



7th Edition

Student Paper Setup Guide

Use this guide to set up an APA Style student paper. The basic setup directions apply to the entire paper. The annotated diagrams that follow illustrate how to set up the major sections: the title page or cover page, the text, tables and figures, and the reference list.

Basic Setup

Seventh edition APA Style was designed with modern word-processing programs in mind. Most default settings in programs such as Microsoft Word, Google Docs, and Academic Writer already comply with APA Style. However, you may adjust a few settings before you begin writing.

- **Margins:** Use 1-in. margins on all sides of the page (top, bottom, left, and right).
- **Font:** Use a legible font. Many fonts are acceptable, including 12-point Aptos, 11-point Calibri, 11-point Arial, 12-point Times New Roman, and 11-point Georgia. It is fine to use the default font of your word-processing program.
- **Line spacing:** Use double-spacing for the entire paper (including block quotations and the reference list). Do not add blank lines before or after headings. Do not add extra spacing before or after paragraphs.
- **Paragraph alignment and indentation:** Align paragraphs of text to the left margin. Leave the right margin ragged. Do not use full justification. Indent the first line of every paragraph of text 0.5 in. using the tab key or the paragraph-formatting function of your word-processing program, not the space bar.
- **Page numbers:** Use the page-numbering function of your word-processing program to insert page numbers in the top right corner of every page, including the title page or cover page, which is page 1. Student papers do not require a running head on any page.

Title Page Setup



Title Page Elements

	Page number 1
Paper title	Advising Psychology Majors About Graduate School in Psychology: Current Practices and Challenges
Author names	Robert T. Schatz and Pamela I. Ansborg
Affiliation	Department of Psychology, Metropolitan State University of Denver
Course number and name	PSY-4510: History and Systems Psychology
Instructor name	Dr. Mackenzie R. Teacher
Due date	October 1, 2025

- The affiliation consists of the department of the course and the name of the university.
- Write the course number and name and instructor name as shown on course materials.
- Use the date format used in your country for the assignment due date.
- Page number 1 appears in the top right of the title page in the page header.
- No running heads are required for student papers.

Title Page Line Spacing

1

Double-space
whole title page

Place title 3 or 4 lines
down from top of page

**Advising Psychology Majors About Graduate School in Psychology:
Current Practices and Challenges**

Extra line between title and author names

Robert T. Schatz and Pamela I. Ansborg

Department of Psychology, Metropolitan State University of Denver
PSY-4510: History and Systems Psychology
Dr. Mackenzie R. Teacher
October 1, 2025

Title Page Alignment

Right-align page number 1

Center entire title page
(except page number)

**Advising Psychology Majors About Graduate School in Psychology:
Current Practices and Challenges**

Extra line between title and author names

Robert T. Schatz and Pamela I. Ansborg

Department of Psychology, Metropolitan State University of Denver
PSY-4510: History and Systems Psychology
Dr. Mackenzie R. Teacher
October 1, 2025

Title Page Font

1

Bold paper title

**Advising Psychology Majors About Graduate School in Psychology:
Current Practices and Challenges**

Robert T. Schatz and Pamela I. Ansborg

Department of Psychology, Metropolitan State University of Denver

PSY-4510: History and Systems Psychology

Dr. Mackenzie R. Teacher

October 1, 2025

**Standard font
(no bold, no italic)
on all other title
page elements**

Text Setup



Text Elements

Repeat title at top of first page of text

2

Advising Psychology Majors About Graduate School in Psychology: Current Practices and Challenges

Introduction The *APA Guidelines for the Undergraduate Psychology Major* (APA Board of Educational Affairs Task Force on Psychology Major Competencies, 2023) outlines strategies for psychology departments to help students discern and take steps toward their professional development goals. For many students, graduate school is fundamental to achieving postbaccalaureate success. High-quality advising can be vital in helping students gain admission to psychology graduate programs. However, little is known about the strategies that psychology departments use to advise students about graduate school. We conducted the present research to better understand these strategies.

