APA Style - Punctuation

Dr. Todd L. Grande
Punctuation

- **Spacing**
  - Insert one space after
    - periods at the end of a complete sentence
    - periods that divide parts of a reference
    - periods that are used after the initials in a name (T. L. Grande)
    - commas, colons, and semicolons
  - Use one space between the variables, mathematical symbols, and values for statistics used in text (e.g. $p > .05$)
  - Do not use a space after
    - a colon used in a ratio or after a DOI
    - an internal period in an abbreviation
Punctuation

- Use a period
  - in Latin abbreviations (e.g., i.e.)
- Do not use a period
  - in acronyms and capital letter abbreviations (ACA, CACREP, IRB, PTSD)
  - after a web address (neither in text, nor in a reference)
  - in the name of a state (DE, AZ)
  - in measurement abbreviations (kg, ft, cm, lb)
Punctuation

- Use a comma
  - to separate elements listed in a series of three or more
  - before a nonrestrictive clause
  - in an exact date (e.g. February 15, 1972, was the date)

- Do not use a comma
  - before a restrictive clause
  - To separate components of measurement (e.g. 6 years 4 months and 12 pounds 5 ounces)
Punctuation

- Use a semicolon to separate elements in a series if one or more of the elements contain a comma (e.g. The list included: (a) depression; (b) personality disorders; and (c) mild, moderate, and severe substance use.)

- Use a colon
  - between a publisher’s location and name in the reference section (e.g. New York, NY: Pearson)
Punctuation

- **Dash**
  - A dash is used to mark an abrupt interruption in continuity
  - Avoid using dashes
- **Use quotation marks**
  - the first time an invented expression, slang, or an ironic comment is used (e.g. the “increased-motivation” group)
  - around the name of an article if it is used in text
    - Grande et al.’s (2012) “Examining Mental Health Symptoms in Male and Female Incarcerated Juveniles”
- **Do not use quotation marks for block quotes**
- **Use italics when citing an element as a linguistic example (e.g. the correct usage of since and while were reviewed)**
Punctuation

- Parentheses
  - Use parentheses
    - in parenthetical citations – (Grande et al., 2012)
    - to declare an abbreviation – the depression scale (DEP)
    - to enclose the letter in a series – (a) article, (b) movie, and (c) book
    - to group elements of mathematical expressions \((n-1)/(X^2)\) and to enclose statistical values \((p < .01)\)
  - Do not use parentheses back to back or to enclose other content in parentheses
Other Mechanics

- Avoid beginning a sentence with a number. If this is necessary, then spell the number (e.g. Fifteen instead of 15).
- Use italics when inserting the titles of periodicals, books, movies, television shows, and videos (e.g. *Measurement and Evaluation in Counseling and Development*)
- Do not use italics for Greek letters (e.g. $\alpha$, $\mu$, $\beta$)