Titles and Synopses/Abstracts and References, Oh My!

Fact or Fiction?

- Most readers only read the title/abstract for a paper

FACT!!!!!!

Outline

- Chemistry Department Seminar Synopsis & Abstract Requirements
  - Basic requirements
  - Topic choice
- Title
- Synopsis & Abstract
- References

Synopsis Form

- Can be found at: https://www.csus.edu/college/natural-sciences-mathematics/chemistry/grad-program.html

- Must be submitted by either May 1st or November 1st prior to the beginning of the semester in which seminar will be presented

  - Approved by graduate mentor first, then submitted to graduate committee for final approval

Chemistry Department Seminar Synopsis Requirements

- Topic choice
- Title
- 500-word synopsis (single-spaced, 12 pt. font, 1 in. margins)
    - Background information on topic
    - Research results to be presented/analyzed
        - Include specific details regarding the chemistry that will be discussed in the seminar
    - Be aimed at a scientifically literate, non-specialist audience
    - You may include a figure of your choosing to help illustrate your synopsis
- Key literature references

Topic Choice

- Should be determined in conjunction with your research advisor
- Should be closely related to the thesis research and address previously published research relevant to the proposed thesis work.

- Must have approval from both the graduate mentor and graduate committee

Title

- Definition (noun):   The name of a book, composition or other artistic work.

Elements of a Great Title

- Keep it concise, don't be overly wordy
- Be descriptive
  - Your title should effectively convey what the talk will be about
  - Your title may be all someone reads!
- Don't use abbreviations or acronyms
- You can be witty, but don't overdo it
  - This is still a professional presentation…

Synpsosis & Abstract

- Definition (noun): A summary of the contents of a book, article or a formal speech

Parts of a Synopsis & Abstract

- Background information
- Research results to be presented/analyzed
  - For the synopsis, include specific details regarding the chemistry that will be discussed in the seminar
- Be aimed at a scientifically literate, non-specialist audience
- You may include a figure of your choosing to help illustrate your synopsis

Background Information

- What information does the reader need to know to be able to understand what the talk will be about?
- Logical information flow
  - Present information going from general→ specific
- There is such a thing as too much background…
  - Only include what is absolutely necessary
  - You can go more in-depth in seminar

Results to be discussed/analyzed

- What are some examples of studies you will be presenting?
- This should complement the background information
- This is not intended to be a laundry list of topics
  - This section should present the key points of the selected studies
  - Put a little thought into this!

References

 - Definition (noun): Use of a source of information in order to ascertain something.

Reference List

At the end of your synopsis/abstract, you must provide a list of key references that have been used to develop your synopsis/abstract:

- These should be **full** citations
  - author(s), journal name, year, volume(issue), pages (***HINT: USE ENDNOTE!!!!!***)
- References must be from peer-reviewed sources
  - Most should be from from the primary literature
  - Some review articles are okay
  - On-line encyclopedias such as Wikipedia are not acceptable references
- References should represent the current state-of-the-art in the field
- Only one primary reference may be from your research advisor's group

Other considerations

- Start early
  - Synopses are due the May 1st or November 1st prior to seminar date
- Spell check!
- Use Endnote to format your references
- Make sure your synopsis has good "readability"
  - Read your synopsis out loud to yourself and fix any awkward sentences, run-on sentences, sentence fragments or grammar issues

Questions?????