, (b) highly-cited or published in reputable journals, and (c) focused on similar or the same constructs. The least relevant studies would be those that are old, hardly cited or published in less-reputable sources, and focused on only loosely-related constructs. Most published studies will meet some but not all of these relevancy criteria, but the idea is to avoid citing articles that are outdated, low impact, and unrelated, especially when there are new, reputable, relevant studies.

The third paragraph needs to make the case for why prior studies have limitations and how the present investigation addresses those limitations. For this course, the bar for this paragraph is relatively low because (a) most published studies are fairly reasonable, and (b) our data sets also have limitations; thus, avoid exaggerated claims. In pointing out the limitations of prior research, it could be useful to note that there have been few studies on a particular topic (if that’s true) and that more research is needed since the topic is an important one. Alternatively, prior studies may have only assessed a subset of the constructs you’re interested in investigating, and perhaps a compelling case can be made for examining some additional variable you’re interested in.

The fourth paragraph is often very brief, perhaps only two sentences or slightly more. Usually, people describe something very general about the study design. Then, they state their hypotheses. For example, one might state something like, “The present investigation was a large correlational study involving a general sample of adults who completed a measure of the Big Five personality traits and depression symptom severity. It was hypothesized that higher neuroticism and lower conscientiousness would be associated with increased depression symptom severity.”

**Method**

**Participants and Procedures**

If you were doing a more elaborate study, you’d break the Participants and Procedures into two separate sections, and you can do so if you like. Since our study is very basic, it’s okay to combine them. For the Participants portion, if possible, you’ll want to describe 1) the number of participants, 2) where they’re from, 3) their age, gender, ethnicity, or any other important demographic variables we might have in the data file. For the Procedures portion, you simple want to describe what the participants did, using enough detail that a different experimenter could re-create a nearly identical study. I have written a generic section below, which you can simply copy and paste into your paper, making a few minor substitutions for the red text, or you can write your own.

The study involved 1,093,645 participants who were college students and their friends and family who completed an online survey administered via Qualtrics.com. The survey assessed a number of constructs, and for this set of analyses, only the following variables were analyzed: insomnia, depression, anxiety, marital satisfactions, etc. etc. Participants were mainly female (XX%), White (XX%), employed (XX%), and educated (XX% completed or plan to complete at least a Bachelor’s Degree). They ranged from XX to XX years old (*M* = XX, *SD* = XX years old). Approximately half were in were in a romantic relationship (XX%) and few were parents (XX%). Finally, participants were geographically dispersed (XX% originally from the Southern U.S., XX% from the Northeast, XX% from the Midwest, XX% from the West, and XX% from outside the U.S.). Bear in mind that the demographic variables assessed varied, sometimes considerably, from study to study, so do your best to report on these or any other characteristics that help to give the reader an idea of the composition of the sample.

**Measures**

**Variable 1***.*  Rather than “Variable 1,” choose an appropriate name for each variable, which can be the term used to describe it in the data dictionary, or something better that you find to be more accurate. Each variable gets its own paragraph. Describe what the variable is designed to measure. If possible, quote the item itself. Describe the possible response options and what high scores mean. If you did anything to re-code the variable, describe that here.

**Variable 2***.*  Follow the above guidelines for each variable. Include all variables involved in your main analyses (5 or more).

**Variable 3***.*  Follow the above guidelines for each variable. Include all variables involved in your main analyses (5 or more).

**Variable 4***.*  Follow the above guidelines for each variable. Include all variables involved in your main analyses (5 or more).

**Variable 5***.*  Follow the above guidelines for each variable. Include all variables involved in your main analyses (5 or more).

**Results**

For the first paragraph, report and interpret the basic descriptive statistics for the important variables in the study. For example, if you’re studying insomnia, you might mention the mean and standard deviation of insomnia scores, e.g. “Participants were generally low on insomnia (*M* = 2.30, *SD* = 1.10).” Sometimes percentiles can also be useful. For example, if studying depression, you might say, “The average depression score was high, (*M* = 76.31, *SD* = 13.24), and 12% of participants indicated that they were experiencing a 100/100 on the depression scale.”

Then, describe the more complex analyses you conduct (e.g. correlations, regression, whatever). First, state the relationship or hypothesis being tested, and the type of statistic you used to test it. Report the statistic and *p*-value. Then describe, in words, what the result means (effect size, direction of the effect) in as plain English as possible. Do this for each of your findings. Consult the lecture notes and homework for more information on reporting results.

**Discussion**

The discussion should be 400-600 words. The first paragraph should accomplish three goals: describe the broad take-home message of the Results (keep it general), briefly link it to prior studies, and foreshadow the contribution of this research by noting one potential implication of how the finding(s) might benefit society or one avenue for a follow-up study.

The second paragraph should walk the reader through each of the specific findings without using statistics. Again, link this back to the prior literature. Where possible, attempt to offer a potential explanation, or several potential explanations for the finding, and incorporate additional references as needed. Additionally, emphasize any implications of each finding, such as why it is particularly important, or how this knowledge could benefit society in some way. If there are many specific findings, the second paragraph could also be separated into as many additional paragraphs as are needed.

The third paragraph should describe 1-2 strengths of the study, and perhaps 3-5 limitations/weaknesses. Were there are problems with the design of the study or the sample of participants? Also, the results probably do not apply to all people in the world. Who do they results likely apply to, and why? Who don’t the results apply to?

The fourth paragraph should suggest 2-3 “future directions” for how researchers might build on this investigation through a follow-up study. What are the next questions that should be asked? How could future studies improve on the weaknesses or limitations of your study?

**References**

The References always begin on their own new page. Make sure to cite all of your sources. Also make sure to use a hanging indent like this, where the first line is not indented, but the following lines are indented for each reference.

Also make sure that references are in ABC order. The general format for journal articles is like this:

Aaronson, S., Bert, R., Carson, R., Daily, M., & Epstein, J. (1999). The best study ever. *Journal of Psychology, 99*, 1074-1081.

Frank, Q, & Goodman, M. (2003). The psychology study. *Journal of Applied Studies, 31*, 321-341.

Hoff, T. (2004). The study of people’s behavior. *Clinical and Counseling Psychology Journal, 22*, 18-33.

**Appendix**

SPSS Output

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