



Building an Abstract

Depending on your discipline and the requirements of the conference/journal or proceedings, abstracts may differ however, most rely on 5 key elements presented below (e.g., Introduction, Research Question/Problem, Methods, Results, Conclusions). Be sure to consult with the place (e.g., conference) you are submitting the abstract to for any further requirements.

An abstract is simply a summary of your research, project, or creative endeavor. It is usually short (~100-250 words) and one paragraph in length and tends to not include citations or tables/figures.

Introduction/Background/Motivation. In 1-2 sentences provide basic information to introduce your topic. Consider addressing the gap you are filling.

Example: The late Devonian (380-350 million years ago) was a time of significant climate change due to the evolution of land plants and the development of soils, and is associated with intervals of severe oceanic anoxia and some of the most severe mass extinctions in Earth's history.

John Granholm, Faculty Mentor: Johnny Waters

Research Question/Problem/Objective. Address what you are attempting to determine or discover. Present the main argument of your theory. Explain what it is you are going to do or present what problem you are trying to solve. Present your hypothesis or argument.

Example: Here we examined pollinator foraging behavior on the co-occurring clover species *Trifolium parryi* and *T. dasyphyllum*, which naturally differ in stem strength and overall sturdiness.

Kimberly Bowman, Faculty Mentor: Jennifer Geib

Methods/Strategy/Approach. Briefly discuss what you did, how you obtained your results. Explain how you answered the question or solved the problem. What theoretical framework did you use?

Example: Narratives of critical incidents in the lives of students of Color at Appalachian State University have been captured using a mixed-method design integrating both qualitative interviews and survey data on undergraduate and graduate students' racial identity, social experiences, and academic experiences as they pertain to race and racism. Data has been analyzed and compared to extant literature on the experiences of students of Color at predominately white institutions.

Sarah Aldridge, Faculty Mentor: Brandy Bryson

Results/Findings/Product. What did you find out based on your described approach?

Example: The results support both of our hypotheses. There was a significant relationship between picky eating and social eating anxiety ($p < 0.001$, $r = 0.441$), demonstrating as picky eating increased, so did the social eating anxiety. There was also a significant relationship between picky eating and psychological flexibility ($p < 0.001$, $r = 0.347$) demonstrating as psychological flexibility increased, picky eating decreased.

Rebecca Schenk, Faculty Mentor: Amy Galloway

Discussion/Conclusion/Outcome/Implication. What is the answer to your question? Overall, what did you discover? What new knowledge do you bring to the field? How does this help fill the gap you presented in the background?

Example: While physical activity trackers did not lead to increased physical activity levels based on total step count, there was an increase in total minutes of non-sport activity, suggesting children were motivated to discover other methods of obtaining physical activity.

Kaylee King, Faculty Mentor: Rebecca Battista

Often abstracts need to state the bigger picture regarding the results discovered.

Outcome/Implication. How will you present this to the community – are your results generalizable?

Example: These results are not only beneficial to the health of visitors to the Parks, but to the natural ecosystems and plants as well.

Mary Allen, Faculty Mentor: Howard Neufeld