The job outlook for psychology majors who earn graduate degrees is quite good. In fact, the demand for psychologists with graduate degrees is expected to grow much faster than the demand for

- Repeat the paper title at the top of the first page of text.
- Begin with an introduction to provide background and context. Do not use the label “Introduction” unless specifically requested; the beginning of the text is assumed to be the introduction.
- Use descriptive headings to identify other sections (e.g., Method, Results, Discussion for quantitative research papers).
- Sections and headings vary depending on paper type and complexity.
- Text can include tables and figures, block quotations, headings, and footnotes.

Text Line Spacing

Double-space all text, including

- headings and section labels
- paragraphs of text
- block quotes

Text Alignment

Center paper title

2

Advising Psychology Majors About Graduate School in Psychology: Current Practices and Challenges

Indent first line of paragraphs 0.5"

Left-align text

Ragged right margin

The *APA Guidelines for the Undergraduate Psychology Major* (APA Board of Educational Affairs Task Force on Psychology Major Competencies, 2023) outlines strategies for psychology departments to help students discern and take steps toward their professional development goals. For many students, graduate school is fundamental to achieving postbaccalaureate success. High-quality advising can be vital in helping students gain admission to psychology graduate programs. However, little is known about the strategies that psychology departments use to advise students about graduate school. We conducted the present research to better understand these strategies.

The job outlook for psychology majors who earn graduate degrees is quite good. In fact, the demand for psychologists with graduate degrees is expected to grow much faster than the demand for

Block Quotation Alignment

5

Although students correctly noted that research experience, letters of recommendation, personal statements, GPA, and program fit are important factors, they erroneously attached relatively low importance to conference presentations, publications, and the thoroughness of application materials (Lang et al., 2022). In their seminal article, Appleby and Appleby (2006) found that the shortcomings of many psychology majors' applications to graduate programs resulted from

Indent whole block quote 0.5" from left margin (also double-spaced)

a lack of exposure to information that would otherwise enable [the applicants] to understand the graduate school culture, the requirements of the graduate school application process, and the exact nature of some of its components [as well as] a lack of appropriate advising and mentoring. (p. 22)

Thus, there is a need for psychology departments to improve the quality of the advising they deliver to

Text Font

- Use the same font throughout the entire paper.
- Write body text in standard (nonbold, nonitalic) font.
- Use italics sparingly, for instance, to highlight a key term on first use (see *Concise Guide to APA Style* Section 4.15).

Headings Format

Level	Format
1	Centered, Bold, Title Case Heading Text begins as a new paragraph.
2	Flush Left, Bold, Title Case Heading Text begins as a new paragraph.
3	<i>Flush Left, Bold Italic, Title Case Heading</i> Text begins as a new paragraph.
4	Indented, Bold, Title Case Heading, Ending With a Period. Text begins on the same line and continues as a regular paragraph.
5	<i>Indented, Bold Italic, Title Case Heading, Ending With a Period.</i> Text begins on the same line and continues as a regular paragraph.

- **Alignment:** Center Level 1 headings. Left-align Level 2 and Level 3 headings. Indent Level 4 and Level 5 headings like a paragraph.
- **Font:** Boldface all headings. Also italicize Level 3 and Level 5 headings.
- **Tip:** Create heading styles using your word-processing program. Use [sample papers](#) on the APA Style website as a template—these already have the heading styles set for you.

Tables and Figures Setup



- Only some papers have tables and figures.
- Tables and figures share the same elements and are formatted similarly.

Table Elements

Number	Table 1																								
Title	<i>Departments' Formal Requirements for Students to Learn About Graduate School in Psychology</i>																								
Body (rows and columns)	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Answer</th> <th>%</th> <th><i>n</i></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>No formal requirements</td> <td>47.9</td> <td>78</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Completion of a psychology careers course or module</td> <td>35.6</td> <td>58</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Required meeting with a department advisor</td> <td>25.2</td> <td>41</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Other</td> <td>4.9</td> <td>7</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Required attendance at a presentation on psychology careers</td> <td>4.3</td> <td>4</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Required meeting with an advisor from outside the department</td> <td>1.2</td> <td>2</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Unsure</td> <td>0.6</td> <td>1</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Answer	%	<i>n</i>	No formal requirements	47.9	78	Completion of a psychology careers course or module	35.6	58	Required meeting with a department advisor	25.2	41	Other	4.9	7	Required attendance at a presentation on psychology careers	4.3	4	Required meeting with an advisor from outside the department	1.2	2	Unsure	0.6	1
	Answer	%	<i>n</i>																						
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Note (optional)	<i>Note.</i> The survey item read as follows: "What format requirements does your department have for students to learn about graduate school in psychology? Check all that apply."																								

