Instructions for Technical Abstract and Project Summary

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Your first task is to write a **"Technical Abstract."** The subject matter for your abstract should either be:

      a) your major research project in your area of study (if you know it), or

      b) the problem that you are going to address in your recommendations report (see below).

In choosing either option, your technical abstract will be *technical*; it will be written for a knowledgeable audience of people in your field (like your MA or Ph.D. thesis committee, for example). This is the *one* document this semester you are writing for a "technical" audience. The utility of this exercise is that you *will* have to complete a technical abstract for your MA or Ph.D. thesis, so this exercise will give you experience. Please be sure to follow the guidelines for "abstracts" in your book on pages 511-512 and 521. Please choose either an "informative" or a "descriptive" abstract. If you have not completed your research and do not know the "findings," you will choose an "informative" abstract. Either way, please limit your abstract to 200-250 words and be sure to follow page-formatting and keyword-list standards.

The draft of your technical abstract is due Friday, March 26th, for peer review.

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Your second task is to write a **project summary**, referred to as the **"Technical Report Proposal"** on your syllabus. You need to start thinking about your final "recommendations report" now. This final report will require that you think of a hypothetical situation in which you are giving a proposal to a "boss," a managerial figure, in which you are recommending that he/she and the business/organization for whom you work institute a certain change that will improve an aspect of the company – the way they operate a certain lab, conduct certain experiments, utilize certain tools, typically calculate something . . . etc. You are recommending an improvement and in your recommendation, you will rely on "primary research data" (some research you've completed in your field) to convince your "boss" that the process/tool your are recommending is the *right* one to use and better than the current practices of the company.

So, now I have just described the basics of what your final project will be, and we will discuss this more in class, but for now, you need to start thinking of a way to describe your "project" in non-technical language to your "boss." How are you going to convince him/her that the study you are running and the report you want to compile is valuable to the company? What do you want to *do? How* will you do it? *What* will the benefit be?

First, download the form linked on your list of assignments (below this one; it is a standard NSF proposal "project summary" form, for NSF grant proposals). You will see that you need to provide a 250-word description of what "activity" you are going to "undertake": what research project are you going to do and what do you hope to show by it? Remember, you are planning to come to some finding that endorses your perspective of a "better way" to do something, and then the final recommendations report you will write to turn it at the end of the semester will *be* that recommendations report. This assignment just asks you to complete the "project summary."

The draft of your project summary is due Friday, April 2nd, for peer review.