EDITORIAL STYLE
(based on APA, Fifth Edition)

Miscellaneous:

1. Article is incorrectly referenced (see APA handout)
2. Abstract is more than three pages (see Abstract Criteria)
3. Font should be size 10, 11, or 12 (see Abstract Criteria)
4. Spacing error(s)
5. Use of only last name of author(s) in abstract is preferred (see APA sample papers, pp. 306-320)
6. Citation needed (page number from article) for quoted material (see Abstract Criteria)

Spelling, Punctuation, Hyphenation, Capitalization, Possession, Abbreviation, Numbers:

7. Spelling error: Merriam-Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary is the standard spelling reference for APA journals and books; APA, p. 89
8. One word, not two OR two words, not one
9. Comma needed to separate two independent clauses joined by conjunction (and, but, or nor, for, so, yet) [Example: “Cedar shavings covered the floor, and paper was available for shredding and nest building.”]; APA, p. 79
10. Comma needed between elements (including before and and or) in a series of three or more items [Example: “The height, width, and depth are needed to determine the proper size.”]; APA, p. 78
11. Comma needed after introductory clause containing a verb [Example: “When we finish work, we will go to dinner.”] As, if, and when — three of the most common words beginning an introductory clause
12. Comma needed after adverb [Examples: fortunately, similarly, certainly, consequently] and other introductory words [Examples: however, therefore] A comma is not needed after an introductory word or phrase if the meaning is clear without the comma
13. Commas needed to set off a nonessential or nonrestrictive clause [Example: “Switch A, which was on a panel, controlled the recording device.”]
Commas needed for parenthetical [Examples: “. . . the mural artist, Diego Rivero” AND “he was born October 20, 1940, in . . . ”] and for understanding [Example: “. . . to the right, walls of granite rose several hundred feet above us.”]  

Comma needed to introduce quoted speech [Example: “I have noticed,” the teacher commented, “that students seem to become ill when we have a test.”]  

No comma needed; the second part of the sentence is not an independent clause [Example: “The results contradicted Smiths’ hypothesis and indicated that the effect was nonsignificant.”] The second part of the sentence is not an independent clause; this sentence has a compound predicate (italicized above)  

No comma needed  

Semicolon needed to separate independent clauses that are not joined by a conjunction [Example: “The participants in the first study were paid; those in the second were unpaid.”]  

Semicolon needed to separate independent clauses when they contain comma(s) [Example: “We usually go skiing in the winter; but when summer comes, we head for the beach.”]  

Semicolon needed to separate elements in a series that already contains comma(s) [Example: “The color order was red, yellow, blue; blue, yellow, red; or yellow, red, blue.”]  

Colon needed to introduce list at the end of a sentence [Example: “There were three reasons for his failure: laziness, ill health, and lack of training.”] and to introduce an example or explanation of something just mentioned [Example: “There are several ways to get to New York: by plane, by train, and by bus.”]  

Dash needed to indicate sudden interruption in continuity of sentence [Example: “A participant—one from the first group—was chosen for the test.”]  

Incorrect dash use: type t-(hyphen)o in Word—the software will create a dash OR create a dash—type t--(two hyphens with no space before or after)o OR type t(space)-(one hyphen)(space)o  

Quotation marks are needed (only the first time used) to introduce a word or phrase used as an ironic comment [Example: considered “normal” behavior], as slang, or as an invented or coined expression [Example: “good-outcome” variable]; APA, p. 82  

Incorrect punctuation location: place a period or comma before rather than after the closing quotation marks; put other punctuation (e.g., colon, semicolon) outside quotation marks; APA, p. 293
26 **Punctuation needed:** punctuation establishes the cadence of a sentence telling the reader where to pause (comma, semicolon, colon), stop (period and question mark), or take a detour (dash, parentheses, and brackets)

27 **Hyphenation needed:** hyphenate a temporary compound preceding the noun modified

[Examples: a compound with a participle (role-playing technique); a phrase used as adjective (trial-by-trial analysis), an adjective and noun adjective (middle-class families), and a compound with a number as the first element (third-grade student)]; APA, p. 91.

28 **Hyphen not necessary:** many prefixes no longer require a hyphen; APA, p. 92

29 **No hyphen needed:** do not hyphenate a compound including an adverb ending in -ly

[Examples: “widely used text” OR “randomly assigned participants”]; APA, pp. 89-94

30 **No hyphen needed:** do not hyphenate common fractions used as nouns

[Example: “one third of the participants” BUT “two-thirds majority”; APA, pp. 89-94

31 **No hyphen needed:** not a temporary compound requiring hyphen

32 **Capitalization error**—item needs to be capitalize OR no capitalization needed

33 **Possessive indicated:** as a general rule to show possession or ownership, add an apostrophe for any singular or plural form of a noun that ends in s or x [Example: “The dogs’ leashes were lost.” AND ”Let us meet at Francis’ house.”] With single-syllable words that end in x, add an apostrophe and an s [Example: The ox’s tail is hurt.”] For singular or plural nouns that do not end in s or x, add an apostrophe and an s [Example: “The child’s (or children’s) playground is around the corner.”]

