

Organization and Content of Manuscript

Title of the Paper

The title of your paper should be brief description of your project. It should adequately inform the reader of your general topic and the specific focus of your research.

Author(s)

All persons who contributed to the paper should be listed (i.e. faculty advisor, graduate students, etc.) If you have written the entire paper yourself, list your name first. Only those papers written entirely by the student will be considered for publication in the *FAU Undergraduate Research Journal*.

Abstract

The abstract is a brief summary of your paper in about 200 - 300 words. The purpose of your research and/or your hypothesis should be concisely stated in one to two sentences. For empirical research, a statement regarding the methodology used or the experimental design follows. The abstract ends with several sentences summarizing the primary results and conclusions.

For papers in the humanities, which are often extended essays, include a statement regarding the major thesis and a sentence for each of the primary ideas explained in the paper. The abstract is limited in words, but complete sentences should always be used. Past tense verbs should be used. While the use of first person (I, we) is generally not used in formal papers, many disciplines encourage using first person in the abstract. Check with your mentor about what is common practice in your field.

The Body of the Paper

Headings serve to organize your paper and guide the reader through it. The use of headings is required for papers in the scientific disciplines. In the social sciences, functional headings (Introduction, Methods, Results, and Conclusion or Discussion) are used to divide the paper. The physical sciences tend to favor a mix of functional and topical headings (Introduction or Background, Design of the Scattering Chamber, Calibration, Experimental, Data Results, Discussion). In the humanities, headings are not always used, but the paper usually provides some background information on the topic as an introduction, and then major areas are often given topical headings (Responsive and Responsible Users of Language, Defining English as Kept Alive by the Work of all its Users, Designing English Against the

Grain of Fast Capitalism, Working with Dissonances in One's Discursive Resources). Your mentor can suggest appropriate organization for your paper. Also, pay attention to the journals in your field and how the articles are sub-divided.

The Introduction

All papers should have an introduction that 1) provides background information on the topic, 2) reviews previous notable research on the topic, and 3) informs the reader of the purpose of your research. The extent of the historical review (2) varies from discipline to discipline. In the social sciences, this part of the introduction is quite long and comprehensive; it is briefer in the physical sciences and may not even be included in the humanities.

In all cases, sufficient background information should be given to orient the reader to the topic of your research. A good rule of thumb is to write so that someone with a broad knowledge in your field would understand your paper.

If you refer to (or *cite*) sources in your Introduction (or later in your paper), you must document these sources properly. The Introduction generally contains references to other papers, books, and journal articles on the topic. These and any other sources should be documented using the in-text citation format common in your field.

Finally, near the end of your introduction, make the purpose of your research clear to the reader. What are you attempting to do and why is it significant? If you are proposing a hypothesis, state it clearly.

Methodology or Experimental Design

For empirical research, a careful and complete description of the methods you used to carry out your research is required. In the social sciences, this section is usually divided into two subsections: Participants and Procedure. The physical sciences tend to use more topical subheadings to describe the content of each section in the Methodology (Voltammetry, Solution, Electrodes).

In the Method section, precise details about the research design are given. For example, provide the ages, gender, and other necessary demographic characteristics for participants in the study. Give precise measurements, times, and quantities used in the experiment. Specifically describe equipment, materials, and tests used. Procedures should be detailed in chronological order. The method section should be so complete and detailed that it could be replicated by the reader.

The method section, as well as the Results, often contains graphics (tables and figures). **Refer to each table and figure by number (Table 1; Figure 3) in the narrative (text) of your paper.**

Results

As the name implies, this section contains the findings of your research. Carefully report all the data you have collected, explaining it in narrative form as well as using graphics, especially to illuminate large quantities of data and to point out significant trends and characteristics of the data. When using graphics, choose the graphic best suited to the data. See Rules for Using Graphics for suggestions on choosing the most appropriate type. **Refer to each table and figure by number (Table 1; Figure 3) in the narrative of your paper.**

Conclusion (Discussion)

In this section, you interpret or analyze the data you have just reported in the section above. What do these results mean? How can they be used? What are the implications for your field? What other questions arise as a result of your research? What should future research focus on?

The conclusion often returns to the issues raised in the introduction. If you stated a hypothesis, was it proven or disproven? How was your initial purpose fulfilled by your research? How do your results compare to the results of the other studies you cited in your introduction? While all these questions may not be pertinent to your research, answering as many as possible will contribute to a well designed and well written paper.

References (Works Cited)

All sources referred to (or cited) in your paper must be listed at the end. The format used for this listing varies from discipline to discipline.