2006 Chicago Area Undergraduate Research symposium (CAURS)
Symposium Guidelines

The second annual CAURS takes place Saturday, April 1, 2006 at the **Chicago Cultural Center**, 78 E. Washington, Tel. 312/743-0266

Poster or Oral Presentation

At the Symposium, students present their work in either a poster or oral presentation. Posters will be set up on an easel for the duration of the day, and poster presenters will need to be at hand to answer questions about their project during their assigned poster session. Oral presenters will be allotted 10 minutes for a presentation followed by a 5-minute question-and-answer period. A faculty moderator will be coordinating each session and may facilitate the discussion. A student volunteer will be assigned to each room to assist presenters and the faculty moderator.

Abstract Guidelines

Abstract Content

An abstract is an outline/brief summary of your paper and your whole project.

- It should have an intro, body and conclusion.
- It highlights major points of the content and answers why this work is important, what was your purpose, how you went about your project, what you learned, and what you concluded.
- It is a well-developed paragraph and should be exact in wording.
- It must be understandable to a wide audience.
- Do not include any charts, tables, figures, or spreadsheets in the abstract body.

Abstract Heading Layout

1. Title of paper (if your title includes scientific notation, Greek letters, bold, italics, or other special characters/symbols, make sure they appear correctly here in Microsoft Word)
2. First name, middle initial and last name of author. Please include any additional undergraduate co-authors, whether they are presenting with you or not. Please exclude the name(s) of your faculty mentor(s) since they will be listed separately.
3. Name(s) of faculty mentor(s)

Abstract Format

Abstracts should follow these guidelines:

- In Microsoft Word format
- In Times New Roman font, size 12
- **No more than 250 words in length**
- Single-spaced and a single paragraph

Review Process

Once the review is complete, the student presenter(s) and faculty advisor(s) will be sent another e-mail notifying them if their submission was accepted, not accepted, or needs modification. After a submission is accepted, the associated presentation will be scheduled, and the student presenter(s) and their faculty advisor(s) will receive a final e-mail notifying them of the time and place of their presentation.

At this time, you may send email invitations to guest notifying them of the time and place of your presentation. Faculty advisors can also invite their colleagues to presentations by their students.

Poster Presentations

Poster presentations are displays on poster boards. Instead of a board, poster presenters can request a table to display objects including models and devices. Poster boards must be 3' or 4' (height) by 4' (width). These can be purchased at a stationery, office supply, or art supply store.

Presentations should be prepared on poster board in advance. If this is not possible because of difficulty transporting your poster board, poster board can be requested for the day of the conference (See: abstract submission form). Please note that we are providing only 3' (height) by 4' (width) sized poster board. Pushpins, glue, and other materials needed to assemble the poster board will be provided.

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For detailed symposium information please visit WWW.CAURS.COM

Presenters must be available to discuss their displays during their assigned poster session. A few specifics on the poster boards include: posters must be readable from at least three feet away, the presentation title must be at least two inches high, and beneath the title, the name(s) of the student author(s), faculty advisor, and home institution must be at least one inch high. CAURS reserves the right to cancel a presenter's poster session if the above requirements are not met. See Poster Tips for more detailed information on how to prepare a poster presentation.

ORAL PRESENTATIONS

Oral presentations will be 10 minutes in length with three-five additional minutes allotted for a question-and-answer period and a five minute change over. This schedule will be strictly enforced. See *Oral Presentation Guidelines* for more specific information on how to prepare an oral presentation.

POSTER PRESENTATIONS

Posters will be on display for the duration of the symposium. Authors are expected to be present with their poster during the time slot allocated for the poster session in the conference program: Schedule of Events.

Poster Size

Poster presentations should be on 3' or 4' (height) by 4' (width) poster board. Presentations should be prepared on poster board in advance. If this is not possible because of difficulty transporting your poster board, or for financial reasons, poster board can be requested for the day of the symposium (request can be made on the abstract registration form). Please note that we will be providing only 3' (height) by 4' (width) sized poster board. **Please notify CAURS** of your request for poster board at the time of your abstract submission, if you will need one.

Space on a poster is limited, so pick wisely what to present. Your display should be self-explanatory and have a logical flow? Others should be able to follow the order even if you are not present. Place your title at the top of the poster and make sure that the text is large (usually at least 2 inches in height) and clear. Include your name and major, and the name of your faculty mentor and his/her department name, in addition to other co-authors. Incorporate appropriate graphics in your poster. Label or describe any charts, tables, figures, graphs, or photos that you use. Easels provided at the event.

