Tips on Writing Abstracts

Submission Deadline for Research Day:
February 23, 2014
What to Include?

An informative abstract answers these questions in 150-300 words:

1. Why did you undertake this study or project?
2. What did you do and how?
3. What did you find?
4. What do your findings mean?
Components of an Abstract

1. Motivation/problem statement
2. Methods/procedure/approach
3. Results/findings/product
4. Conclusion/implications
1. Problem Statement

- Why should we care about the problem?
- What previous research are you building on?
- What practical, scientific, scholarly, theoretical, or artistic gap is your research filling?
2. Methods and Procedures

What did you actually do to get your results?

Be specific: for example, analyzed three novels, completed a series of five oil paintings, interviewed 17 students
3. Results and Findings

As a result of completing the above procedure, what did you learn, invent, create, or discover?
4. Implications of the Research

- What are the larger implications of your findings?
- How do you address the question or gap identified in the problem statement?
Your Abstract Should:

• Be complete enough to stand on its own.
• Emphasize the different points of your study in proportion to the emphasis they receive in your poster.
• Use active rather than passive voice.
• Use key words from the document to help indexers more accurately catalog your presentation for future reference.
• Be sensitive to the needs and knowledge of your audience.
• Be 300 words or less.
• Be submitted by February 23, 2014.
Your Abstract Should Avoid:

- Repeating or rephrasing your title.
- Discussing information that is not in your presentation.
- Using the first person "I" or "we," if possible.
- Using trade names, acronyms, abbreviations, or symbols, if possible.
- Using evaluative language; report instead of praising or criticizing your findings.
Abstract Submission Form - April 1, 2014

Abstract Category *
- Select -

If you indicated Natural Sciences, please select the most appropriate subcategory.
○ Ecology
○ Molecular and Cellular Biology
○ Physical Sciences
○ N/A

If you indicated Social Sciences, please select the most appropriate subcategory.
○ Economics
○ Psychology
○ Socio-Cultural Studies
○ N/A

Abstract Title *

Authors *

Please provide the full text of the abstract and attach the Word document in the appropriate format.

Include full text of abstract here: *

Limit your abstract up to 400 words.

Faculty Advisor’s/Department Chair’s Name *
If you are a faculty member submitting an abstract, please list your department chair’s name.

Faculty Advisor’s/Department Chair’s E-mail Address *
If you are a faculty member submitting an abstract, please list your department chair’s e-mail address.

Abstract *

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Limit your document’s size to 800KB. Only .doc and .docx files will be accepted.
Examples?
“Actual and Open Rebellion”: Lord William Campbell and the Fight for South Carolina, 1775-1778

Despite wide research on royal governors and their political and military actions during the early revolutionary period, little is known about South Carolina’s own last royal governor, Lord William Campbell, and his impact on developments in Charles Town. Indeed, Campbell has been given scant and often inaccurate attention in existing historical literature.

Arriving in June 1775, Campbell was a key alienating figure who increased friction in the province. Despite his best efforts, South Carolinian revolutionaries seemingly won when the governor was forced to flee in September 1775. South Carolina’s fate during this watershed period, however, was still uncertain. Campbell’s efforts over the next three years would help determine the future of this dichotomously divided colony and later state.

The object of this study is to analyze what Governor Lord Campbell reported to the British government as he struggled to maintain control over the colony, why he continued to serve the British cause even after he fled Charles Town, and what effects his efforts, perceived and real, had on the political climate in South Carolina.

Archival research was conducted at the National Archives, Library of Congress, and Society of the Cincinnati Library in Washington, D.C., the South Carolina Historical Society in Charleston, and the Caird Library and National Archives in London. Research shows that the changing landscape in Charles Town upon Campbell’s arrival quickly spiraled out of his tenuous control and into the hands of a small but radical Provincial Assembly. Campbell’s continued service as a “governor without a colony” and a volunteer in the naval service demonstrated his resolve to aid the loyalist cause and wrestle the colony back under royal authority. As a conspicuous loyalist, Campbell’s presence and actions between 1775 and 1778 helped to crystallize the tensions in revolutionary Charles Town.

Further research could reveal how Tory and Whig, loyalist and patriot identities were shaped during this period, and how political and military developments during the early revolutionary years affected these identities in South Carolina. This research consequently informs how the presence of the public, divisive royal governor, Lord William Campbell, influenced not only political and military actions, but how those actions were perceived, processed, and reacted to.
Rhetoric and Reality: An Analysis of Strategies and Models of Community-Driven Development in Liberia

The effectiveness of international development efforts is under constant scrutiny. Many of the criticisms of these efforts center around arguments that development projects take a paternalistic approach that does not address real needs and often diminishes the agency and self-worth of the poor. In response to the many well-documented limitations of these strategies, many organizations are starting to favor community-based projects, maintaining that the greater control and investment people have in the project, the more likely it will be that the benefits will be inclusive and sustainable.

The objective of this study is to compare the models that different aid organizations use in these ‘community-driven development’ efforts to examine whether the rhetoric of ownership and participation is in fact translated into reality in Liberia.

Five participatory development projects were identified in Liberia as case studies, and interviews were conducted with three relevant stakeholder groups in each project: the NGO or agency staff, the local leaders of the project within the target communities, and the intended beneficiaries.

