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Why and How to Write APA-Style Citations in the Body and Reference Section of Your Papers

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The information in the following three paragraphs (a) identifies the class in which I use this presentation, (b) describes how my students use the information contained this presentation, and (c) provides an explanation of why this presentation helps my students overcome their initial resistance to writing in APA style by providing them with a logical reason to master its complex rules for creating citations.

I use this presentation in my B103 Orientation to a Major in Psychology class, in which my students create a poster composed of 10 one-page answers to a series of questions about how they will use their undergraduate educations to prepare themselves for their careers. My students must support their answers with sources from the psychological literature and cite their sources in correct APA style.

The 6th edition of the *APA Publication Manual* (American Psychological Association, 2009) is a required text for B103, and I introduce my students to APA style with this slideshow (using Microsoft PowerPoint<sup>®</sup>) before I require them to begin using the manual to write their papers. This presentation exposes students to both the mechanics (i.e., the “how”) and the ethics (i.e., the “why”) of the professional writing style they will be required to use in our curriculum.

As teachers of psychology are aware, APA style includes a complex set of instructions for creating citations. Providing students with the ethical rationale for the necessity of citations (i.e., to give proper credit to those whose words and ideas they use to support what they write in their papers) motivates them to master the rules for creating citations in their papers that provide this credit.

#### Reference

American Psychological Association. (2009). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (6<sup>th</sup> ed.). Washington, DC: Author.