34 **Apostrophe in not needed:** to form the plural of most abbreviations and statistical symbols, add s alone without an apostrophe [Examples: IQs, APAs, Eds.]; APA, pp. 110-111

35 **Abbreviation incorrect OR should not be abbreviated:** APA prefers that writers use abbreviations sparingly; if used, a term to be abbreviated must, on its first appearance, be written out completely and followed immediately by its abbreviation in parentheses; thereafter, the abbreviation is used in the text without further explanation [Example: “The results of studies of simple reaction time (RT) were given and have shown a strong relation between RT and luminance.”]

36 **Incorrect number use:** in general, use figures to express numbers 10 and above; use words to express numbers below 10 that do not represent precise measurements [Examples: 25 years old, 13 lists BUT nine words, five trials, three conditions]; APA, pp. 122-127; BUT, use figures to express all numbers below 10 that are grouped for comparison with numbers 10
and above (and appear in the same paragraph); [Example: “. . . 8 nouns, 12 verbs, and 4 adjectives.”]

37 Incorrect number use: use words for any number that begins a sentence [Example: Forty-eight percent of the sample . . . ”]; APA, p. 126

38 Incorrect number use: use figures to express numbers that represent statistical or mathematical functions, percentages, and so on [Example: “More than 5% of the student sample . . . ”]; APA, p. 124

39 Incorrect plural for number; to form the plurals of numbers, whether expressed as figures or as words, add s or es alone, without an apostrophe [Examples: vols., ps, fours and sixes, 1950s, 10s and 20s]; APA, 130

Grammar:

40 Need to use formal wording; use formal style of writing in word choice—make sure every word means exactly what you intend the word to mean [Example: “learning other skills” (not “things”)]; avoid colloquial expressions which diffuse meaning [Example: “deliver the report” (not “write up”) AND “a large number” (not “a lot”)]; avoid jargon; avoid contractions; APA, pp. 36-37

41 Avoid weak pronoun references; do not use weak pronoun references (e.g., it, they, this, that, these, those); APA, p. 37

42 Pronoun not in agreement with replaced noun; pronoun must agree in number (i.e., singular or plural) with the noun replaced [Example: “Neither the highest scorer nor the lowest scorer in the group had any doubt about his or her (not their) competence.”]; APA, p. 47

43 Verb is not in agreement with subject; verb must agree in number (i.e., singular or plural) with its subject [Example: “The percentage of correct responses as well as the speed of the responses increases (not increase) with practice. AND “The authors (plural) were becoming facilitators.” (not “more of a facilitator”)]; APA, p. 44

44 Do not mix verb tenses; use same verb tense throughout writing [Example: “The authors noted (past tense) that the study looked at (not "looks at") . . . and the authors examined (not “examine”)); the last two verbs must also be past tense (not present tense)

45 Do not end a sentence with a preposition; [Examples: “They did not get what they came for.” This determines what needs to be concentrated on.” I will share this with the teachers I work with.”] Remember Winston Churchill’s famous quote: “This is the sort of English up with which I will not put.”
Adjective/adverb does not clearly refer to word modified; an adjective or an adverb, whether a single word or a phrase, must clearly refer to the word modified (avoid misplaced or dangling modifiers); APA, pp. 50-57  [Example: “Using this procedure, the investigator tested the participants.” NOT “The investigator tested the participants using this procedure.” The sentence is unclear about whether the investigator or the participants used this procedure.]

The elements in the series are not in parallel form; elements in a series need to be in parallel form; all elements of parallelism need to be present before and after the coordinating conjunction (i.e., and, but, or, nor); APA, pp. 57-60  [Examples: “The participants were told to make themselves comfortable, to read the instructions, and to ask about anything they did not understand.” NOT “. . . and that they should ask about anything they did not understand.” “The results show that such changes could be made without affecting error rate and that latencies continued to decrease over time.” NOT “and latencies continued to decrease over time.”]

Incorrect word used; note context of the sentence to determine correct word; APA, pp. 31-76

Word(s) missing OR double/extra words included that need to be removed; note context of the sentence to determine correction; APA, pp. 31-76

Awkward sentence structure; rewrite to correct awkward structure; APA, pp. 31-76

Run-on sentence; rewrite and/or break run-on sentence into two sentences; APA, pp. 31-76

Meaning of sentence or transition to new sentence is unclear; rewrite to make meaning clear

Incomplete sentence; rewrite to make sentence complete; APA, pp. 31-76