

## Poster abstract

Writing an abstract of a larger publication you have researched is a crucial skill for any profession. For the poster project, **please write a short (about 75 words), one-paragraph abstract** about your poster. This will be **due Thursday, November 13 at midnight**. The abstract must be submitted as a Word or text attachment by e-mail to: [tfurutan@northseattle.edu](mailto:tfurutan@northseattle.edu) (do clearly title the e-mail "AST 100 poster abstract" — you aren't the only students submitting poster abstracts to me!)

The format of the abstract should be as follows:

### **Author (that's you)**

TITLE (IN ALL CAPS)

Body of the abstract

For instance:

### **Cara Hart and Keith Luengen, North Seattle Community College** **EARTH-GRAZING ASTEROIDS**

Some astronomers have compared our solar system to a "cosmic shooting gallery" with asteroids at times narrowly missing the earth. 139 impact craters have been identified thus far on earth. The question is, is it possible for such a collision to occur again? The asteroids identified as "earth-crossing" so far do not pose a threat to the global ecosystem, however a celestial body by the name of Comet Swift-Tuttle is expected to cross the path of the earth's orbit in the year 2126. NASA has determined that a nuclear blast on the surface of an asteroid would serve to push it off its course, but could cause a comet to fragment into many dangerous pieces. In any case, no immediate threats have been discovered so NASA's interception plans have years to be perfected.

I've included material from the following website in order to guide you:

<http://wwwindex.rdg.ac.uk/~kcshuwil/cme/abstract.html>

since you are not writing a paper, please modify the suggestions as necessary. In addition, the abstract should not contain any footnotes or references; it is meant to be a "stand-alone" work.

## Writing informative abstracts

Abstracts are often the least considered but most important part of any paper. Most readers of a journal will read most of the abstracts, but very few will read the full papers. Perhaps 95% of readers will read *only* the abstract.

The need for abstracts to be terse often causes difficulty and can taint what is otherwise a perfectly acceptable style of writing. The following suggestions should help to reduce the need for authors to re-write their abstracts.

The abstract should not be a table of contents in prose, neither should it be an introduction. It should be informative. Tell the reader what the research was about, how it was undertaken and what was discovered, but not how the poster or paper is organized. The main findings must be summarized. If there are too many of them, then just exemplify them in the abstract. The essential elements of the abstract are:

- Background: A simple opening sentence or two placing the work in context

- Aims: One or two sentences giving the purpose of the work
- Method(s): One or two sentences explaining what was done
- Results: One or two sentences indicating the main findings
- Conclusions: One sentence giving the most important consequence of the work.

The following guidelines have been extracted from recent criticisms of real abstracts. This may help to overcome some of the most frequent problems:

- Do not commence with "this paper...", "this report..." or similar. It is better to write about the research than about the paper
- Similarly, do not explain the sections or parts of the paper
- Avoid sentences that end in "...is described", "...is reported", "...is analysed" or similar. These are simply too vague to be informative
- Do not begin sentences with "it is suggested that...", "it is believed that...", "it is felt that..." or similar. In every case, the four words can be omitted without damaging the essential message
- Do not write in the first person in *any* form. Thus, not only should you avoid "I", but also "we", "the author", "the writer" and so on. Again, this is because the abstract should be about the research, not about the act of writing.

## How to use Web CT

1. Get to the web page, either through the link off of my home page or by typing:

<http://elvis.sccd.ctc.edu:8900/>

on your favorite browser

2. Click "Log in to MyWebCT" Your *user name* is your **student number**; your *password* is your **student number**.

Example: Joe Bogus with a student number 970-05-0202.

Login name: 970050202

Password: 970050202

Click "Log in".

3. Click on "ASTR100TF".

4. On the left side of the screen, click, on "My Grades". Make sure that everything you think you've turned in has a numerical score next to it; if not, talk to me during class. For further details, click the "View statistics" to see how you are doing compared to your colleagues on exams. Enjoy!

5. Don't forget to log out. Remember to do this so that your grades are not easily accessible to the next user of the computer!