

RESC 098 TECHNOLOGY EQUALS PROGRESS

Guide to writing an Abstract

In the academy, the abstract is the first impression you give to your scholarly community. It is the first place where peers and potential colleagues interact with you at a professional level. For this reason, it is important that you take the time and care necessary to prepare a respectable abstract.

The abstract of a conference or symposium presentation serves as a guide for the reader when deciding which talk or poster presentation to attend. As such, keep your abstracts short and informative, and make your title meaningful. The following suggestions are intended to be helpful as you revise your abstracts for the Residential Colleges Symposium.

Titles:

- The title for your abstract should be written after you have a full draft of your abstract.
- Do not be cryptic or cute. You may find using a title and sub-title helpful.
- NB: Some people use *only* the title when deciding whether to attend a talk.

Abstract:

- Avoid using: “In this talk, ...” or “In this presentation, ...” This is implied.
- Avoid words like “hope” or expressions like “hope to show”
- Avoid colloquial language; the abstract is a formal piece of writing.
- It is assumed you are reporting on work performed. As such, use the present tense.
- It will be helpful to provide some context for the problem/issue you are presenting, and this should be done early.
- Vary your sentence structure. (Avoid a run of sentences of the form: We show ... We examine ... We present ...)

And please note that the abstract is not the place to dazzle your audience with elaborate prose; it is where you describe your plans for the materials/information you intend to present.