Figure Elements

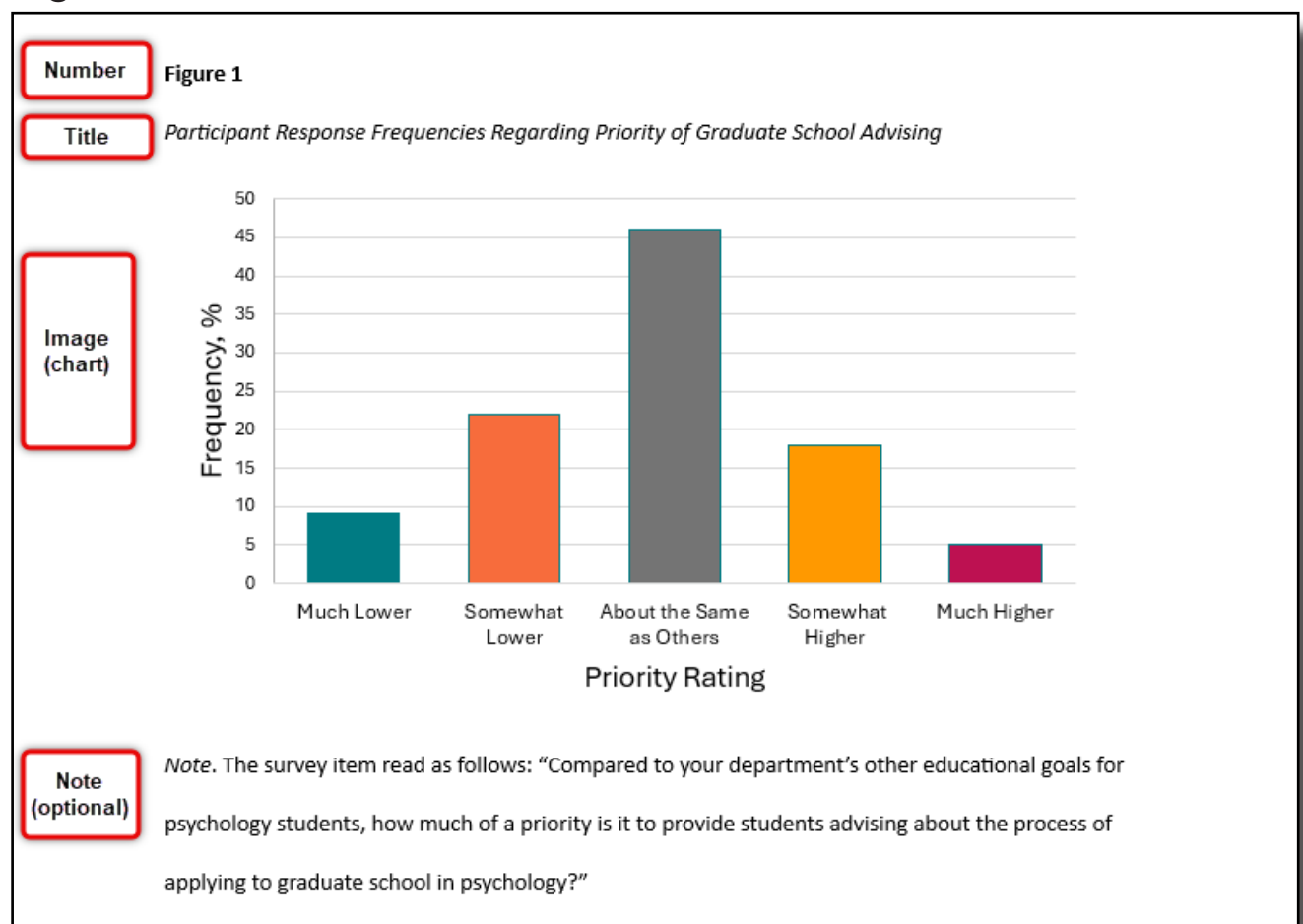


Table Line Spacing

Double-space number

Table 1
Departments' Formal Requirements for Students to Learn About Graduate School in Psychology