Poster Board Formatting and Layout

Type sizes: The presentation title should be printed across the top of the poster in characters of at least 70 pt (1 inch high). Author(s) and affiliation(s) should be at least 36 pt. Subheadings should be at least 24 pt and all text, including figures and tables, should be no smaller than 16-18 pt, if possible. Words should be large enough to read from several feet away.

Layout: Arrange materials in columns rather than rows. Logically consistent sections may be grouped on background of the same color. In no case, should the text be less than 16-point in size. Use a font that is easy to read from a distance such as **Arial** or **Times Roman**.

Place an **Introduction** on the upper left of the poster and **Conclusion(s)** on the lower right, both in large letters (no less than 24 pt.). For empirical papers, you will want to include other conventional headings such as Method (with sub-headings Participants, Stimuli, Materials, Equipment, and Procedure), Results and Discussion. Theoretical papers may include other headings such as Aims, Main Contribution, and Implications.

Illustrations

Keep in mind that the poster will be viewed from a distance and that a picture can effectively communicate what might take *many* words to explain. Carefully considered use of large format figures can capture important aspects of your research and save on the amount of text required? In addition, as a result, the reading time required of interested delegates.

Use figures to illustrate your experimental design, theories, procedure, stimuli, and results.

Each illustration should have a heading of one or two lines in large type clearly stating the significance. Detailed information should be provided in a legend in smaller type below. This information replaces the commentary that would ordinarily constitute the body of a manuscript, but in abbreviated form. It should clearly describe the content of the illustration and the conclusions to be drawn from it.

Handouts

Consider preparing a one-sheet handout about your poster so that conference participants who view it will have information for reference. Always include your contact information (especially your e-mail address) on handouts.

PRACTICAL MATTERS

It takes time to make a great poster. Allow 2 to 3 days to assemble all the bits and pieces, such as photos or laser copies, and then 1.5 to 2 days to cut all the boards and assemble the poster physically. That last bit of data you rush around to get at the last moment will go completely unnoticed if your poster is messy and disorganized i.e. illegible and unreadable.

It costs from $50 to $150 to make a poster depending on how you have it printed. Assembling your own poster on mounting boards is cheapest and one piece, color dye emulsion prints that you can roll up to transport are the most expensive. If you have poster made for you it can cost from $300 to $3,000 (average of $550.00 at the University of Washington) depending on how much of it you do yourself.

Portability is worth considering. The poster should fit into carry-on luggage so that even if your suitcase is lost, you can still present your work. If all your poster panels can stack and be packaged together, so much the better.

A great poster is easy to assemble on site and can be flexible in assembly in case the poster space is smaller than advertised. If you cannot mount the poster by yourself or the poster is awkward for one person to mount on the materials provided, be sure you arrange for someone to help you. Often the person next to you will be glad to exchange labor. A map of how the poster should look when it is done is handy when you need to work quickly, are distracted or nervous.

We recycle our poster boards by peeling off the old data and text and gluing on new material. Of course, this means that you stick to the same style but it also saves time, money and trees.

Posters can be made in many styles. Roll-up single piece prints, individual boards, hinged boards that fold together all have their pluses. The style you chose is a matter of cost and personal taste.

During the poster session, stand to the side of your display so that you do not block it. Prepare and practice a short summer speech—no more than three minutes—about your project. This is an excellent networking opportunity, so it is important to speak and interact professionally. Your will receive lots of feedback and exposure for your work as well.

ORAL PRESENTATION

Oral presentations will be 10 minutes in length with three-five additional minutes allotted for a question-and-answer period and a five minute change over.

A faculty moderator keeps track of your presentation time ands may also facilitate the discussion. As student volunteer is assigned to each room to assist you, the other presenters, guests, and the moderator.

Guidelines for Oral Presentations

Presentations are brief discussions of a focused topic delivered to a group of listeners in order to impart knowledge or to stimulate discussion. They are similar to short papers with an introduction, main body and conclusion. The ability to give brief presentations is a learned skill and one that is called on frequently in the workplace.

Preparation

Preparation is the key to giving an effective presentation and to controlling your nervousness. Know your topic well. You will be the expert on the topic in the classroom. Good preparation and the realization that you are the expert will boost your self-confidence. After your research, you will find that you know much more about your topic than you will have time to present. That is a good thing. It will allow you to compose a good introduction, to distill out the main, most important points that need to be made, and to finish with a strong conclusion.

