

# General Formatting Requirements for Written Deliverables

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**Course:** BUS 497a  
**Title:** Capstone: Strategic Management (3 units)

“I love being a writer. What I can’t stand is the paperwork.”  
---Peter De Vries (1910-1993)

## Introduction

The purpose of this document is to enumerate the minimal requirements for all written assignments in this course. Students will lose points for not following the instructions below. Students that are stronger writers have learned to allocate sufficient time (both lead time and re-writing time) to deliver quality work deliverables. At a minimum, quality work simply means “no sloppy errors.”

If this document is unclear, please contact the instructor.

## Style

When making grammatical and word choices, students should choose formal writing over informal writing, standard English over non-standard English, active voice over passive voice, and idiomatic phrases over un-idiomatic phrases. Students should choose the indicative mood (that is, the style for facts, opinions, and questions) rather than the imperative or subjunctive mood. Note that the *length of the assignment is irrelevant*. Even a one page assignment needs to meet all of these criteria.

## Layout

Each page, including the first page, should have a page header indicating the course department and number, class number, student’s name (with the last name underlined), assignment name, and due date. This information should appear as follows:

Example:

BUS 497a, #11387, Jane Doe  
Book Report  
November 11, 2005

Each page, including the first page, should have a page footer indicating the page number. This information should appear as one (and only one) of the following:

Example:

## **Margins**

Each page should have a 1” top margin and a 1” bottom margin. Each page should have a 1.25” left margin and a 1.25” right margin. This is usually the default in most word processors. This document has these dimensions.

## **Paragraphs**

First-line indentation, if used at all, must be consistent. This document, for example, does not use first-line indentation. Each new paragraph must be separated by one more line than the default line spacing. Use one space between words in a sentence. Use two spaces between sentences in a paragraph. If a sentence ends with a quotation mark, then place any other needed punctuation, such as a period or comma, inside the quotation marks.

## **Line Spacing**

All text in the document is to be double-spaced. The text in the page header is to be single-spaced. This document is single-spaced.

## **Alignment**

All of the text on the page should be “left-aligned.” This is sometimes referred to as “left-justified” or “ragged-right.” Do not “fully-justify” the text on the page. This document is “left-aligned.” All numbers are to be “decimal-aligned.” Numbers without a decimal, such as an integer, are to be aligned as if a decimal was present.

## **Fonts**

The text on the page must be in a serif typeface—for example, Cambria or Times Roman. The size of the text is to be 12-point. This document uses 12-point Times Roman.

A mono-spaced (“fixed-width”) typeface, such as Consolas or Courier, may be used for special purposes, including that of displaying numbers that are aligned on a decimal place or for a WWW URL (e.g., <http://www.csun.edu/>). The size of the Courier typeface may be 10- or 11-point as needed to improve aesthetics and clarity.

## **Print Quality**

All text on each page should be readable. There should be no areas on any page where the ink or the toner is poor or uneven.

## **References**

Each work cited requires an entry in the “References” section. Except for the formatting described above in this document, use the American Psychological Association (APA) citation style. Eric Garcia in the Library has distilled the major citing and referencing guidelines from the APA at:

<http://library.csun.edu/egarcia/documents/apacitationguide.pdf>

Some assignments may require a word definition or other lexical clarification (such as whether a word is, indeed, a word). For general terms, I’ll the use Merriam-Webster’s online dictionary first:

<http://www.m-w.com/>

and the Oxford English Dictionary second:

<http://www.oed.com/>

Other acceptable (print or online) dictionaries are The American Heritage Dictionary, The Random House College Dictionary, Merriam-Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary, or Webster’s New World Dictionary.