General Rules for Writing Papers

A Web Page to answer all of your questions
http://owl.english.purdue.edu/

Formatting Rules

Use a font no larger than this handout (Times 12 point).
Do not put extra spaces between paragraphs (that’s why you indent!!)
Margins should be 1 inch all the way around the page, NO Larger!
Spaces: no spaces after (open parentheses, or before closed parentheses)
    one after words and commas
    two after periods. Colons: semi-colons;
All punctuation goes inside “quotations.”
Set off titles in ITALICS
“Block” (indent) quotations three lines or longer.
Always Double Space.

Grammatical Rules

Always write in the formal never the familiar (use last names only).
Do not write in first person. (I, you, we, etc.)
Don’t use contractions.
Avoid these words: really, so, just, thing, seem
Avoid weak verbs: any form of “to be” (is, are, was, were), “do” (did, done), “have.”
Never use: “a lot” or “got”
Never end a sentence with a preposition.
Never use slang.

Stylistic concerns

Make sure your first paragraph introduces the entire paper
Make sure your paper ends with a paragraph summarizing and concluding your information.
Avoid saying the obvious: “In this paper” “In conclusion”
Combine source information.
Combine ideas and sentences for better continuity and flow.
Only quote material essential to the discussion.
Don’t start or end a paragraph with a quote.
You must cite all material that is not your own research or considered common knowledge.
    This goes for quoted as well as paraphrased material.