Results showed that perspectives on the projects greatly differed between each of the three stakeholder groups. While the rhetoric suggests that community driven development strategies will lead to community ownership in its most complex and multidimensional form, in practice, this study showed that ‘ownership’ often takes on a superficial and contradictory meaning. One of the primary reasons identified to explain this digression in meaning was the persistent inequality that typifies power relations between NGOs and communities.

Thus, this research calls into question some of the basic assumptions and strategies of the development community in Liberia today, and shows the need for additional critical discussion and research on the global movement towards a ‘community driven development’ model and its effects at the community level.
Sustainability of Indigenous I. upiat Ice Cellars (Siġ-uap): A Case Study from Barrow, Alaska

Ice cellars, or Siġ-uap, are excavated into perennially frozen ground, or permafrost, which provides natural refrigeration for whale and other game harvested for subsistence by the indigenous I. upiat people in Arctic Alaska. This method of food storage has been employed by the I. upiat for over 1,000 years and continues to be essential to their native life style as it provides secure, accessible year-round frozen storage. However, over the past two decades reports have emerged describing ice cellar failures (including instances of flooding and collapse) thought to be caused by increasing air temperatures due to climatic change.

The village of Barrow, Alaska, was selected for a case study as it is a traditional I. upiat whaling community with over 60% Native Alaskan residents as of the 2010 census. Five ice cellars were instrumented with HoboPro(R) miniature temperature data loggers recording internal cellar air temperatures at hourly intervals. After seven years of monitoring, the internal air temperatures appear relatively stable. These results raised the question of how representative the instrumented cellars are of others within the community.

To answer this question, an effort to map all of the ice cellars in Barrow was undertaken with the assistance of the North Slope Borough’s Department of Planning and Community Services. In August 2012, a series of interviews, community meetings, and a visual vehicle-based survey were conducted in order to catalogue and map the locations of ice cellars within the village.

The resulting map product was shared with the collaborating local government and will be used in public health studies, permitting of construction projects, by snow removal crews, for ice cellar preservation, and in future research on climate-change impacts.
Analysis of Daasanach growth in relation to ecology and subsistence strategy

Body size is highly variable among modern human populations, influenced by the interactions between genetic information and external nutritional and environmental variables during growth. Across traditional societies a relationship between life history strategy, relative adult body size, and extrinsic variables (e.g. ecology, subsistence strategies) has been documented and serves as a theoretical foundation to explain observed variability. However, individual populations are known to deviate from this pattern.

Data on height and weight were taken from an ontogenetic sample of Daasanach individuals (n=223) from Ileret, Kenya to test the null hypothesis that the Daasanach conform to the expected growth timings, trajectories, and adult body size parameters for traditional populations of similar ecologies and subsistence strategies. Mean male adult body size was compiled for twenty comparative traditional societies among which stature differed significantly among ecological groups.

Our results indicate that Daasanach mean adult male height falls within the parameters for the group of populations with similar ecologies (savanna, desert, dry forest; Z score=1.46), and falls beyond the group of ecologically dissimilar (tropical and neotropical forest, coastal) populations (Z score=4.04). Additionally, Daasanach obtain a lower percentage of adult stature and mass at age 10 compared to other populations, suggesting a delayed growth trajectory.

Our results demonstrate that while the Daasanach mean adult male stature is consistent with predictions based on ecology, they raise interesting questions regarding why the Daasanach might deviate from predictions of life history strategy in relation to subadult growth.
Useful Links

- Research Days 2014 abstract submission form
- Tips on writing an abstracts
- Research Days FAQs
- Research Days 2013 Abstract Book
- Poster instructions
Questions?
Effective Methods for Improving Perceived Self Control and Their Impact on Substance Use Cognitions

High self-control is associated with positive outcomes, including lower drug and alcohol abuse, whereas low self-control is a risk factor for negative outcomes. Furthermore, higher self-control buffers against the consequences of negative life events such that increases in self-control are associated with decreases in substance use. The current study was designed to determine an effective method for improving perceived self-control and to examine how improved self-control impacts substance use cognitions.

Undergraduate students who reported prior substance use (n = 137) were randomly assigned to one of five conditions that manipulated perceived self-control. The conditions were: exposure to an aversive noise either with control over the volume and duration or no control over noises, an essay writing task about a time participants felt in control or powerful, a word completion task that primed feelings of power or control, and a neutral condition. Self-reported feelings of control, substance use willingness, and an indirect measure of substance use attitudes were assessed post-manipulation. Stroop task response latency measured post-manipulation inhibitory control.

An overall ANCOVA comparing all five conditions, controlling for gender and negative mood, revealed that the writing condition had the strongest effect on perceived self-control. When compared to the neutral condition, respondents in the essay condition reported higher feelings of control ($\mu_{\text{essay}}=3.89$, $\mu_{\text{neutral}}=3.13$, $p < .02$), lower response latency in the Stroop incongruent trials ($\mu_{\text{essay}}=1445.08\text{ms}$, $\mu_{\text{neutral}}=1657.19\text{ms}$, $p < .02$), and lower willingness to use substances ($\mu_{\text{essay}}=2.54$, $\mu_{\text{neutral}}=3.74$, $p < .03$). Respondents in the word completion task also reported lower response latencies in Stroop incongruent trials ($\mu_{\text{neutral}}=1659.18$, $\mu_{\text{word completion}}=1422.52$, $p < .02$).

The findings demonstrate that the essay writing task is an effective way to enhance perceived and inhibitory control, and is negatively associated with risky substance use cognitions. The word completion task is an effective method for enhancing only implicit inhibitory control.