Answer	%	<i>n</i>
No formal requirements	47.9	78
Completion of a psychology careers course or module	35.6	58
Required meeting with a department advisor	25.2	41
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Required meeting with an advisor from outside the department	1.2	2
Unsure	0.6	1

Single-, 1.5-, or double-spacing in table body (choose based on readability)

Double-space note

Note. The survey item read as follows: "What format requirements does your department have for students to learn about graduate school in psychology? Check all that apply."

Figure Line Spacing

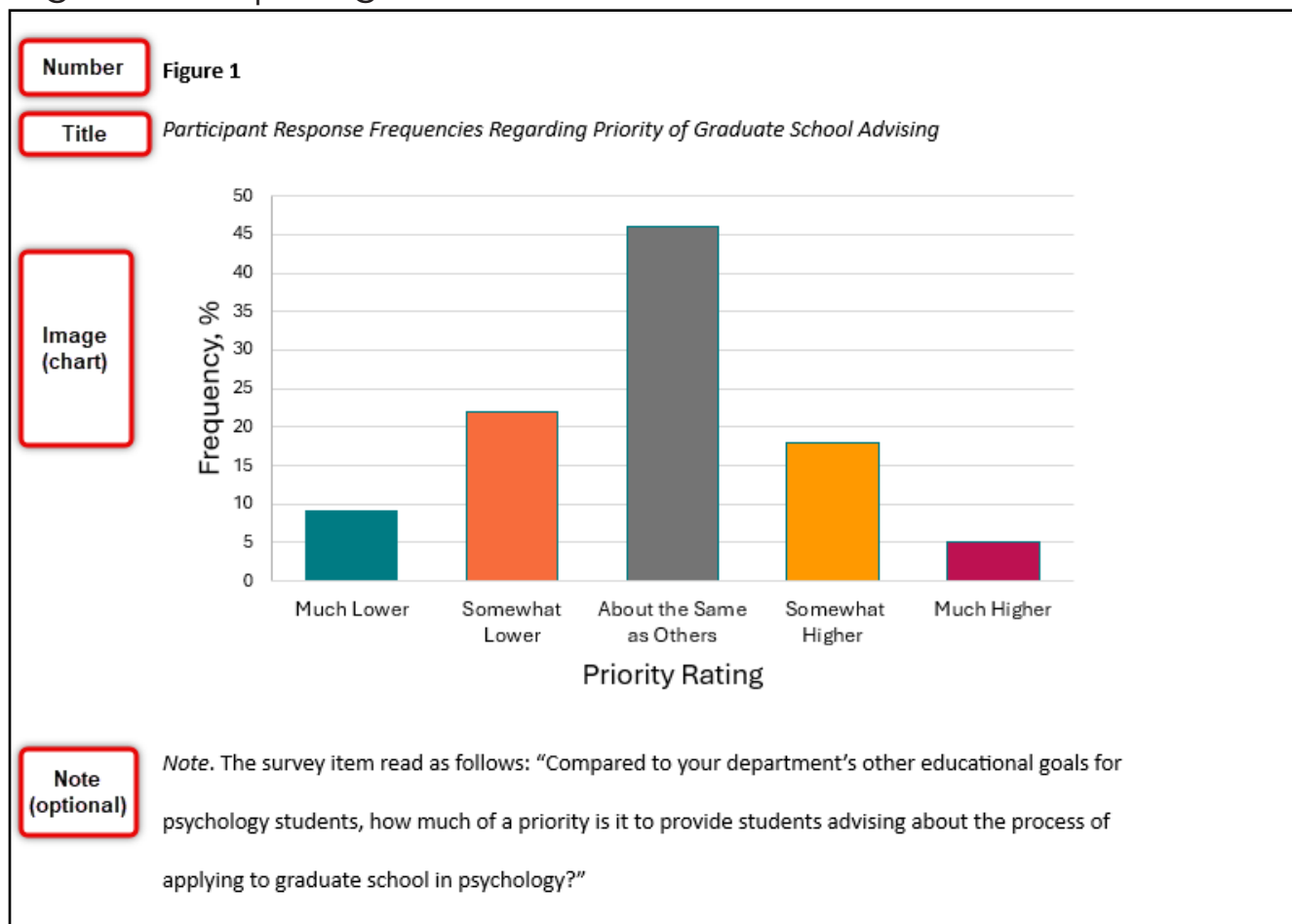


Table Alignment

Left-align number and title **Table 1**
Departments' Formal Requirements for Students to Learn About Graduate School in Psychology

Answer	%	<i>n</i>
No formal requirements	47.9	78
Completion of a psychology careers course or module	35.6	58
Required meeting with a department advisor	25.2	41
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Required attendance at a presentation on psychology careers	4.3	4
Required meeting with an advisor from outside the department	1.2	2
Unsure	0.6	1

