Workshop series on Academic Writing & Logical Thinking at the library 2014
4th Workshop – Writing an abstract for your dissertation

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1. What is an abstract?

Abstract is the most important paragraph in an academic paper. It is a *succinct summary* of the research presented by the paper. And it basically functions to advertise the paper to as many readers as possible in the big wild world.

2. The purpose of an abstract

The purpose of an abstract is basically to let the readers know **the central idea** of your paper, and **how the idea is supported**.

3. What should be included in an abstract?

The following information should be included in order for the abstract to be satisfactory:

(1) Background information / Motivation
(2) Main task of the research
(3) Key task procedures & results
(4) Conclusion (thesis statement)
(5) Implication [optional]

4. What should not be included in an abstract?

It is important to exclude the information that is not necessary for understanding the main argument. Unless they are absolutely essential to understanding the main idea or research results of your research, you should avoid using the following in your abstract:

(i) *bibliographic references*
(ii) *footnotes*
(iii) *citations or quotations (paraphrase instead)*
(iv) *abbreviations, symbols, etc (spell out all terms)*

5. Abstract templates

Abstract template 1 (for Science paper)

{Motivation} Many studies on …. have demonstrated …. But there is a problem …. **{Main task}** In this study/research, we investigated … **{Procedures & Results}** In particular, firstly we conducted an experiment on … Then we compared the results from the experiment with … Finally we conducted another experiment on … **{Conclusion}** Based on the results we found in … we can conclude that … **{Implication}** [optional] One important implication of our conclusion is that …

Abstract template 2 (for Humanities paper)

{Motivation} Many studies on …. have demonstrated …. But there is a problem …. **{Main task}** In this study/research, we analyzed … **{Procedures & Results}** In particular, firstly we studied the work by … Then we compared the results from the study with … Finally we further studied the work by … **{Conclusion}** Based on the results we found in … we can conclude that … **{Implication}** [optional] The implication of our conclusion is that …