

Writing Abstracts- the “sure fire” formula!

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Introductions

- Kathryn L Braun
 - Army brat
 - Peace Corps
 - MPH/DrPH
 - The Queen's Medical Center (10 years)
 - UH (20+ years)
 - 170+ peer reviewed publications
 - 150+ conference presentations
 - \$25 million in grant funding

Introductions

- Affiliation within UH:
 - College of Health & Social Welfare (Med, Nurs, PH, SW)
 - Hawaiian Knowledge
 - Arts & Sciences
 - Education
 - CTAHR
 - Business
- OTHER?
- What did you bring to work on?
 - Abstract for conference presentation
 - Abstract for manuscript
 - Abstract for report
 - Abstract for a grant proposal

Writing abstracts for manuscripts, reports, proposals



Abstracts, Reports, Proposals

	Abstract for paper or presentation	Report	Grant Proposal
Word/space limits	100-250	1 - 3 pages	0.5 - 1 page
Uses	Apply to present paper at conference To summarize manuscript	Often called “Executive Summary” To summarize a longer report	Often called “Specific Aims” To summarize grant proposal

Why are they important?

- For conference presentations, they are the only thing a reviewer reads
- For manuscripts, reports, and grant proposals, they may be the only thing a reviewer or student reads

Decisions are made (or opinions colored) based on the abstract.

Abstracts are structured

5 areas to address, in this order!

- Problem →
- Purpose →
- Methods →
- Findings →
- Implications →

Also may be called

- Introduction, background, rationale
- Objectives
- Approach
- Results
- Conclusions or recommendations

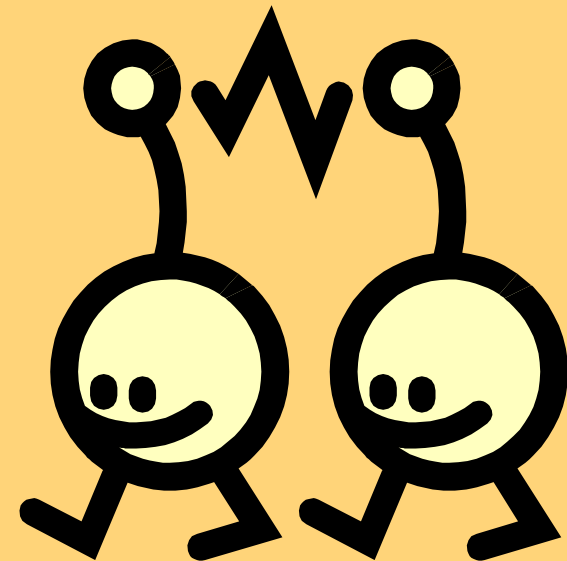
The Formula for Abstracts and Reports

	Abstract for manuscript or conference	Report or proposal
Problem	1-2 sentences	1 paragraph
Purpose	1 sentence	1 paragraph
Methods	1-3 sentences	1 paragraph
Findings	1-3 sentences	1-3 paragraphs
Implications	1-2 sentences	1 paragraph

1st Activity

- Review some abstracts submitted for presentation at a **conference** (250 words)

Formula	
Problem	1-2 sentences
Purpose	1 sentence
Methods	1-3 sentences
Findings	1-3 sentences
Implications	1-2 sentences



Abstract Reviewer Guidelines

- **Introduction, background, problem, or rationale** must state the “issue” of concern and why it is a concern.
- **Purpose or objectives** must outline the expectations of the project, or outline the content of the presentation.
- **Methods or approach** must provide a clear description of the methods, which must be appropriate to the objectives.
- **Results or findings** must indicate clear findings, fulfilling the purpose or objectives.
- **Conclusion or implications** must follow from the results and provide direction to researchers and/or practitioners concerned about the problem.

NOTE:

Abstracts that indicate

- "the work is in progress" or
- "the results will be discussed"

are usually not accepted!.