Center table headings

Left-align table itself and Left-align leftmost column

Center data (if short) or Left-align data (if long)

Left-align note *Note.* The survey item read as follows: "What format requirements does your department have for students to learn about graduate school in psychology? Check all that apply."

Figure Alignment

Left-align number and title **Figure 1**
Participant Response Frequencies Regarding Priority of Graduate School Advising

Priority Rating	Frequency, %
Much Lower	~9
Somewhat Lower	~22
About the Same as Others	~46
Somewhat Higher	~18
Much Higher	~5

Left-align whole image (chart, graph, etc.)

Default alignments for axis titles and data are fine

Left-align note *Note.* The survey item read as follows: "Compared to your department's other educational goals for psychology students, how much of a priority is it to provide students advising about the process of applying to graduate school in psychology?"

Table Font

Bold number **Table 1**

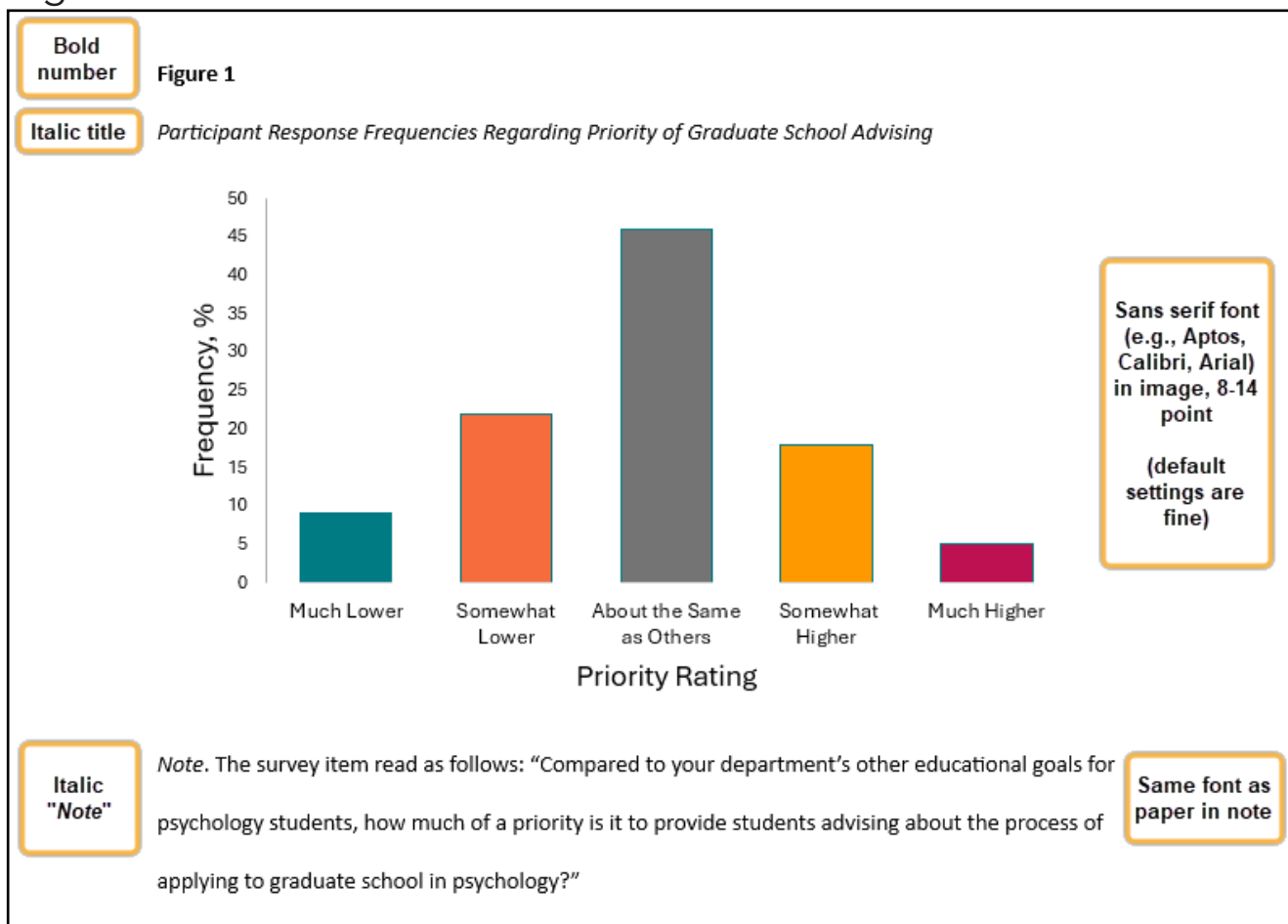
Italic title *Departments' Formal Requirements for Students to Learn About Graduate School in Psychology*

