Some of the default settings in Microsoft Word 2010 are inconsistent with APA style. It is important to master the use of Word and not rely on its default settings nor on its built-in spell checker.

Some of the more common errors I've noticed when checking student papers are listed below along with the information required to resolve them in Word.

1: Paragraph

Inconsistency: Under APA 6, paragraphs in the body of the document should be double spaced with no extra space between paragraphs. Under Word, the default is 1.5 spacing with a 10 pt space between paragraphs.

Correction: Select all of the text in the body of the document. Open the Home Ribbon Click on Paragraph Change settings as shown

- Alignment: Left
- Indentation: Left 0"
- Indentation: Right 0"
- Special: First line by: 0.5"
- Spacing Before: 0 pt.
- Spacing After: 0 pt.
- Line spacing: Double

Click on Set as Default

You will be asked if you want to make these paragraph settings the default for just this document or for this and all future documents. That is your decision to make!
2: Font
Inconsistency: Recommended font is Times New Roman 12. Word default is Cambria 11.

Correction: Select all (Ctrl A) of the text in the document.
In the Home Ribbon choose Times New Roman as the font and 12 as font size.

3: Headings
Inconsistency: The default heading styles in Word do not sync up at all with the APA 6 heading styles. The APA 6 styles are shown in this table taken from the Purdue Online Writing Lab at http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/16/

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Format</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Centered, Boldface, Uppercase and Lowercase Headings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Left-aligned, Boldface, Uppercase and Lowercase Heading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Indented, boldface, lowercase heading with a period.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Indented, boldface, italicized, lowercase heading with a period.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Indented, italicized, lowercase heading with a period.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Word heading styles different than APA 6.

Correction: Either use the Paragraph box to format your headings to match the table above or create your own style and "Save Selection as a New Quick Style" where it can be used to apply all the settings quickly.
4: Reference List
Citations in the reference section are formatted similarly to the body of the text with one exception; a hanging indent is used for the first line. Confirm that the Spacing is set to 0 pts before and after the paragraph and that Line Spacing is set to Double.

5: Margins
In Word 2010, the default margin settings are 1.0” which matches the APA recommendation. However, if you have an older version of Word, the default margins were wider. In that case, be sure to change the margins on all four sides to 1”.
Open the Page Layout Ribbon
Click on Margins
If no 1” margin choice is given, choose "Custom Margins" and configure them as shown below.