Comparison of low birth weight across Asian subgroups in California

- **Background:** Low-birth weight (LBW) babies are at higher risk of complications and developmental delays than normal weight babies. Although Asian Americans usually are treated as one categorical group in studies about low-birth weight, in fact this category includes more than 50 unique cultural groups, and LBW may vary by group.
- **Objective:** This study sought to examine differences in the risk of delivering a LBW infant across 8 Asian subgroups.
- **Methods:** California birth certificate data from 2009-2010 were analyzed for 8 groups of Asian women delivering singleton births, including Chinese (n=26,729), Japanese (n=4,758), Korean (n=9,873), Vietnamese (n=14,203), Filipino (n=27,820), Asian Indian (n=19,543), Pacific Islander (n=4,632) and Cambodian/Laotian/Hmong (n=10,068) women. Multivariate logistic regression analyses were performed to examine the risk of LBW while controlling for maternal characteristics.
- **Results:** Of 1.04 million California live births, 128,140 (or 12.4%) births were to Asian mothers. Asian Indian and Filipino women were 2 times more likely to have delivered a LBW infant than non-Hispanic whites (OR=2.3, 95% CI 2.2, 2.5; OR=2.2, 95% CI 2.1, 2.3 respectively).
- **Conclusions:** Risk for delivering a LBW infant varies across Asian subgroups. Heterogeneity of this population should be considered when developing and targeting clinical and public health prevention efforts.

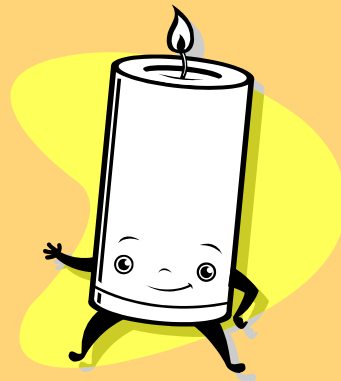
1st Activity

- Review some abstracts submitted for presentation at a **conference** (250 words)

Formula	
Problem	1-2 sentences
Purpose	1 sentence
Methods	1-3 sentences
Findings	1-3 sentences
Implications	1-2 sentences

- In pairs
- Review
- Share
 - Good ones
 - Bad ones

Writing abstracts for grant applications



NIH Grant Review Criteria

- **Significance**

- Does the project address an important problem or a critical barrier to progress in the field? If aims are achieved, how will knowledge and/or practice be improved?

- **Investigator(s)**

- Are the researchers well suited to the project? Do they have appropriate experience and training? Do they have preliminary data?

- **Innovation**

- Does the application propose novel theoretical concepts, approaches or methodologies, instrumentation, or interventions?

- **Approach**

- Are the overall strategy, methodology, and analyses well-reasoned and appropriate to accomplish the specific aims of the project?

- **Environment**

- Will the scientific environment in which the work will be done contribute to the probability of success?

The Formula for Proposal Summaries is a bit different, because you don't have findings.

	Proposal Sum
Problem	1 paragraph
Purpose	1 paragraph
Preliminary Findings	1-2 paragraphs
Methods	1-3 paragraphs
Why proposal should be funded— significance, investigator, innovation, approach, environment	1 paragraph

Include in Proposal Summary

- **Introduction, background, problem, or rationale** states the “issue” of concern and why it is a concern.
- **Specific Aims (objectives)** outlines the specific objectives and tasks of the proposal.
- **Preliminary data** outlines relevant work of YOUR TEAM
- **Methods or approach** must provide a clear description of the methods, which must be appropriate to the objectives.
- **Why this proposal should be funded**
 - Significance
 - Investigator
 - Approach
 - Innovation
 - Environment.

2nd Activity

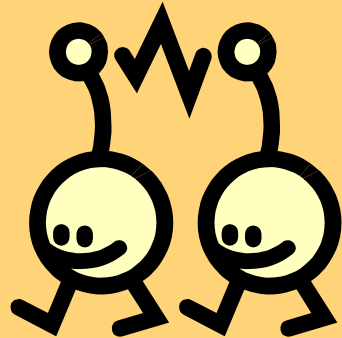
Formula for Abstract

Problem	1-2 sen
Purpose	1 sen
Methods	1-3 sen
Findings	1-3 sen
Implications	1-2 sen

- Write your own abstract or research summary

Proposal Summary

Problem	1 para
Aims (Objectives)	1 para
Prelim Findings	1-2 para
Methods	1-3 para
Sig, Inv, Inn, App, Env	1 para



Sharing and Questions

- Sharing
 - Abstracts for conference presentation
 - Abstract for manuscripts
 - Summary for grant proposal



Take-Home Messages

- Presume that decisions will be made (or opinions colored) by the abstract
- Follow abstract instructions
- Follow the formula
- Submit on time and as directed

- Write first, using the structure.
- Get feedback!
- Keep revising



More info
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