TITLE AND ABSTRACT

TASK   Choose a term paper topic, write a title for the paper, and write a 150-300 word abstract that succinctly describes the topic and approach of the paper. Hand in a hard copy of the title and abstract in class on a single sheet on Monday, October 6th.

GOAL    Choosing a topic is often the most difficult stage of writing a paper. It is also an extremely important stage since an unwieldy topic will result in many hours of misery when you engage in the research and writing process. The goal of writing an abstract and title is to force you to evaluate several topic ideas, discuss those ideas with me, if that helps, and then settle on one topic.

STYLE   The abstract should clearly identify a topic, the main thesis of the paper, and a few important details you plan to include in the paper. For example, you may want to relate the topic to the field of urban geography. If you choose to study tuberculosis, how does it relate to urban areas? The abstract should answer the following questions: What is the paper about? How does the topic relate to urbanization or settlement systems? Why should I, the reader, be interested in reading the paper? That is, why is the topic important?

EXAMPLES
In the space below and on the reverse side of this sheet I have included several sample abstracts from the last time I taught this course.

[only available on hard copy]