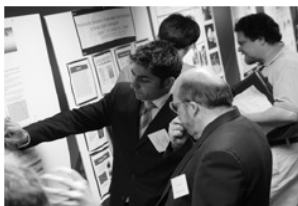


# UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH SYMPOSIUM GUIDELINES

## 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 single paragraph generally no longer than 300 words.

## REVIEW PROCESS

Once your abstract is reviewed, the student presenter and faculty advisor will be sent an e-mail notifying them of the status of their submission including any modifications requested. After it is accepted, the presentation will be scheduled, and the student presenter and their faculty advisor will receive a final e-mail notifying them of the time and place of their presentation.

## ABSTRACT GUIDELINES

### *Abstract Content*

An abstract is an outline/brief summary of your research project. It should be a single well-developed paragraph that is concise and comprehensive.

- It should have an introduction, body, and conclusion.
- It explains the importance of the project, its purpose, your procedure, what you learned, and your conclusion.
- It must be understandable to a wide audience.
- Be general. Do not include any figures, graphs, or tables.

### *Abstract Heading Layout*

1. Title of project (make sure special characters/symbols appear correctly in Microsoft Word)
2. Full name of presenter. Include any additional colleagues that assisted you on the project, whether they are presenting with you or not.
3. Full name(s) of faculty advisor/principal investigator

### *Abstract Format*

Abstracts should follow these guidelines:

- In Microsoft Word format, Times New Roman font, size 12
- Single-spaced

## GENERAL PRESENTATION GUIDELINES

- Establish the focus of your presentation (i.e. your purpose) early
- Explain the importance of your research and be sure to discuss each step of the scientific method: hypothesis (if any), procedure, data, results, conclusion, references
- Make sure everything is spelled correctly and grammatically correct.
- Always cite sources and give acknowledgements.
- Explain unexpected results and future plans for your work.
- Prepare ahead of time for questions.
- Know your audience
- As a general rule, use minimal text when bullet points and visual aids can convey the information more effectively. However, posters can have more text than PowerPoint slides during oral presentations.
- Be excited and convey your enthusiasm through your facial expression and voice.
- You are the expert on the topic. Speak with confidence.

## POSTER PRESENTATIONS

Poster presentations are displays of your research project on poster board. Presenters must be present at their poster during their assigned poster session. Your presentation should be prepared in advance and should cover all the major points of your research. Posters will be on display for the duration of the symposium.

## ***Poster Size***

Poster boards should be no bigger than 3'-4' (height) by 4' (width). Your faculty adviser will usually know the best way to print your poster board on campus, but poster boards can also be purchased at a printing or stationary store. Pushpins and tape will be available at the conference to assemble your poster board, but we strongly recommend that you bring your own assembly materials. Easels will be provided at the event. If you need a table for additional materials, please request it from us as soon as possible.

## ***Poster Board Formatting and Layout***

The presentation title should be printed across the top of the poster at least two inches high. Beneath the title, the name of the student presenter, faculty advisor, and home institution should be at least 36 pt or about one inch high. Subheadings should be at least 24 pt and all text, including figures and tables, should be no smaller than 16-18 pt. Everything should be large enough to read from several feet away.

Arrange materials in columns rather than rows. Text should not be less than 16 pt in size. Use a font that is easy to read from a distance such as Arial or Times Roman. As a general rule, place an introduction at the upper left of the poster and conclusions at the lower right, both in large letters.

Use ample white space as an organizational tool. Stick with a simple color scheme and up to two fonts.

Include appropriate graphics and text, and make sure everything is spelled correctly. Inappropriate or incomplete poster boards will not be displayed.

## ***Illustrations***

The poster will be viewed from a distance, so pictures can effectively communicate what might take *many* words to explain. Carefully considered use of charts, tables, figures, graphs, or photos can capture important aspects of your research and reduce the amount of text. Use figures to illustrate your experimental design, theories, procedure, stimuli, and results. Each illustration should have a heading in large type that clearly states the significance of the figure. A caption of detailed information should be provided below. It should clearly describe the content of the illustration and the conclusions to be drawn from it.

## ***Handouts***

Consider preparing a short handout about your poster so that conference participants who view it will have

information for reference. Include your contact information (especially your e-mail address) on handouts.

## ***Practical Matters***

Use your poster space wisely. 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.

It takes time to make a great poster. Allow a couple days to assemble all pieces, and never save anything for the last minute.

