How to Write and Edit an Abstract
What is the Undergraduate Research Symposium?

WHAT An academic symposium with poster presentations, oral presentations, panel sessions, data stories, and creative work.

WHY Gives undergrads an opportunity to share their research, projects and ideas with the campus community.

WHO Open to all undergrads regardless of major or discipline (over 400 students last year from over 60 majors, all colleges).

WHERE On campus, in the EMU.

WHEN Every May. Thursday, May 16, 2019.
What is an abstract?

A brief summary/overview of your research that communicates succinctly what your project is about.

An abstract addresses the main points of the research but doesn’t generally go into fine detail.
Things to remember

1. Your abstract title should be 30 words or less, abstract body should be 250 words or less.
2. The Symposium requires an abstract but not a full paper.
3. Make it accessible! Assume your reader is somewhat familiar with the topic but not an expert.
4. Submit your abstract with your online application at undergradsymposium.uoregon.edu/apply. (If submitting with a group, have one applicant submit an abstract on behalf of everyone.)
5. You will get constructive feedback from an anonymous reviewer, then make edits and resubmit if necessary.
6. Abstracts are flexible documents that should be tailored to fit various contexts.
Breaking it down...
What to include

1. Introductory sentence(s), brief background
2. Statement of hypothesis, thesis, purpose, or research question
3. Methods, procedures, sources, or media used
4. Primary results, findings, arguments
5. General statement about the significance/implications of work
1. Introductory Sentence Examples

Research Area: Social Science
Topic: The influence of the O.J. Simpson trial on racial ideologies today

Example A

“In societies around the world, notions of law and race have interacted in complex ways throughout history. This project explores the restructuring and revision of racial ideologies in the United States as a result of the O.J. Simpson trial.”

Example B

“This project explores the restructuring and revision of racial ideologies in the United States as a result of the O.J. Simpson trial. Unlike most of the existing literature on the Simpson trial, however, this project is situated firmly in the present day.”
2. Hypothesis, Purpose, Question Examples

Research Area: Humanities
Topic: The novel Niels Lyhne in relation to the Anthropocene geologic epoch

Example A

“Along with biologists and other natural scientists, students of philosophy and literature must contend with the problems posed by this new chapter in geologic time. The Anthropocene forces us to reconcile the possibility of species death with immortality, an entrance into Earth’s geologic narrative.”

Example B

“Along with scientists, humanities students must deal with new problems that are related to the Anthropocene. It raises questions about how the death of a species can still relate with geologic immortality.”
3. General Methods, Procedures, Sources, Media

Research Area: Communications
Topic: A regional approach to climate change communications

Example A

“My thesis will combine social science research on framing and identity with advertising techniques to show how agencies can create tailored campaigns for different regions of the United States. I will also test if this regionally-segmented approach to climate communications is more effective than trying to target the entire United States with one campaign.”

Example B

“Combining social science research and advertising techniques, I will test 16 different climate messages in 32 different regions in the United States. Test subjects will be asked on a scale of 1-10 how much a particular message resonated with them, then they will be asked to rank all the climate messages according to how likely they would be to remember them, then...”
4. Primary Results, Findings, Arguments

Research Area: Natural Science
Topic: Genetics

Example A

“Through a series of complementation tests, we were able to create a preliminary map of the location of the gene that z6 disrupts with significance of $p<0.001^{**}$.”

Example B

“Through a series of complementation tests, we were able to create a preliminary map of the location of the gene that z6 disrupts.”
5. Conclusion, Implications Examples

Area of Research: Art and Technology
Topic: Wearable Computing Technology and the Body/Self

Example A

“My research-based practice may provide insight into human engagement with technological tools and inspire discussion about the conception of self and the place of visual arts in the high-tech future.”

