

TIPS for student SUBMISSIONS to MPA

1. It is probably better to think of your submission as a “SUMMARY” rather than a traditional abstract.
2. As a general rule, 20-25% of the submission should be devoted to intro/theoretical background. The reviewers expect *a few* citations provided in correct APA format. Full references should be included at the end for any cited material in the text - but only for those cited.
3. Words in tables, figures and references do NOT count toward the 400 word limit.
4. 400 words yield an abstract of approximately two pages double-spaced. We do not “check” word count, if you have 410 words - don’t worry. If you have 510 words - look for ways to cut! If your abstract is substantially shorter make sure it is properly describing your methods and the background.
5. Each submission is reviewed by 3 reviewers - faculty from around the Midwest. They review your submissions using a 4 point scale (see below). I recommend you read the scale so that the criteria are clear to you.
6. Any student who is able to attend the regional conference is welcome to submit a proposal. The number of proposals accepted is limited by the space available in the room. Most years, approximately 10% of submissions are rejected.
7. Only Psi Chi members are eligible for the research awards. Approximately 10% of submissions earn regional awards. Presentations by award winners are scheduled during a special session and award winners receive a cash honorarium.
8. The most common reasons for rejection are:
 - A.) *Insufficient justification* for the proposed project. Remember, you are building an “argument” about why it would be important to do the study based on past research or theory.
 - B.) *Insufficient methodological detail*. Even if the study has not yet been done, you need to convince the reviewers that the design has been thoroughly articulated and approved. If a carefully planned project fails to yield significant results, you can still make a contribution to the field. However, if you describe a design cannot If a project goes belly-up because you haven’t figured out how you will gain access to 100 prisoners, or how you are going to keep participants blind to the hypothesis, you waste everyone’s time
9. Finally, please make sure your faculty advisor has read and “approved” your abstract prior to submission. Also, if accepted, your faculty member’s name and official “degree” are listed. Please determine what letters should follow your faculty member’s name. It will read “Joan Chao, PhD” NOT Dr. Joan Chao. However, it could be an EdD, PsyD, MA, MS... etc so please list accordingly in your information sheet.
10. The reviewers use the following RATING SCALE when they read your submissions.
 4. Excellent/Possible Award Winner: Research purpose is clear; hypotheses follow logically from prior literature/design. Design and analyses are appropriate for the problem being addressed. Project should be completed or very near completion, with some if not all data analyses completed and showing interesting results.
 3. Accept as Poster: Strong submission worthy of a poster presentation at a largely undergraduate conference. Design is interesting and (proposed) analyses are adequate. Study is well conceived and the project is well designed, well underway, and/or completed.
 2. Accept if Space Allows: A reasonable undergraduate submission, but with some weaknesses. Reasons might include: the writing is not clear enough to give the reader a good sense of the study’s purpose, the design seems adequate but fairly simple, the study is interesting but not strongly tied to theory, or project is still in beginning stages with no data collection.
 1. Reject: Submission is deficient in one or more ways. Reasons might include: poor writing, research design that is incomplete or incorrect; study is not tied to theory.