

BILL BLACKWOOD LAW ENFORCEMENT MANAGEMENT INSTITUTE OF TEXAS



DO's and DON'Ts of Scholarly Writing

GENERAL RULES & FORMATTING

DO:

- Use the LWP Template in the Survival Guide.
- Write the paper in third person (he, she, it, one, they, their, them, etc.).
- Capitalize proper nouns only – nouns that refer to a specific police department, title, or title of person (i.e. Houston Police Department, Dallas County Constable's Office, Captain John Smith).
- Write in paragraph form while making statements of fact.
- Ensure that the page numbers in the top-right corner of the pages match the page numbers in the Table of Contents – Page 1 starts on the Introduction page.

DO NOT:

- Do not use first person language or second person language (I, me, my, us, our, we, you, your, etc.).
- Do not capitalize descriptive nouns/common nouns that refer to law enforcement in general (i.e. police, law enforcement, law enforcement officers, agency, sergeants, lieutenants, etc.).
- Do not use rhetorical questions. The paper should contain no question marks.
- Do not use vague language when referring to time and dates (i.e. "in today's world" / "recently" / "currently"). Be specific: Since 2020, ... or ... As of 2025, ...
- Do not use bullet points or lists. Write all paragraphs out in complete sentences.

PARAGRAPHS:

DO:

- Double-space all paragraphs and references.
- Indent new paragraphs within the body of the paper by using the "tab" key.
- Include at least three sentences per paragraph and, ideally, five to seven sentences.

DO NOT:

- Do not indent the abstract or include multiple paragraphs within the abstract. The abstract should be a "reader's digest" of your paper that is one paragraph and $\frac{3}{4}$ page to one page in length.
- Do not have the thesis stand alone as its own paragraph. It should be included in another paragraph within the introduction and restated in a paragraph within the recommendation section.

TRANSITIONS:

- Transitional phrases serve as bridges between ideas. They help the paper flow smoothly, creating a cohesive piece of writing that allows readers to move seamlessly from one section to the next.
 - Example transitions to help introduce each **POSITION**:
 - Proponents may contend that ...
 - Supporters assert that ...
 - Advocates may argue that ...
 - Another factor supporting this view is ...
 - Example transitions to help introduce each **COUNTER ARGUMENT**:
 - Critics may argue that ...
 - On the other hand, opponents may claim that ...
 - An alternative perspective to the above positions suggests that ...
 - Another opposing viewpoint may suggest that ...
 - Those who disagree may also maintain that ...
 - Example transitions to help introduce each **REBUTTAL**:
 - While this argument raises valid concerns, ...
 - Despite this argument, ...
 - The above argument fails to consider ...
 - That argument does not account for ...
 - While this argument holds some merit, ...
 - Example transitions to help summarize the positions, counter arguments, and rebuttals in the **RECOMMENDATION** section:
 - SUMMARY OF POSITIONS:
 - The positions presented in this paper maintain that ...
 - In review, the position asserts that ...
 - To summarize the positions, proponents contend that ...
 - SUMMARY OF COUNTER ARGUMENTS:
 - Conversely, critics argue that ...
 - To summarize the opposing arguments, ...
 - However, the counter arguments presented highlight concerns such as ...
 - SUMMARY OF REBUTTALS:
 - While these arguments raise valid points, ...
 - In response to these counter arguments, ...
 - Despite these objections, ...
 - Example transitions into the **PLAN OF ACTION / BENEFIT TO L.E. / POLICY IMPLICATION** in the **RECOMMENDATION** section:
 - It is recommended that ...
 - Having examined both the supporting and opposing arguments, this paper recommends ...

QUICK GUIDE FOR IN-TEXT CITATIONS

GOOGLE SEARCH “PURDUE OWL 7TH EDITION STYLE GUIDE” FOR FURTHER GUIDANCE

https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/apa_style/apa_formatting_and_style_guide/in_text_citations_the_basics.html

PARAPHRASED MATERIAL:

- Cite the last name of the author(s) and year of publication for paraphrased material.
- If there is not an individual listed as an author, the next likely scenario is that the group or organization is the author. Cite the organization’s name and year of publication.
- The period should always go after the citation when the citation is at the end of the sentence.
- If there is no date associated with the citation, use n.d. in place of the year. This stands for “no date” and is used when citing a webpage or organization that has no publishing date.
- Narrative citations are included inside the structure of the sentence and parenthetical citations are typically at the end of a sentence and use the ampersand (&) symbol when two authors are cited inside the parentheses.

The examples below include parenthetical citations first and narrative citations next.

IF THE SOURCE HAS ONE AUTHOR:

- Law enforcement personnel should be held to a higher standard (Smith, 2004).
- Smith (2004) stated that law enforcement personnel should be held to a higher standard.
- In 2004, Smith conducted a study that found ...

TWO AUTHORS:

- Law enforcement is a noble profession (Jones & Smith, 2010).
- According to Jones and Smith (2010), law enforcement is a noble profession.
- In 2010, Jones and Smith performed a study that found ...

