ENG 501: Writing abstracts and delivering conference papers

Fall 2011

For this project, you will write a conference paper abstract and deliver a conference presentation based on the research you completed for your research paper. You will deliver the presentation to your classmates who will participate by asking questions and responding to your delivery. They will provide you with written feedback as well.

Student learning outcomes addressed by this project

- Compose successful abstracts and proposals for conference presentations and articles
- Develop a strategy for entering a new scholarly discourse community and participating in relevant discussions
- Begin to develop your own voice as a scholar in your specific subfield

Guidelines and grading criteria for your abstract

Length: 400 words maximum
Due date: Monday, November 14 by 5 pm; we will review the abstracts as a class on Tuesday, November 15.
Point value: 25 points

Your abstract should provide a clear and succinct description of the main focus of your project, your central arguments, and your most significant findings or conclusions. It should be very specific and concrete, not general. The abstract should encapsulate the most important information that you will cover in the presentation.

When reviewing abstracts for potential inclusion in a conference, readers want to know precisely what your paper will be about, what arguments you will present, and what evidence you will use.

Abstracts must adhere to word limits and are generally very brief. As a result, you need to use every word to contribute to thoroughly describing your project.

Guidelines and grading criteria for your presentation

Length: 20 minutes maximum
Due date: Select Nov. 15, 22, 29, or Dec. 6
Point value: 50 points

Your conference presentation should be significantly different from your research paper, particularly in terms of depth, scope, and organization. The prose that is designed to be read does not often form an appropriate text for an oral presentation.

Presentations are generally only 20 minutes in length. Therefore, if you are reading, your paper can be at most ten pages long. In preparation for developing your conference paper, you should decide on the three to four most important points that you make in your research paper and design your presentation around those.
Your presentation should have the following movements:

- An introduction that explains your focus, scope, and main arguments
- Some (brief) background or context as necessary to situate your project within your field
- A discussion of methods and methodology
- Three to five main points supported by evidence
- A conclusion that reminds your audience what you had set out to do and explains how your presentation accomplished its goals (you may reassert your main assertions here)

Audiences are interested in presentations that are accompanied by visual elements. These can include images, handouts, a Prezi, and/or PowerPoint slides. If you use PowerPoint slides or a Prezi, employ them to present main ideas, brief quotations, images, and data. Avoid attempting to place a great amount of your text on the visuals—use your own notes or paper for the main text. Avoid reading your slides or Prezi.

**Conference presentation review sheet**

**Name:**
**Points earned:**

**Criteria for evaluation**

**Purpose:**
Presenter begins by providing an overview of their presentation, forecasting the topics to be covered

- Excellent
- Good
- Needs improvement

Presenter has a clear, well-articulated, and sufficiently narrow focus for the presentation

- Excellent
- Good
- Needs improvement

Specific examples, illustrations, and concrete details are used to support general statements

- Excellent
- Good
- Needs improvement

**Product:**
Presenter speaks clearly, with adequate volume, and at an appropriate pace

- Excellent
- Good
- Needs improvement

Presenter makes eye contact and is aware of audience reactions

- Excellent
- Good
- Needs improvement
Presenter interacts effectively with any visuals used to supplement the presentation and avoids reading their slides or other visuals

Excellent □ Good □ Needs improvement □ Not applicable □

Presenter keeps remarks within the 20 minute time limit

Excellent □ Good □ Needs improvement □

Presenter fields any questions effectively

Excellent □ Good □ Needs improvement □ Not applicable □

Process:

Presenter has selected the most significant portions of their research to present

Excellent □ Good □ Needs improvement □

Presenter has structured the presentation in a clear and effective manner

Excellent □ Good □ Needs improvement □

Presenter has clearly prepared and rehearsed their remarks

Excellent □ Good □ Needs improvement □

Comments: