

Tips for Writing Your Abstract

When you submit your research for presentation at the MSS Annual Meeting, you will need to provide an abstract of no more than 250 words. Your abstract should provide a concise summary of the paper that you plan to present. The conference planning committee will use the abstract to review the quality of your submission and to assign it to a conference session. Therefore, it is important that your abstract be well-organized and clearly written.

In general, a strong abstract does several things. First, it identifies the guiding research question(s) or puzzle(s) of your paper, providing brief context so that the reader can understand their relevance. Second, it describes the paper's research method and data sources. MSS accepts presentations based in qualitative or quantitative methods, as well as theoretical analysis, scholarship of teaching and learning, and community engaged or participatory action research approaches. Third, a strong abstract should provide an overview of key research findings and should briefly discuss their implications for theory and/or practice. If you are submitting an abstract for paper that is based in ongoing research, you should also indicate the state of data collection and analysis at the time of submission.

Here is an example of what an MSS submission abstract might look like:

Title: *Extending Growth Machine Theory to Consider Climate Adaptation in Southern Louisiana*

Abstract: *How do locally-dependent business leaders, who Logan and Molotch famously described as the drivers of urban "growth machines," respond to emerging hazards associated with climate change? I use a collection of interviews completed with business leaders located in and around New Orleans, Louisiana to investigate this question. My data illuminate the important role that these individuals play in regional climate adaptation strategies, but also highlight ways that their involvement is contingent on interpreting adaptation as a way to address challenges of growth. The research offers insight into urban growth politics in the era of climate change, and also demonstrates the value of paying attention to continuities in social actors' modes of interpretation and organization in the face of significant environmental change. The qualitative data collection for this paper is complete and grounded analysis of the data is ongoing.*