- Know your topic – become an expert
- Learn as much about the topic as you can to boost your self-confidence
- Have an idea what the background is of your audience is so you will know how much detail to go into and what kinds of things you may have to define
- Prepare an outline of topic. Bullet or number the main points.
- A 10-minute talk is roughly equivalent to 4.5 double spaced pages in 12-pt. font and 1" margins - however, never read a presentation. Write out your presentation if you need to organize your thoughts, but then outline this text for the actual presentation.

Visual aids

Visual aids (maps, photos, film clips, graphs, diagrams, and charts) can enhance a presentation.

- Keep visual aids simple and uncluttered.
- Use color and contrast for emphasis but use them in moderation
- Use a font large enough to be seen from the back of the room
- A rule of thumb: slides are readable from the back of a room if they are readable at a distance of 9 feet from a 15" monitor
- For an 8-10 minute talk use no more than 10 slides or overheads
- If using PowerPoint, strongly resist the temptation to use sound effects and dramatic slide transitions

Practice

Practice giving your presentation to yourself. Speak aloud and time yourself. Practice using your visual aids. It is important that you adhere to your time limit. Your professor knows that you know more about your topic than you will have time to share. Your goal is to inform, not overwhelm. In this case, less can be more.

Delivery

To deliver your presentation you will have to overcome your nervousness and deal with room conditions. Good preparation should allay most of your nervousness; realizing that everyone feels nervous before a presentation should also help. Your presentation will never go exactly as you think it will – fortunately, they usually go better than you expect. However, if you are using any kind of technology (overhead projector or PowerPoint) be prepared for something to go wrong and have a backup plan.

Equipment tips:

- Workout details with equipment before the day of your presentation
- Know how to operate the equipment you choose to use
- If you are using PowerPoint, have a backup copy on a disk
- Consider making print duplicates of your slides or transparencies in case there is a problem with electricity or bulbs
- Do not expect a network connection to work when you need it. Have any web sites you hope to show available as offline copies on a disk. Work offline whenever possible to avoid slow network response

Delivery tips:

- Begin your presentation by telling your audience what your topic is and what you will be covering. Audiences like to have a guidepost.
- Avoid reading your remarks
- Dress neatly and appropriately. The rule of thumb is to dress one level nicer than the audience will be dressed.
- Do not wear a hat of any kind
- Speak in a clear, audible voice – loud enough to be clearly heard in the back row.
- Stand up straight, don't slouch or drape yourself around the podium. Don't be afraid to move around the room – moving around is good, it causes the audience to pay attention
- Don't rock back and forth on your heels, don't tap a pencil or play with pencil or pointer – don't do things that will distract from your content.
- Never apologize to your audience for the state of your knowledge or your degree of preparation. The audience wants to have confidence in you – you are the authority, do nothing to undermine your authority.
- Never mention anything that could have been in your talk but wasn't
- Make frequent eye contact with the audience. Really look at the audience as you talk to them. Engaging them directly with your eyes transfers a bit of your energy to them and keeps them focused on your content. Making eye contact says that you are in charge of the room and for a presentation – that's what you want.
- If you use slides or PowerPoint, avoid the tendency to speak to the screen instead of to the audience. Be so familiar with your visual aids that the only reason you look at them is to point something out.
- Never turn your back on the audience and try to avoid walking in front of the projector
- Adhere strictly to your time limit. Organize your main points and rate of speech so that you speak for your allotted minutes. You will be surprised how quickly the time goes.
- At the conclusion of your presentation, ask for questions. Encourage questions with your eyes and your body language. Respond to questions politely, good-humoredly, and briefly. Take a quick moment to compose your thoughts before responding if you need to – but do not fill the moment with uh….
- At the end of your presentation, summarize your main points and give a strong concluding remark that reinforces why your information is of value.
- Show some enthusiasm

A note on fear and nervousness

Accept nervousness for what it is – part of the preparation for speaking and it is a good thing. It heightens your senses and gets your blood pumping. You will think clearly and move faster. Everyone will feel nervous. A good preparation will increase your self-confidence. Once you get going, your good preparation will kick in and before you know it, your presentation will be over.

