

How to write an Abstract & Nationally Competitive Scholarship and Fellowship Opportunities for Students Engaged in Undergraduate Research

Office of National Scholarships and
Fellowships (ONSF)
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Developing an Abstract for presentation and publication purposes

An Abstract is a concise summary of a larger research document or presentation. It highlights the critical points covered in the research and allows the reader to easily understand the work.

An Abstract should:

- Be easily understood by a non-expert audience;
- Consist of a maximum 350 words in a single paragraph;
- Not* include headers, references or footnotes, if possible;
- Adhere to the guidelines or standards set forth by the conference and/or publication (pay close attention to the context).

Tips for writing a good Abstract:

- Draft a brief, well-developed paragraph that is coherent, concise, and able to stand alone, separate from a larger document or explanation;
- An abstract should present the work's purpose, methods, results (or anticipated results), and conclusions;
- An abstract is *not* the place to add new information, but simply offers a summary description of the work

The Writing Process:

- Review your research notes and other relevant documents;
- Draft a summary of your work;
- Revise your rough draft and solicit feedback from your faculty P.I. or mentor(s);
- Edit and finalize your draft;
- Obtain approval from your faculty P.I. or mentor(s), if required.

Writing your Abstract – Formatting Suggestions

- 1.) State the research question and explain why it is interesting;
- 2.) State the hypothesis/hypotheses;
- 3.) Briefly describe the methods used;
- 4.) Describe the results, or anticipated results;
- 5.) Explain the key implications or suggestions for further work.

Revise your Abstract

- 1.) Minimize jargon, define key terms and **spell out any acronyms**;
- 2.) Eliminate unnecessary words or sentences;
- 3.) Avoid repeating information;
- 4.) Use the past tense when describing what was done and use active voice where possible;
- 5.) Consult well-written abstracts for guidance and utilize friends, colleagues, and faculty mentors to help you edit;
- 6.) Stay within the word limit and triple-check for spelling and grammar errors!

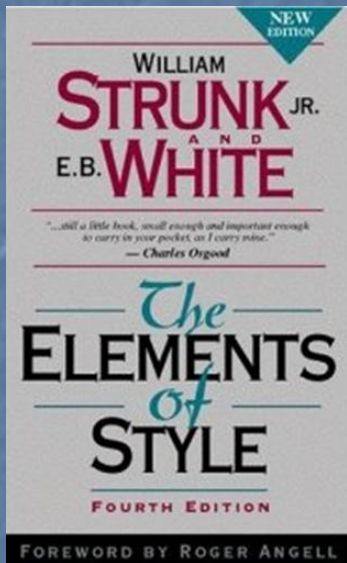
Consult examples of well-crafted abstracts.

Samples available on-line in the proceedings from the 2012
National Conference of Undergraduate Research:

<http://www.ncurproceedings.org/ojs/index.php/NCUR2012>

Samples available from all disciplines.

An abstract is a publishable document so
take time to make it exceptional!



‘Have something to say and say it as clearly as
you can. That is the only secret of style’.

- *Matthew Arnold*

‘Vigorous writing is concise’. - *William Strunk, Jr.*

A Sampling of Scholarships and Fellowships Available for Students Engaged in Undergraduate Research



UDALL SCHOLARSHIP

In 2013, the **Udall Foundation** expects to award 50 scholarships of up to \$5000 and 50 honorable mentions to sophomore and junior level college students committed to careers related to the **environment, tribal public policy, or Native American health care**. Scholarships are offered in any of three categories: students who have demonstrated commitment to careers related to the **environment** including policy, engineering, science, education, urban planning and renewal, business, health, justice, economics, and other related fields; **or** to Native American and Alaska Native students who have demonstrated commitment to careers related to **tribal public policy**; **or** to Native American and Alaska Native students who have demonstrated commitment to careers related to **Native health care**, including health care administration, social work, medicine, dentistry, counseling, and research into health conditions affecting Native American communities, and other related fields. More information available on the program's website:

<http://www.udall.gov/OurPrograms/MKUScholarship/MKUScholarship.aspx>



GOLDWATER SCHOLARSHIP

The **Barry Goldwater Scholarship and Excellence in Education Program** was established by Congress in 1986 to honor Senator Barry M. Goldwater, who served his country for 56 years as a soldier and statesman, including 30 years of service in the U.S. Senate. The purpose of the Foundation is to provide a continuing source of **highly qualified scientists, mathematicians, and engineers** by awarding scholarships to college students who intend to pursue careers in these fields. Students must show a significant record of involvement in undergraduate research leading to advance studies in their field of choice. More information available on the program's website:

<http://www.act.org/goldwater/index.html>

Fulbright U.S. Student Program



The Fulbright U.S. Student Program provides grants for individually designed study/research projects or English Teaching Assistantships. A candidate will submit a Statement of Grant Purpose defining activities to take place during one academic year in a country outside the U.S.

The program facilitates cultural exchange; through engagement in the community, the individual will interact with their hosts on a one-to-one basis in an atmosphere of openness, academic integrity, and intellectual freedom, thereby promoting mutual understanding.

