



AMERICAN ACADEMY
of OPTOMETRY

Writing Scientific Abstracts



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THE ART OF WRITING SCIENTIFIC ABSTRACTS

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COLLEGE of OPTOMETRY

SCIENTIFIC PROGRAM COMMITTEE



SUBMISSION PROCEDURES

- Read the call for abstracts
 - This presentation available on AAO website
 - Evaluation criteria
 - Overview of submission Instructions

SUBMISSION PROCEDURES

- Follow the submission instructions
 - Select type correctly
 - Clinical and Scientific Research
 - Case report / Case Series
 - Educational Research
 - Academy Information

SUBMISSION PROCEDURES

- Use comments to reviewer as needed
 - Images available
 - Funded research
 - Previous presentation
 - Candidate for fellowship
- Carefully select
 - Primary topic
 - Requested format
 - Keywords

SUBMISSION PROCEDURES

- Consider Carefully / disclose fully
 - Financial support
 - Conflicts of interest

WHAT IS SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH?

- Novelty
 - New information
 - Unique problem
 - Fresh perspective
 - Novel and useful information
 - Innovative methods
- Systematic evaluation
 - Study design addresses proposed question
 - Methods are sound
 - Subject selection
 - Controls
 - Analysis is appropriate
- Interpretation of Results
 - Findings and Conclusions

WHAT TO IMPROVE WHEN WRITING SCIENTIFIC ABSTRACT

- Title should describe study without bias
- Purpose should state the research question and possibly why it is important
- Methods should briefly describe in detail everything conducted to obtain results
- Results should show data, not just p-values
- Conclusions must be completely substantiated by data presented
- Mention funding source
- Check for grammatical, typographical errors

WHAT DOES THIS HAVE TO DO WITH HAIKU?

*Within plum orchard,
Sturdy oak takes no notice
Of flowering blooms.
—Basho*

- Scientific Abstracts are a similarly Restrictive format
- Requires concise and structured writing

*Communicating
Striving for understanding
Few will ever know*

SCIENTIFIC CASE REPORTS

- What Makes A Great Case Report?

Seek out the unique
Thoroughly research, review
Write concise & clear

Writing a Case Report is a Process:

It involves much more than just seeing a case!

Interesting / Unique
Clinical Case

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graph TD; A[Interesting / Unique Clinical Case] --> B[Diagnosis is not in question  
Follow-up is sufficient to support conclusions  
Role in management is appropriate for authorship  
Relevant imaging, photography, test results available]; B --> C[Thorough Literature Review:  
Reassuring the diagnosis is correct  
Assessing extent of previous reporting  
Identification of previously unknown aspects]; C --> D[Read submission requirements  
Clearly write the abstract emphasizing novelty  
Include all details reviewers will need for decision  
Check spelling / grammar]; D --> E[Greater likelihood of acceptance];
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TOP 5 REASONS FOR REJECTION (2011)

Novelty / Significance (71)

Methods not appropriate (18)

Results not stated or incomplete (24)

Conclusions unsupported (4)

Administrative concerns (ethics, disclosures, etc.) (4)

How do I know that my case is novel enough?

The concept of a “Gap Statement”

Does your case bridge a “gap” in our understanding of the anatomy, pathophysiology, epidemiology or natural history of a disease?

Does your case bridge a “gap” in the current treatment options for a particular disease or use of a particular medications?

Does your case fill a “gap” in the knowledgebase of the community?



** On-line form has a place for authors to directly inform reviewers of desirable attributes of the case

Summary

The Scientific Programs Committee wants you to showcase your work

Remember that published abstracts are a direct reflection of the academy

You will go a long way toward acceptance if:

- Pick a case that you managed with sufficient work-up and follow-up
- Go to the literature and thoroughly review topic. Think "Gap Statement"
- Read directions on academy website before writing
- Make sure you write clearly and convey the novelty in your writing
- Check for grammatical and spelling errors

We look forward to reading your submissions next year!