The role of the audience

Presentations involve both a speaker and the audience. People in the audience play a role in how well a presentation goes. People in the audience have an obligation to:

- Listen politely
- Make occasional eye contact with speaker
- Take notes or jot down interesting facts
- Control negative facial expressions
- Control bored body language
- Do not put your head down on the desk or tilt your head back to sleep
- Control the impulse to constantly check watch
- Expect a Question & Answer period to be part of the presentation
- Participate in Question & Answer period – either by listening or by posing a question.
- Prepare to remain attentive throughout the Q&A – speakers will dismiss their audience
- Remain seated until the speaker is finished

Checklist

A. Organization and Development of Content

1. Opening statement gained immediate attention?
2. Purpose of presentation made clear?
3. Previewed contents of speech?
4. Main ideas stated clearly and logically?
5. Organizational pattern easy to follow?
6. Main points explained or proved by supporting points?
7. Variety of supporting points (testimony, statistics, etc.)
8. Conclusion adequately summed up main points, purpose?

B. Delivery

1. Presenter "owned the space" and was in control?
2. Held rapport with audience throughout speech?
3. Eye contact to everyone in audience?
4. Strong posture and meaningful gestures?

C. Visuals

1. Visuals clear and visible to entire audience?
2. Creative and emphasized main points?
3. Presenter handled unobtrusively and focused on audience?

D. Voice

1. Volume
2. Rate (pacing)
3. Pitch
4. Quality
5. Energetic and included everyone in dialogue?

WHAT TO EXPECT ON APRIL 1

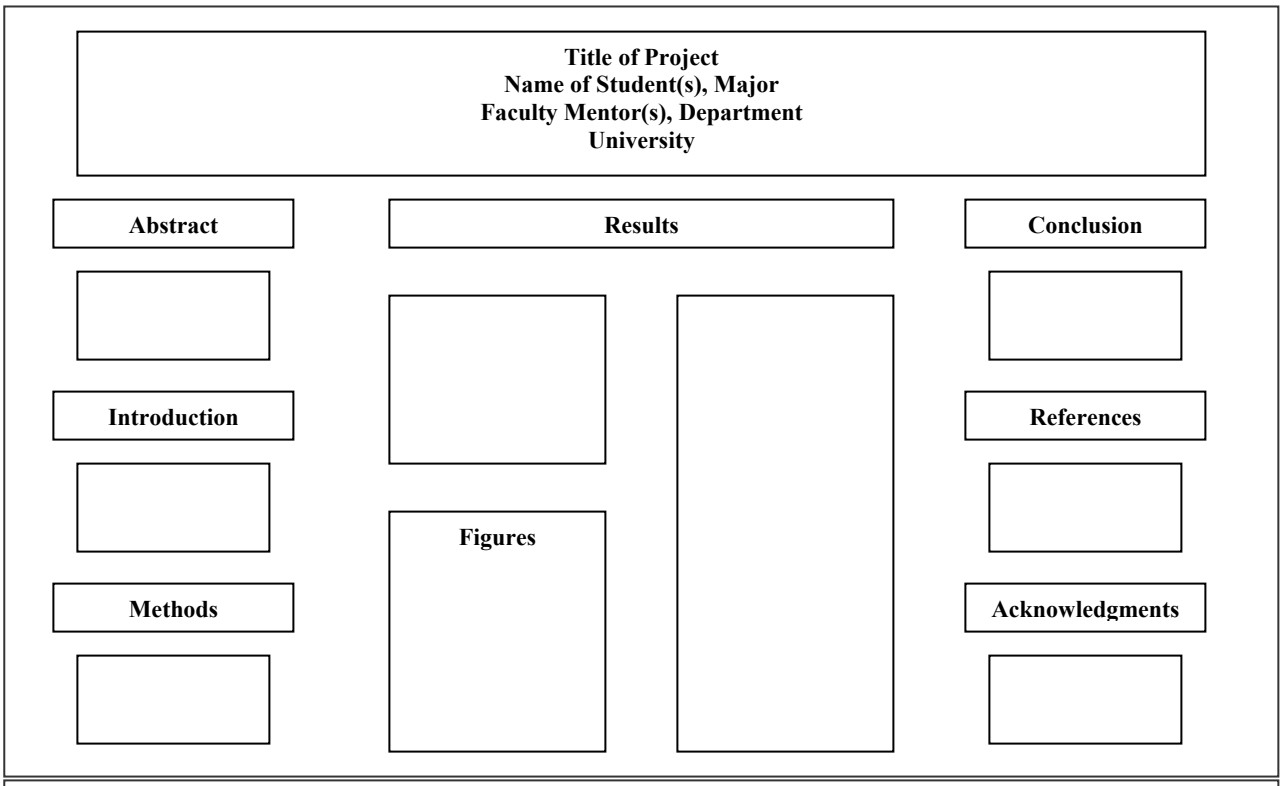
- Please arrive during the Registration/Breakfast portion of the event.
- A student volunteer will take poster presenters to their assigned easel or table.
- Oral presenters should familiarize themselves with the room and any equipment that will be used in their presentation.

