



# Writing Abstracts

# What Is an Abstract?

Summary of a longer document

Describes content and scope of the document

Highlights major points

## *Abstract*

The evaluation of peer consultant competency as affected by gender stereotypic beliefs has been documented in the personal anecdotes of writing center directors, administrators, and consultants. Student writers judge female writing consultants to exhibit stereotypically feminine behaviors, and male writing consultants are judged to exhibit stereotypically masculine behaviors. Additionally, student writers have demonstrated a tendency to evaluate the competency of the peer tutor in a manner consistent with their own gender. In this study, I propose that female student writers will rate female peer consultants to be more effective than male peer consultants, and male student writers will rate male peer consultants to be more effective than female peer consultants. Furthermore, I believe that feminine female student writers will rate female peer consultants to be more effective than will masculine, androgynous, and undifferentiated female student writers; and masculine student writers will rate male peer consultants to be more effective than will feminine, androgynous, or undifferentiated student writers.

# Who Is the Audience?

Author	Meier, K. V.
Institution	Western Ontario University, London, Ontario, Canada.
Title	A meditation on critical mass in the philosophy of sport.
Source	Journal of the Philosophy of Sport. 1983. 10: 8-20. 38 ref.
Abstract	<p>The paper explores the contemporary state, in North America, of philosophic interchange among scholars interested in the better understanding of sport. The emergence of scholarly writing in this area, and its development into an academic discipline, is followed by an analysis of the productivity of North American based philosophers of sport and a determination of the publication record in selected journals. Investigations revealed a lack of 'critical mass' - only 46 authors with two or more published works in the philosophy of sport during the years 1963-83. The paper concludes with an assessment of problems of direction, structure and content currently evident in a field which has not become a widely practiced specialty within the discipline of philosophy.</p>

Researchers

Scholars

Conference organizers

Conference attendees

Readers

# Not All Abstracts Are Alike

Check the style guide or the instructions to authors for the conference or publication you are targeting. They may have specific guidelines.



<http://images.amazon.com/images/P/160329024>

# Descriptive Abstracts

Introduce the subject in under 250 words

Include the purpose, methods, and scope of the work

Omit results, conclusions, recommendations

This study investigated the effectiveness of Calibrated Peer Review (CPR)<sup>TM</sup> in a senior-level biochemistry class for improving students' ability to write scientific abstracts. The CPR process for feedback was compared with Teaching Assistant-generated feedback. Statistical analyses of three assignments by 50 students and a separate analysis of the abstract written by 256 students were used to measure differences in writing quality for each type of feedback.

From: "Development of Student Writing in Biochemistry Using Calibrated Peer Review," by Yasha Hartberg, Adelet Baris Gunersel, Nancy Simpson and Valerie Balester, *Journal of the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning*. 2008.

# Informative Abstracts

Include the purpose, methods, and scope of work

Also include results, conclusions,  
recommendations

Range from a paragraph to a page or two,  
depending upon the length of the original work  
being abstracted

This study investigated the effectiveness of Calibrated Peer Review (CPR)<sup>TM</sup> in a senior-level biochemistry class to improve students' ability to write scientific abstracts. The writing quality of scientific abstracts composed with feedback from CPR was compared with the writing quality of abstracts composed with Teaching Assistant-generated feedback. Statistical analyses of three assignments by 50 students indicated significant differences between CPR and Teaching Assistant feedback on student writing quality. While scores of students who received Teaching Assistant feedback decreased, scores of students who used CPR improved. Students also progressed over the course of a semester in CPR-generated measures of their reviewing abilities.

From: "Development of Student Writing in Biochemistry Using Calibrated Peer Review," by Yasha Hartberg, Adelet Baris Gunersel, Nancy Simpson and Valerie Balester, *Journal of the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning*. 2008.



# IMRaD

- Introduction
- Method
- Results, and
- Discussion





# Key Words

Abstracts must contain key words about what is essential in the main document.

Key words are used to classify abstracts in databases.

Effective key words allow researchers to search for your publication easily.

# Checklist

Have you included the following?



- ✓ Subject
- ✓ Scope
- ✓ Purpose
- ✓ Methods
- ✓ Results
- ✓ Recommendations, implications, or significance
- ✓ Key words

This dissertation examines the impacts of social movements through a multi-layered study of the Mississippi Civil Rights Movement from its peak in the early 1960s through the early 1980s. By examining this historically important case, I clarify the process by which movements transform social structures and the constraints movements face when they try to do so. The time period studied includes the expansion of voting rights and gains in black political power, the desegregation of public schools and the emergence of white-flight academies, and the rise and fall of federal anti-poverty programs. I use two major research strategies: (1) a quantitative analysis of county-level data and (2) three case studies. Data have been collected from archives, interviews, newspapers, and published reports. This dissertation challenges the argument that movements are inconsequential. Some view federal agencies, courts, political parties, or economic elites as the agents driving institutional change, but typically these groups acted in response to the leverage brought to bear by the civil rights movement. The Mississippi movement attempted to forge independent structures for sustaining challenges to local inequities and injustices. By propelling change in an array of local institutions, movement infrastructures had an enduring legacy in Mississippi.

*Kenneth Tait Andrews, "Freedom is a constant struggle': The dynamics and consequences of the Mississippi Civil Rights Movement, 1960-1984" Ph.D. State University of New York at Stony Brook, 1997 DAI-A 59/02, p. 620, Aug 1998.*

# Write the Draft

1. Check style guidelines.
2. Re-read the original document.
3. In each major section, highlight key information.
4. Create a single paragraph using your own words.
5. Smooth it out with transitions.



# Revise the Draft



7. Be sure you've included all necessary parts. Check the abstract against the original for accuracy.
8. Edit for wordiness. Check organization and transitions.
9. Double check guidelines and instructions.

# A Good Abstract Is . . .

Coherent

Comprehensible to  
a wide audience

Direct, concise, and  
clear



# References

Phillip Koopman. “How to Write an Abstract.”

<http://www.ece.cmu.edu/~koopman/essays/abstract.html>

University of Toronto. “The Abstract.”

<http://www.io.com/~hcexres/textbook/abstracx.html>

UWC TAMU. “Abstracts.”

<http://writingcenter.tamu.edu/how-to/science-technical/abstracts/>