THREE OR MORE AUTHORS:

- There are many different styles of leadership (Jones et al., 2020).
- Jones et al. (2020) stated that ...
 - Do not list all the authors in the in-text citation when there are three or more authors; only list all the authors (up to twenty) in the reference section.

GROUP OR ORGANIZATION AS THE AUTHOR:

- An archive of LCC “white papers” is available at the Newton Gresham Library (Bill Blackwood Law Enforcement Management Institute of Texas, n.d.).
- The Texas Police Chiefs Association (2024) has a model policy on ...
- In 2024, the Bill Blackwood Law Enforcement Management Institute of Texas (LEMIT) conducted a study that found ...

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https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/apa_style/apa_formatting_and_style_guide/in_text_citations_the_basics.html

DIRECT QUOTES:

- Cite the last name of the author(s), year of publication, and page or paragraph number (preceded by “p.” for a single page, “pp.” for multiple pages, and “para.” for a paragraph).
- **All direct quotes should be introduced with a signal phrase. No sentence should start with quotation marks.**
 - Some common signal phrases include:
 - According to Author Last Name (Year), “insert quote here” (p. number).
 - Author Last Name (Year) found that “insert quote here” (para. number).
 - Some have argued that “insert quote here” (Author & Author, Year, p. number).
- For example:
 - According to Smith (2004), “law enforcement is a noble profession” (p. 18).
 - Smith (2004) found that “law enforcement is a noble profession” (para. 4).
 - Some have argued that “law enforcement is a noble profession” (Smith & Jones, 2004, p. 5).
 - In 2004, Smith stated that “law enforcement is a noble profession” (p. 18).

The signal phrase should not be a complete sentence; it should be a simple introductory statement. For example:

According to Smith and Jones (2020), “law enforcement personnel should be held to a higher standard” (p. 20).

The statement before the quote is considered the signal phrase because it signals to the reader that additional information is about to be discussed.

- When the citation of a direct quote and/or paraphrased material appears at the end of a sentence, place the period **after** the citation. For example:
 - Some believe that “law enforcement personnel should be held to a higher standard” (Smith & Jones, 2020, para. 4).

WHAT NOT TO DO FOR IN-TEXT CITATIONS

- **DO NOT** include the author's first initial in citations unless two separate authors have the same last name.
- **DO NOT** include the day or month in the in-text citation unless the citation is a personal communication (See APA guidelines); include the year of publication for all other citations.
- **DO NOT** cite the title of the source unless there is no author available and there is no organization to be cited as the author. The title of the source will rarely be cited inside the body of the paper.
- **DO NOT** have direct quotes stand alone as their own sentence. The following quote is **incorrectly** formatted:
 - The next sentence contains a direct quote. "This is a direct quote that has no signal phrase" (Smith, 2020, p. 20).
 - **No sentence should begin with quotation marks.**
 - The **correct** way to format the above sentence would be as follows:
 - The next sentence contains a direct quote. Correspondingly, "this is a direct quote that has a signal phrase" (Smith, 2020, p. 10).
 - "Correspondingly" is the signal phrase in the above example
 - Other signal phrases include, but are not limited to:
 - According to Smith (2020), "....." (p. 10).
 - Smith et al. (2020) believe that "....." (p. 10).
 - Smith & Jones (2020) state that "....." (p. 10).
- **DO NOT** place the period before the citation when the citation appears at the end of a sentence. For example, the following paraphrased sentences are **incorrectly** cited:
 - Law enforcement personnel are held to a higher standard. (Smith, 2020). Others argue that ...
 - This is incorrect because the period before the citation should be omitted.
 - Law enforcement personnel are held to a higher standard. (Smith, 2020) Others argue that ...
 - This is incorrect because the period should always go **after** the citation.
 - The **correct** citation would read as follows:
 - Law enforcement personnel are held to a higher standard (Smith, 2020). Others argue that ...
- **DO NOT** allow quotes to contain more than 40 words or be longer than one sentence. If the quoted material is more than one sentence long, please paraphrase the information or divide the quote into multiple sentences, citing each sentence separately.

QUICK GUIDE FOR FORMATTING REFERENCES

**** PLEASE ENSURE ALL URL LINKS WORK & THE FULL TEXT OF THE LINK IS PROVIDED ****

GOOGLE SEARCH “PURDUE OWL 7TH EDITION STYLE GUIDE” FOR FURTHER GUIDANCE

https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/apa_style/apa_formatting_and_style_guide/reference_list_basic_rules.html

- Reference list entries should be alphabetized by the last name of each work.
- Indent all lines after the first line of each entry in the reference list. This is called a **hanging indentation**.
 - To create a hanging indentation in Microsoft Word:
 - Highlight the text of the references and right-click anywhere within the references
 - In the pop-up box, click “Paragraph”
 - A new pop-up box should appear. There is a section titled “Indentation” near the middle of the box
 - Under Special: Choose “Hanging” and click OK

AUTHORS

- Invert all authors’ names in the reference section to where the last name is provided first and then provide the authors’ first initial or first and middle initials. For example, the reference entry for a source written by John Doe Smith would begin with "Smith, J. D." If a middle name isn't available, just initialize the author's first name: "Smith, J." The author’s first name should not be provided.
- Give the last name and first/middle initials for all authors of a particular work up to and including 20 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.
 - Smith, J., Jones, R., Rodriguez, K., & Jackson, R. D. (2025).