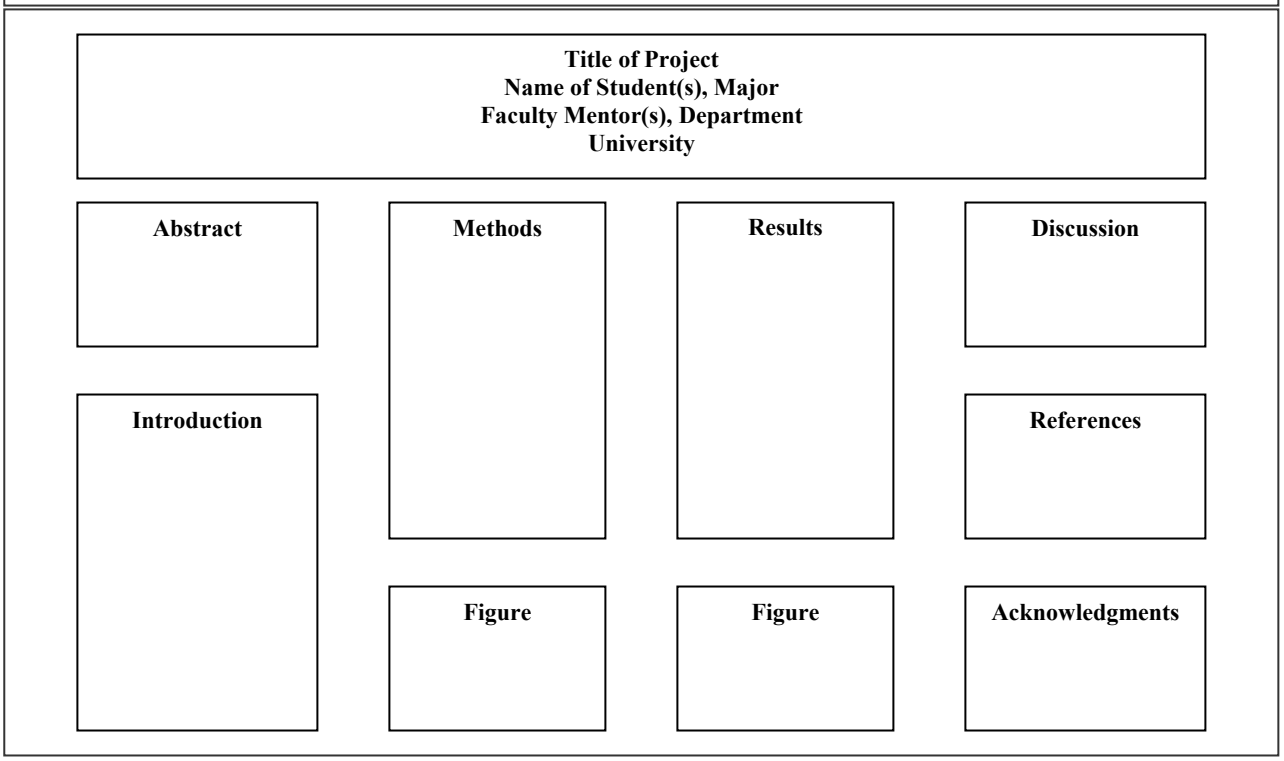
SYMPOSIUM ETIQUETTE

The CAURS Undergraduate Research Symposium is created as a forum not only to present your achievements as an undergraduate researcher but also as a celebration of bringing together a community committed to excellence and knowledge expansion. Be a part of this community and support your peers, who have also experienced the trials and successes of the research process, by attending their presentations and learning about the research that they have completed. When you are participating as a presenter or as an audience member for the oral presentations, please demonstrate respect and courtesy for your fellow researchers throughout the entire session. If you must leave at anytime during the sessions, please inform the student room monitors that you will need to leave early, and they will assist you in leaving the session at the end of a presentation and before the next presentation begins.

ATTIRE: BUSINESS/PROFESSIONAL

SAMPLE DESIGNS FOR POSTER PRESENTATIONS





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