Robert Morris University
Department of Social Sciences

Psychology Thesis: Research Paper Format

All research papers must meet the following guidelines:

I. **Title Page** (Header with page number, running head, title, author, affiliation.)

II. **Abstract** (120-150 word summary of research. This should include a brief discussion of the basic research issue, methods, results, and conclusions.)

III. **Introduction**

    A. Rationale.

    B. Statement of the Problem/Hypothesis.

    C. Definition of terms.

    D. Review of the literature (educate the reader about what is known).

    E. Research hypothesis that clearly derives from the literature review.

    F. Reasonable research predictions based on what you have discussed.

IV. **Methods** Should include the following sub-sections in approximately this order:

    A. Subjects (whatever qualities of the participants that would be needed for replication)

    B. Design (completely describe independent and/or dependent variables)

    C. Materials and/or apparatus (provide detailed descriptions of critical materials, etc.)

    D. Procedure (provide everything needed for others to replicate your design)

V. **Results**

    A. Summary of analyses performed.

    B. Statistical outcomes and descriptions of them.

    C. Data Tables and/or Figures.

VI. **Discussion** (Briefly review the original hypothesis and predictions; describe the significant outcomes that supported your hypothesis along with your explanation as to WHY that happened; describe the significant outcomes that were NOT in support of your hypothesis along with your speculations as to why they did not agree; summarize your conclusions and any recommendations that derive from your study; end with a brief discussion of possible "next step" research possibilities.

VII. **References**

VIII. **Appendices** (if any) These would include survey instruments, special materials that you developed, copy of the consent form, IRB approval documents, etc. that would have been too intrusive to have included in the bulk of the paper.

IX. **Miscellaneous**

Only double-space everything. Use APA style throughout. Use 1-inch margins all around. Ideally: Times New Roman 12-pt font. Avoid orphans and widows. Always PROOFREAD everything before submitting a final copy (spelling/grammatical errors will be penalized).