Answer	%	<i>n</i>
No formal requirements	47.9	78
Completion of a psychology careers course or module	35.6	58
Required meeting with a department advisor	25.2	41
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Required meeting with an advisor from outside the department	1.2	2
Unsure	0.6	1

Italic "Note" *Note.* The survey item read as follows: "What format requirements does your department have for students to learn about graduate school in psychology? Check all that apply."

Same font as paper in note

Figure Font



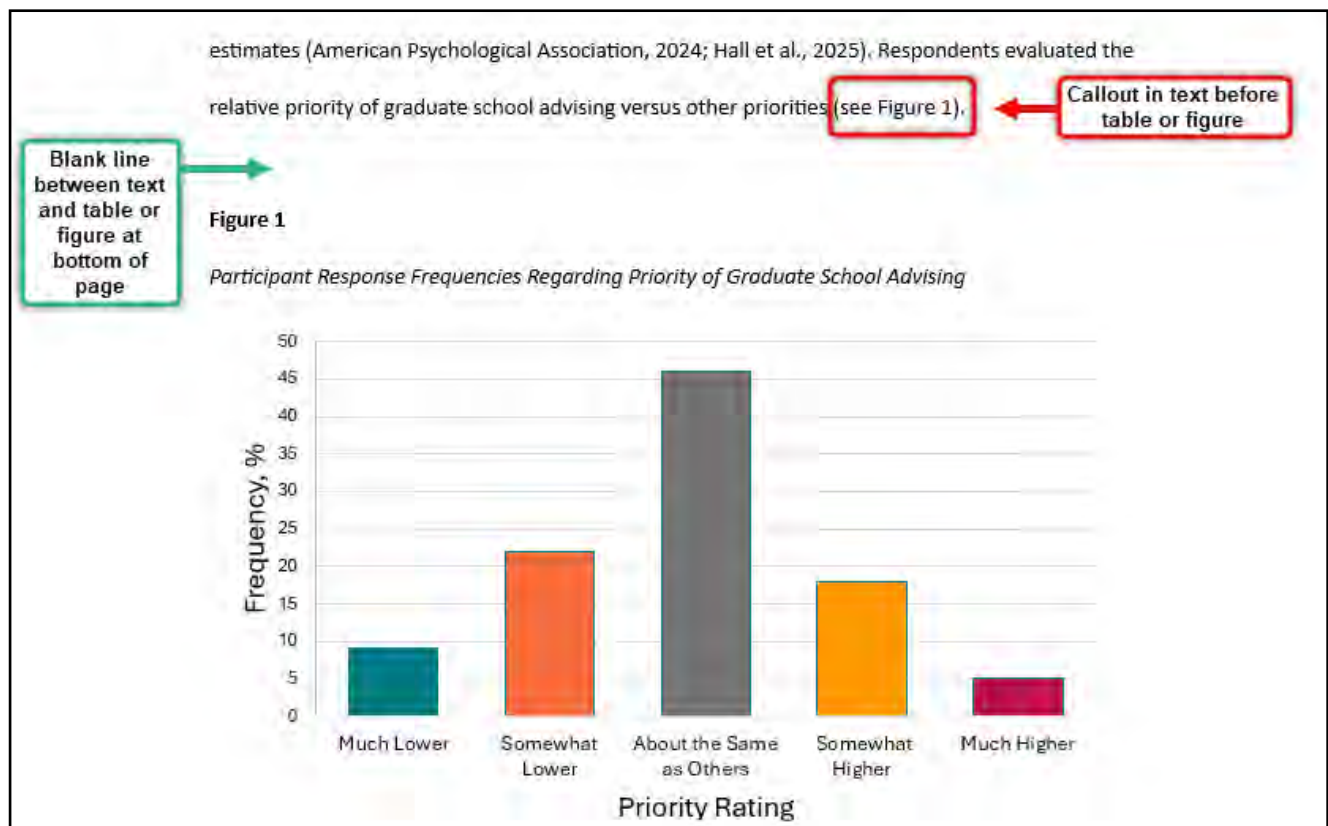
Placement of Tables and Figures

You can embed tables and figures in the body of the paper.

This guide shows options for placement. If your instructor requires tables and figures to be placed at the end of the paper, see examples in the *Publication Manual* and in the [professional sample paper](#) on the APA Style website.

- Embed tables and figures in the text.
- Call out (mention) the table or figure in the text before embedding it.
- Place the table or figure after the callout
 - at the bottom of the page
 - at the top of the next page
 - by itself on the next page
- Avoid placing tables and figures in the middle of the page.

Embedded at the Bottom of the Page



Embedded at the Top of the Page

Callout in text before table or figure

Table 1 presents the responses to the question regarding formal requirements for students to learn about graduate school in participants' home departments. Thirty-five percent of departments required students to complete a careers or professional development course or course module(s) that included information about graduate school, and 25% of departments required that students meet with a department advisor about graduate school. Forty-eight percent of participants indicated that their department had no formal requirements for students to learn about graduate school.