Example B

“Because this research-based art practice is still in progress, the implications of this work remain unclear.”
Putting it all together...
This project explores the restructuring and revision of racial ideologies in the United States as a result of the O.J. Simpson trial. Unlike most of the existing literature on the Simpson trial, however, this project is situated firmly in the modern day. Rather than utilizing court transcripts and police reports as research tools, this paper employs the FX television series, The People v. O.J. Simpson: American Crime Story and the ESPN documentary, O.J.: Made in America, both released in 2016, as the primary objects of study. In analyzing these very recent cultural productions, the central questions of this project are, “Why O.J., and why now?” In this project, I argue that the recent resurgence of interest in the Simpson trial is no coincidence, but in fact has to do with the current state of American society, from the Obama presidency to the Black Lives Matter movement. To what extent, my project asks, does the renewed fascination with O.J. Simpson have to do with history repeating itself? My research investigates how and why the Simpson trial still provokes us, over twenty years later, to confront issues of race in the United States. Thus, in asking, “Why O.J., why now?” this project aims to uncover the crux of contemporary U.S. racial ideology. In essence, the FX and ESPN portrayals of the O.J. Simpson trial reveal that Simpson’s is not merely a captivating tale of celebrity and crime, but a paradigm of racial ideology’s responsiveness to—and influence over—sociopolitical and pop-cultural change.
During the development of an organism, cells undergo differentiation in order to perform specialized tasks. To understand how cells differentiate as neurons, our research focuses on identifying genes required for the development of photoreceptor neurons (R cells) in the fruit fly, Drosophila. In this study, we used a technique known as Mosaic Analysis with a Repressible Cell Marker (MARCM) to create mosaic flies in which undifferentiated precursor cells were homozygous for a new z6 mutation. We then characterized the phenotype caused by the z6 mutation and observed that in mutant z6 adults, R1/R6 cells adopted the fate of R8 cells but not R7 cells. Through a series of complementation tests, we were able to create a preliminary map of the location of the gene that z6 disrupts.
My project offers a reading of Jens Peter Jacobsen’s 1880 novel Niels Lyhne through the critical lens of the Anthropocene, the new epoch of geologic time in which humans bear the most important role in shaping the Earth’s natural environment and geologic structure. Along with biologists and other natural scientists, students of philosophy and literature must contend with the problems posed by this new chapter in geologic time. The Anthropocene forces us to reconcile the possibility of species death with immortality, an entrance into Earth’s geologic narrative. With these seemingly opposing realities in mind, I seek to understand how a 19th century Danish novel like Niels Lyhne behaves under the scrutiny of Anthropocenic criticism. Making use of Jacobsen’s imaginative, yet calculated and in some ways scientific use of color and shading, I pinpoint the ways in which metaphor and metonymy create and exacerbate a textual conflict between aesthetic decadence and material constraints. Jacobsen pits these worlds against each other, revealing how poetry must always give way to the prosaic. Placing the text’s characters in the current of geologic time, I attempt to unravel what is Anthropocenic about Niels Lyhne’s concern for the failures of poetry.
Abstract:
The lost wax method of casting a bronze sculpture is centuries old, yet pieces from ancient times still survive to tell the stories of our ancestors. This is the spirit of a bronze: an emotion and a message, immortalized. As a bronze artist, I believe it is my purpose to celebrate the tales we tell as humans through sculpture. To tell my own story, I have gathered my experiences of joy and intrigue from the University of Oregon and have commemorated them in a statue of the Oregon Duck Mascot. As an entrepreneurial sculptor, my goal is to share my creativity with other alumni who want their experiences remembered in bronze.
Workshop: Abstract Checklist

- Introductory sentence(s), *brief* background
- Statement of hypothesis, thesis, purpose, or research question
- Methods, procedures, sources, or media used
- Primary results, findings, arguments
- General statement about the significance/implications of work
Thanks!

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blogs.uoregon.edu/nexus

Find upcoming workshops on our Facebook page: “ASURE - Associated Students for Undergraduate Research and Engagement”

Find out more about the Symposium and start your application at undergradsymposium.uoregon.edu