

## INTRODUCTION

This document was written by University of Phoenix instructor Elizabeth Ball. It has been modified by another University of Phoenix instructor James Ballou. This version of the document is maintained by James Ballou and is used for educational purposes only. Questions about this document should be directed to James Ballou ([jamesballou@email.phoenix.edu](mailto:jamesballou@email.phoenix.edu)).

This document describes APA style that is used at the University of Phoenix. University of Phoenix students should rely on the University handbook for questions about style. Any discrepancies between this document and the University of Phoenix style guide.

## APA FORMAT FOR THE ABSTRACT<sup>1</sup>

Although the abstract is read first, it is usually written **last**. The abstract should contain key ideas from each section of the report and this isn't commonly known until the report is written. The general rule is to include at least one sentence that summarizes each section (with at least 2 sentences summarizing the Methods section, if there is one). The first sentence of the abstract should contain information from the Introduction section of the paper conveying the purpose of the study. The abstract should be at least 100 words and **not exceed 120 words**. Remember, readers will decide to read the article based upon the abstract. To ensure your readers continue to the article, you should be clear, concise, and well-organized; it may also be a good idea to include key words in the abstract.

### **An abstract of a report of an empirical study should describe**

- The problem under investigation, in one sentence if possible;
- The participants or subjects, specifying pertinent characteristics, such as number, type, age, sex, and genus and species;
- The experimental method, including the apparatus, data-gathering procedures, and any other relevant information;
- The findings, including statistical significance levels; and
- The conclusions and the implications or applications.

### **An abstract for a review or theoretical article should describe**

- The topic, in one sentence;
- The purpose, thesis, or organizing construct and the scope of the article;
- The sources used (e.g. personal observation, published literature); and
- The conclusions.

### **An abstract for a methodological paper should describe**

- The general class of method being proposed or discussed;

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<sup>1</sup> *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (5<sup>th</sup> ed.). (2001). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association; Szuchman, L. T. (2002). *Writing with style: APA style made easy* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.

- The essential features of the proposed method;
- The range of application of the proposed method; and
- The behavior of the method, including its power and robustness to violations of assumptions.

**An abstract for a case study should describe**

- The subject and relevant characteristics of the individual or organization presented;
- The nature of or solution to a problem illustrated by the case example; and
- The questions raised for additional research or theory.