

# Writing Abstracts for Academic Conferences

## Purpose of Conference Abstracts

- Acceptance of the presentation into a conference program is typically based on a submitted abstract
- Accepted abstracts will also be included in the conference program – a good abstract can garner interest and excitement in presentation
  - Persuade people to attend your presentation
  - Make people want to learn more about your research
- Provide an overview of your research

## General Tips for Abstract Writing

- Make sure to thoroughly read the abstract requirements (word count restrictions, special characters, etc.)
- Familiarize yourself with the review process (will reviewers be experts in your field? Or more generalists?)
- Work with your faculty mentor
- Have someone review a draft
- Fill out completely and correctly
- Give yourself plenty of time

## What to Include in an Abstract

- Clearly describe your overall research problem/question/focus
- Clearly describe your methods/ how did you answer the question?
- What results and conclusions have you found?
- Importance of research and/or findings? Why should the audience care?

## Formatting Guidelines & Suggestions

- ~300-word limit is fairly typical (but check your conference guidelines)
- Include text only (no images or graphics)
- References are allowed in abstracts, but not required (this may be conference and/or discipline specific)
- Do not use special characters (e.g., scientific symbols, exponents, etc.) unless guidelines specifically note allowing them
- Stick to one paragraph

## Other Information You May Need for Abstract Submissions (Have These Ready)

- Name, email address, and affiliation for each co-author
- Presentation type of preference (i.e., oral, poster, panel discussion, etc.)
- Session of preference (there may be different themed sessions at the conference – investigate these and determine which one is most appropriate)

## A Word of Caution

Many conferences require you to submit an abstract 6-7 months in advance – you may not have even completed the research at this stage. It is okay to be vague at this point – make sure you talk to your faculty mentor about how to do this.

