Abstracts
NC State Writing and Speaking Tutorial Services * NC State Graduate Writing Center
go.ncsu.edu/wsts * 919.515.3163 * go.ncsu.edu/gwc

Abstracts summarize an article, project, or study in a clear, concise manner, and are usually fairly short, no more than 150-250 words. It summarizes the main points of each section of the paper, but should be able to stand alone (readers should be able to understand it without reading the full work). It can also include keywords to help readers search for and locate the paper in a database.

Purpose
An abstract may be used for the following:

- **APA style papers**: Formal coursework using APA conventions includes an abstract
- **Submitting a journal article**: Abstract will be included before the text, so readers can decide whether or not they want to read the full article
- **Submitting a paper or presentation to a conference**: Provides efficient review process
- **Writing a thesis or dissertation**: Abstract will be included before the full text

If submitting your work to a journal or conference, make sure you research the guidelines of the publication or submission guidelines of the conference. Target your submissions appropriately.

Content
Although it will vary between disciplines and purposes, an abstract should include:

- **Purpose for writing**: Why is this an important topic?
- **Problem statement**: What is the research trying to address? What is the study scope?
- **Methodology**: What models, approaches, or evidence are used?
- **Results**: What are the findings of the study?
- **Implications**: What knowledge does this study add to the field? What steps need to be taken in light of the findings?

Composing
To write an abstract, identify the main ideas of your full text, drawing key sentences or ideas from each major section. You can also include the exact text from the full paper, but make sure the abstract provides a summary for audiences not familiar with the study. Follow the same style of writing as the full text, and maintain the use of technical terms. Use straightforward language throughout. Look for article abstracts of articles published that are similar to your study, for examples of how to structure the abstract.

Works Consulted:
Purdue University Online Writing Lab (https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/752/04/); UNC-Chapel Hill Writing Center (http://writingcenter.unc.edu/handouts/abstracts/); Writing Matters: A Handbook for Writing and Research, 2nd ed. (Howard)