

Here are some additions Marc Rysman would make:

1. I use bibtex, which I think is a worthwhile investment and really cleans up a lot of problem you might have with the bibliography. I would recommend this to them.
2. I recommend my students write their introduction without any citations, and then write a section called "literature review." This may not be the version of the introduction they use in their final draft, but it is a good exercise. It forces you to write about what you do, and not about what others do. Make sure in any case to state what your paper does "This paper etc" before any citations take place.
3. No figures or tables in the introduction. That typically distracts from getting across your main idea, as people naturally have questions about distracting data issues.
4. I think one issue I struggle with in my own writing is when to use mathematical symbols. For instance, suppose you are constructing a variable. Is it OK to write "I take the average of the income over time, divide by the number of family members and use the gini coefficient for the county." Or should you write that one up in symbols.
5. Some grammar points:

Never start a sentence with a mathematical symbol. Write "The parameter  $\theta$  ... " even if it seems a little clunky. For support for this point, see

[http://jmlr.csail.mit.edu/reviewing-papers/knuth\\_mathematical\\_writing.pdf](http://jmlr.csail.mit.edu/reviewing-papers/knuth_mathematical_writing.pdf), page 1, point

2. They should find this author compelling has he wrote Tex. I would add some books like this to your list of books.

Use "because" instead of "since" unless you are referring to time. Don't write "Since  $f(x)$  is monotonic, etc."

The word "only" is in the wrong place in a sentence with incredibly high frequency. It is the most misused word in English.

Don't use "\*" for multiplication in a paper. It is computer code.

No more than 3 decimal places in tables (computers aren't that accurate anyway) but don't put zeros in tables. If your coefficient is 0.000, add more decimal places or use scientific notation, even if there are only a few variables you do this for (or rescale your data so this goes away).