Writing an Abstract

What is an abstract?
- The abstract is a brief overview of your selected type of work.
- It is typically a condensed version of a longer piece of writing that highlights the major points covered, while concisely describing the content and scope of the work.
- *Your Discover USC abstract title may not exceed 100 characters (not including spaces) and the abstract may not exceed 250 words.*

An abstract should tell your reader:
- WHAT you did
- WHY you did it
- HOW you did it
- WHAT you found
- WHAT it means

RESEARCH/SCHOLARLY ACTIVITIES

Introduction
- What is this project about?
- Why is this project interesting or important? Elaborate upon the rationale.
- What is the scope of the project?
- What was your hypothesis, what did you think you were going to find?
- Is your topic newly discovered or has it been ignored in the past?

Methods
- What was your approach? Did you use sampling, or experimentation, for example?
- Briefly explain your procedure.
- What sources did you use?
- Are your methods new to your field?

Results
- What did you find when you performed your experiment, your work?
- If your project is not completed yet, what do you think you will find?
- Do you have data collected or effects observed?
- Distinguish between fact and conjecture. If you are theorizing, make sure you state it as such.

Discussion
- Are your results consistent with your initial hypothesis? Why or why not?

Conclusions
- What is your interpretation of what these results mean?
- Why should anyone become interested in your findings?
- What are the implications for future research?
BEYOND THE CLASSROOM EXPERIENCE ACTIVITIES

Introduction
What is the background or overview of this activity?

Activity/Event Description
What did you do?

Motivation or Purpose
Why did you do it?

Reflection
What did you learn?
What was the impact on you?

Significance
What does it mean?
What do you want others to learn/know from your experience?

Future plans or Next Steps
What is next for you and/or for the activity/project?

This information was used with permission from Annaliese Bischoff at the University of Massachusetts