Table or figure is at top of page

Table 1

Departments' Formal Requirements for Students to Learn About Graduate School in Psychology

Answer	%	<i>n</i>
No formal requirements	47.9	78
Completion of a psychology careers course or module	35.6	58
Required meeting with a department advisor	25.2	41
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Required attendance at a presentation on psychology careers	4.3	4
Required meeting with an advisor from outside the department	1.2	2
Unsure	0.6	1

Note. The survey item read as follows: "What format requirements does your department have for students to learn about graduate school in psychology? Check all that apply."

Blank line between end of table or figure and more text

Table 2 shows participants' perceptions regarding the most common way that students in their department learn about the psychology graduate school application process. More than half of the

Embedded on Its Own Page

8

Table 4

Challenges or Barriers to Advising Students About Applying to Graduate School in Psychology

Challenge	%	<i>n</i>	Example
Disseminating information	32	52	We need to get information to students effectively.
Faculty time and resources	20	33	We each have 30 to 40 advisees.
Student effort or initiative	7	12	Students need to be more proactive.
Student constraints	7	12	Many students cannot leave the area due to family responsibilities.
Student planning and timelines	7	12	Students get involved in research too late.
Student interest	6	9	Not all students are interested in graduate school.
Student resources	5	8	We do not have adequate research and field work opportunities for all interested students.
Assessment	4	7	There is no easy way to track students or follow up to find out who actually applies to graduate school.
Faculty interest and motivation	4	6	Some faculty do not encourage students to apply.

