**Guidelines for the for a Research Paper**

*Purpose:* To investigate a research question that demonstrates the integration of knowledge of advanced nursing practice, scholarly inquiry, theory and data analysis. The guidelines below may apply to quantitative or qualitative research methodologies.

| I. Introduction | • Describe the background of the study  
|• Introduce the topic  
|• Identify the research problem and target phenomenon  
|• Describe significance of the study to nursing  
|• State the purpose(s) of the study  
|• List the study aims, research question(s) or hypotheses  
|• Define terms (conceptual/operational definitions) (may come after II)  
|• List assumptions (may come after II)  |

| II. Conceptual Framework / Review of the Literature | • Identify conceptual framework of study if appropriate  
|• Summarize and critique relevant theoretical and empirical literature  
|• Summarize what is known and not known about the selected area of study  
|• Summarize findings and present rationale for the study  |

| III. Methods | • Design: Identify the type of quantitative/qualitative research design  
|• Setting: Describe the setting of the study  
|• Sample: Describe the sample (participants) and inclusion criteria; Identify sample size as determined by power analysis (quantitative); Identify power level and effect size (quantitative)  
|• Procedure: Describe the procedures for data collection  
|• Instrumentation: Describe instruments including reliability/validity  
|• Protection of human subjects: Discuss the process of protection of human subjects (IRB)  
|• Data Analysis: Describe procedures for data analysis  |

| IV. Results | • Describe the characteristics or demographics of the sample/participants  
|• Present results of data analysis  
|• Describe method of coding data  
|• Use tables/figures to present data, as appropriate  
|• Describe how scientific rigor was established, maintained and tracked  
|• Describe procedure for verification of data  |

| V. Discussion | • Discuss findings of study in relationship to purpose, hypotheses, or study questions  
|• Relate findings to previous research and conceptual framework if applicable  
|• Provide explanations for findings  
|• Discuss conclusions of study  
|• Identify implications for advanced nursing practice  
|• Generate recommendations for future research  
|• Identify limitations of study  |

| References | • List all references cited in the paper  |

| Appendices (will vary) | • Provide letters of support, if applicable  
|• Copy of IRB consent form, if applicable  
|• Include documentation of site approval and permission for subject assess, if applicable  
|• Include copies of Instruments  |