

Conclusions for Capstone Paper

Sources

- North Carolina Writing Center <http://writingcenter.unc.edu/handouts/conclusions/>
- Purdue OWL: <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl>

Purpose of a Conclusion

- To provide an overview or summary of your main ideas.
- An abstract should summarize *all* of your work, whereas a conclusion synthesizes your contribution to the literature. For example, highlighting components of your literature review need not be included in your conclusion, but may be necessary in an abstract.
- A conclusion moves the reader from the substantial details contained in the main body of your work to more general ideas that you want to leave the reader with.
- A conclusion is a place where you can be provocative and let the reader consider ideas beyond your existing work.

Writing an Effective Conclusion

- A conclusion should reiterate your main ideas in a concise and cohesive way.
- Unlike an abstract, a conclusion need not stand alone and should synthesize earlier discussions.
- Use the “So what?” or “Why do I care?” mantra to motivate the writing of your conclusion.
- Also, consider using “the sum is much greater than each individual part” mantra; i.e., make sure the reader leaves with a holistic perspective of your work as the reader is unlikely to remember specific details.
- Akin to abstracts, less specificity in your writing is appropriate for conclusions.
- If a section is not devoted to “Future Research”, then a conclusion should contain such discussions.

Conclusion = *Synthesis*
 ≠ *Summary*