<http://us.fulbrightonline.org/>

Benjamin A. Gilman Scholarship Program



The Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarship Program offers grants for U.S. citizen undergraduate students of limited financial means to pursue academic studies abroad. Such international study is intended to better prepare U.S. students to assume significant roles in an increasingly global economy and interdependent world. Must be on Pell Grant.

<http://www.iie.org/Programs/Gilman-Scholarship-Program>

Nationally competitive opportunities in the U.S.



For Those Who Want to
MAKE A DIFFERENCE
in Public Service

TRUMAN SCHOLARSHIP

The **Truman Scholarship** is a prestigious U.S. program which awards 60 to 65 scholarships annually to fund students pursuing graduate degrees in **public service fields**. The program provides up to \$30,000 for graduate study, as well as leadership training, graduate school counseling, and internship opportunities. Scholars are required to work in public service for three of the seven years following the funding. Applicants must be in their junior year, should be in the top quarter of their class, and should be committed to a career in public service.

<http://www.truman.gov/>

A selection of nationally prestigious scholarships and fellowships to support advanced studies in the U.K. and Ireland



The Marshall Scholarship

The Marshall Scholarship is a full support given to approximately 40 students for up to three years of study in any discipline at *any* university in the United Kingdom.

<http://www.marshallscholarship.org/>



The American Rhodes Scholarship

The American Rhodes Scholarship provides full support for up to three years of study at University of Oxford, England, awarded to 32 American citizens between the ages of 18 and 24 with proven intellectual and academic achievement of a high standard and a strong case for pursuing an Oxford degree program. <http://www.rhodesscholar.org/>



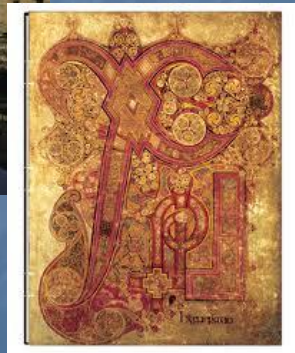
The Gates Cambridge Scholarship



The Gates Cambridge Scholarship offers a substantial number of scholarships for graduate study or for study for a second bachelor's degree at the University of Cambridge. Established by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, the intention of the scholarship is to create a network of future leaders from around the world who will bring new vision and commitment to improving the life circumstances of citizens in their respective countries. Applicants from every country of the world except the United Kingdom are eligible to apply.

<http://trust.gatesscholar.org/>

The George J. Mitchell Scholarship

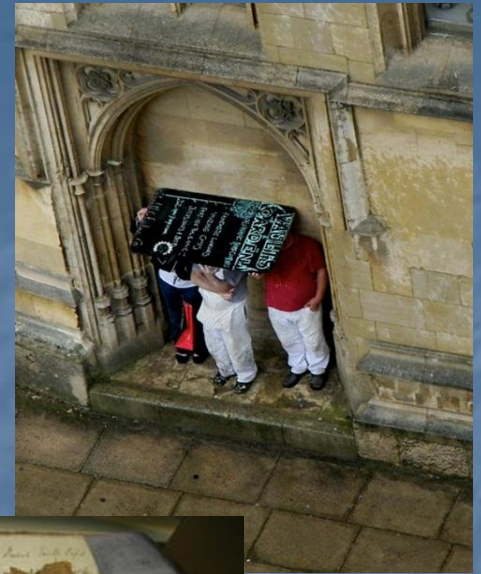


The George J. Mitchell Scholarship grants full support for up to one year of graduate study or research at one of the seven universities in the Republic of Ireland and the two universities in Northern Ireland. The award is given to 12 American citizens between the ages of 18 and 30 who have shown academic distinction, commitment to service, and potential for leadership.

<http://www.usirelandalliance.org/wmspage.cfm?parm1=2>

All national scholarships and fellowships require:

- *Curriculum vitae (CV)/*
Academic resumé;
- Personal Statement;
- Research Proposal and/or
proposed course of study;
- Letters of Recommendation.





Time-management and DEADLINES!

All of these opportunities require planning as much as and/or at least a year in advance. So:

- 1.) Develop a strategic plan of action for your entire 4-5 years at UTK;
- 2.) Set a time-line based on campus and national deadlines;
- 3.) Give yourself plenty of time to request letters of recommendation (at least one month in advance of deadline, if not more);
- 4.) Be prepared to devote significant time to writing your personal statement, research proposals, etc., including time to revise, revise, revise.

Deadlines

Campus Deadlines:

Goldwater – mid-December of your sophomore or junior year.

Udall – January of your sophomore or junior year.

Truman – December of your junior year; national deadline is February.

UK, Ireland and Fulbright – Spring of your junior year; national deadline is October of your senior year

Questions?

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The Facebook logo, consisting of the word "facebook" in white lowercase letters on a blue rectangular background.

“Office of National Scholarships
and Fellowships, University of
Tennessee”



‘They can because
they think they can’.

- Virgil