- Embed long tables or large figures on their own page if needed.
- Text continues on the next page.

Reference List Setup



Reference List Elements

15

**"References"
section label**

References

Alphabetical list of references

APA Board of Educational Affairs Task Force on Psychology Major Competencies. (2023). *APA guidelines for the undergraduate psychology major* (Version 3.0).
<https://www.apa.org/about/policy/undergraduate-psychology-major.pdf>

Appleby, D. C., & Appleby, K. M. (2006). Kisses of death in the graduate school application process. *Teaching of Psychology, 33*(1), 19–24. https://doi.org/10.1207/s15328023top3301_5

Becerra, M., Wong, E., Jenkins, B. N., & Pressman, S. D. (2021). Does a good advisor a day keep the doctor away? How advisor-advisee relationships are associated with psychological and physical well-being among graduate students. *International Journal of Community Well-Being, 4*, 505–524. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s42413-020-00087-2>

Creswell, J. W., & Poth, C. N. (2024). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches* (5th ed.). Sage.

- Follow [reference examples](#) to write your references.
- Consult Chapter 10 of the *Publication Manual* or *Concise Guide to APA Style* for even more examples.

Reference List Line Spacing

15

References

APA Board of Educational Affairs Task Force on Psychology Major Competencies. (2023). *APA guidelines for the undergraduate psychology major* (Version 3.0).
<https://www.apa.org/about/policy/undergraduate-psychology-major.pdf>

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Start reference list on a new page after the text

Double-space entire reference list (both within and between entries)

Reference List Alignment

15

References

APA Board of Educational Affairs Task Force on Psychology Major Competencies. (2023). *APA guidelines for the undergraduate psychology major* (Version 3.0).
<https://www.apa.org/about/policy/undergraduate-psychology-major.pdf>

Appleby, D. C., & Appleby, K. M. (2006). Kisses of death in the graduate school application process. *Teaching of Psychology*, 33(1), 19–24. https://doi.org/10.1207/s15328023top3301_5

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Creswell, J. W., & Poth, C. N. (2024). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches* (5th ed.). Sage.

Center the bold "References" label

Hanging indent of 0.5" on all references

Create hanging indent with your word-processing program (do not manually hit enter and tab/space within entries)

Reference List Font

Bold "References" label at top of first page of references

15

References

Italics in references either

on the title (e.g., books, webpages, reports)

or

on the source (e.g., journal articles, edited book chapters)

APA Board of Educational Affairs Task Force on Psychology Major Competencies. (2023). *APA guidelines for the undergraduate psychology major* (Version 3.0).

<https://www.apa.org/about/policy/undergraduate-psychology-major.pdf>

Appleby, D. C., & Appleby, K. M. (2006). Kisses of death in the graduate school application

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Creswell, J. W., & Poth, C. N. (2024). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five*

approaches (5th ed.). Sage.

Final Checks

Check Page Order

- Start each section on a new page.
- Arrange pages in the following order:
 - title page (page 1)
 - text (starts on page 2, with any tables or figures embedded)
 - reference list (starts on a new page after the text)



Check Headings

- Check that headings accurately reflect the content in each section.
- Start each main section with a Level 1 heading.
- Use Level 2 headings for subsections of the introduction if desired.
- Use the same level of heading for sections of equal importance.
- Avoid having only one subsection within a section (have two or more, or none).

Check Assignment Instructions

- Instructors' guidelines supersede APA Style.
- Students should check their assignment guidelines or rubric for specific content to include in their papers and to ensure they are meeting assignment requirements.

Tips for Better Writing

- Ask for feedback on your paper from a classmate, writing center tutor, or instructor.
- Budget time to implement suggestions.
- Use spell-check and grammar-check to identify and correct errors.
- Proofread the paper by reading it slowly and carefully aloud to yourself.
- Consult your university writing center if you need extra help.