IF THERE IS NO DATE OF PUBLICATION

- If the date of publication is not available, use the abbreviation (n.d.) for the date. Copyright dates on websites are not necessarily the date of publication. Examples of sites that contain no date include sites like the Officer Down Memorial Page, general webpages that discuss law enforcement programs, training programs, or “about us” pages, etc. For example:
 - Bill Blackwood Law Enforcement Management Institute of Texas. (n.d.). *LEMIT programs*. <https://www.lemitonline.org/programs>

TITLES & CAPITALIZATION

- When referencing the titles of books, webpages, journal articles, or other sources, capitalize only the first letter of the title, the first word after a colon or dash in the title, and proper nouns.
 - For example:

Smith, J. (2021). *Nobility in policing: The ethics of law enforcement*. Site Name. URL

Smith, J. (2022). *Do what is right – Law enforcement integrity in the United States*. Site Name. URL

WHAT KIND OF REFERENCE IS IT?

**** PLEASE ENSURE ALL URL LINKS WORK & THE FULL TEXT OF THE LINK IS PROVIDED ****

*** Please pay close attention to what is capitalized and italicized in each reference ***

All example references provided below are hypothetical

1) Article in a Journal/Periodical:

Lastname, F. M., Lastname, F. M., & Lastname, F. M. (Year). Title of article: Capitalize the first letter after the colon as well. *Name of Periodical/Journal in italics*, volume number(issue number), pages.
<https://doi.org/xx.xxx/yyyy>

Smith, S. R., & Jones, W. (2019). Data and policing: Negotiating statistical policing strategies. *Journal of Sociology and Statistics*, 6(1), 5-11. <https://doi.org/12345678>

The title of the journal article is not italicized, but the name of the periodical/journal is in italics as well as the volume number ("6" in the above example). Include the DOI number if one is available.

2) Format for Books:

Lastname, F. M. (Year of publication). *Title of work in italics: Capital letter also for subtitles*. Publisher Name. DOI (if available)

Thompson, J. L. (1996). *Lead with vision: Strategic leadership strategies*. International Business Press.

3) Format for Webpages if the Webpage Lists an Individual as the Author:

Lastname, F. M. (Year, Month Day). *Title of page in italics*. Site Name or Organization Name. URL

Smith, J. (2021, March 2). *Police and the environment: A study on environmental crimes*. Police One.
www.policeone.com/environmentalcrimestudy12345678

4) Format for Webpages if a Group or Organization is the Author:

Group or Organization Name. (Year, Month Day). *Title of page in italics*. Site Name if available. URL

International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP). (2024). *A model policy on the use of body worn cameras in policing*. www.iacp.org/bodyworncameramodelpolicy12345678

5) Format for Online News Articles WITHOUT an Associated Newspaper - Online news websites, televised news outlets, social media news, ABC News, NBC News, etc.:

Lastname, F. M. (Year, Month Day). *Title of article in italics*. Name of Publishing Website. URL

Jones, R. L. (2021, January 8). *Police are the true leaders of the world*. ABC News.

www.abcnews.com/articlexyz

6) Format for Online News Articles WITH an Associated Newspaper - Houston Chronicle, Washington Post, etc.:

Lastname, F. M. (Year, Month Day). Title of article. *Title of Newspaper Publication in Italics*. URL

Jones, R. B. (2021, January 8). Police are the true leaders of the world. *Houston Chronicle*.

www.houstonchronicle.com/articlexyz

7) Format for Thesis or Dissertation from a Database:

Lastname, F. M. (Year). *Title of dissertation or thesis in italics* (Publication No.) [Doctoral dissertation or master's thesis, Name of Institution Awarding Degree]. Database Name. URL if available

Smith, J. (2019). *The leader's edge: A longitudinal study on transformational leadership* (Publication No.

12345678) [Doctoral dissertation, Sam Houston State University]. Proquest Dissertations and

Theses Global. www.proquest.com/dissertations

8) Format for an Internal Document Within an Agency:

This can be used when there is personal knowledge of something due to internal documents within your agency. This can be a case discussed in the paper, purchases made by the agency, programs, etc.

Name of Organization or Author. (Year). *Title of document* [Internal agency document]. City, State.

Bill Blackwood Law Enforcement Management Institute of Texas (LEMIT). (2024, January 18). *Sheet*

protector purchases – 2024 [Internal agency document]. Huntsville, Texas.

9) Past Leadership White Papers

Lastname, F. M. (Year). *Title of white paper in italics* [Leadership White Paper]. Bill Blackwood Law

Enforcement Management Institute of Texas, Sam Houston State University. URL

10) Personal Communication – Conversations, emails, texts, etc.:

No references are needed for personal communications, but you will need to cite the person's first initial and last name, "personal communication," and the date that the communication took place in the text.

A lieutenant from the Huntsville Police Department stated that the program was a success (J. Smith, personal communication, December 8, 2022). ... OR... According to Lieutenant John Smith, the program was a success (personal communication, December 8, 2022).