Consider the portability of your poster. A great poster is easy to assemble on site and can be flexible in case the poster space is smaller than planned. Arrange for help in case mounting the poster is difficult. A map of how the poster should look when it is done is handy in case you need to work quickly, are distracted or nervous.

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 choose is a matter of cost and personal taste.

## ***Presenting***

During your presentation, stand to the side of your display so that you do not block it. Your presentation should be a short summary speech about 3-5 minutes long. You should also be prepared to answer questions about your research. Because this is an excellent networking opportunity, it is important to speak and interact professionally. You will receive feedback for your work as well.

In addition to your presentation, it may be wise to also prepare a short 1 minute summary of your research for any guests browsing over your poster.

Practice often and be familiar with your poster.

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## **ORAL PRESENTATIONS**

Oral presentations are extended speeches about your research using materials such as Powerpoint, multimedia, and a podium. They should last no more than 10 minutes with 3-5 additional minutes for a question-and-answer period. An oral presentation is similar to a short paper with an introduction, main body, and conclusion.

A faculty moderator keeps track of your presentation time and may also facilitate the discussion.

## ***Preparation***

Preparation is the key to giving an effective presentation and to reducing your nervousness. You are the expert on the topic in the room, so know your topic well. You will find that you know much more about your topic than you will have time to present, which is a good thing. It will allow you to create a good introduction, to distill out the most important points that need to be made, and to finish with a strong conclusion.

- Know your topic – become an expert, which will also boost your self-confidence
- Be cognizant of the background and educational level of your audience so you know how much detail to go into and what kinds of concepts you may have to define
- Prepare an outline. Start and finish with a bang.
- Never read a presentation. Use an outline if you wish, but do not read directly from it.

## ***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 size 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)
- Resist the temptation to use too many slides and become dependent on them
- If using PowerPoint, do not 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 a good and effective presentation, you will have to overcome your nervousness and be prepared for the room conditions. Good preparation should dispel most of your nervousness. Your presentation will never go

exactly as you expect – but in fact, they usually turn out better. If you are using any kind of technology such as an overhead projector or PowerPoint, however, be prepared with a backup plan in case anything goes wrong.

## ***Equipment tips:***

- Work out details with equipment before the day of your presentation; request any equipment well before the event and make sure any necessary software (such as PowerPoint) is installed
- Know how to operate the equipment you choose to use
- Have backup copies of everything!
- Consider making printouts of your slides or transparencies in case there is a problem with electricity or bulbs
- Do not expect an internet connection to work when you need it. Have any web sites you want to show available as offline copies.

## ***Delivery tips:***

- Begin your presentation by telling your audience what your topic is and what you will be covering. A brief outline of your presentation will help guide and orient the audience.
- Avoid reading your remarks directly from your preparation materials.
- 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 loudly and clearly – loud enough to be clearly heard in the back row.
- Stand up straight. Don’t be afraid to move around the room –it causes the audience to pay attention
- Do not do anything that will distract from your content – try to overcome any nervous fidgeting or habits such as pencil twirling or rocking back and forth.
- Do not apologize to your audience for the state of your knowledge or your degree of preparation. The audience wants to have confidence in you – do not do anything that undermines your authority.
- Never mention anything that could have been in your talk but wasn’t.
- Make frequent eye contact with the audience.
- If you are using slides or PowerPoint, avoid speaking to the screen instead of to the audience. Be familiar enough with your materials 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.
- 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 brief moment to compose your thoughts before responding but do not say “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 enthusiasm

### ***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
- Control negative facial expressions
- Control bored body language. Do not fall asleep or lay your head down.
- Avoid constantly checking your watch
- Expect a Question & Answer period to be part of the presentation and participate in it
- Prepare to remain attentive throughout the Q&A – speakers will dismiss their audience
- Remain seated until the speaker is finished

### ***Evaluation Criteria (D’Arcy, 1998)***

#### **A. Organization and Development of Content**

1. Did the opening statement gain immediate attention?
2. Was the purpose of the presentation made clear?
3. Were the contents of the speech previewed?
4. Were the main ideas stated clearly and logically?
5. Was the organizational pattern easy to follow?
6. Were the main points explained or proved by supporting points?
7. Was there a variety of supporting points (testimony, statistics, etc.)?
8. Did the conclusion adequately sum up the main points and purpose?

#### **B. Delivery**

1. Did the presenter appear to be in control?
2. Did the presenter hold rapport with audience throughout the speech?

3. Did the presenter make eye contact with the audience?
4. Did the presenter have a good posture and meaningful gestures?

#### **C. Visuals**

1. Were the visual guides clear and visible to the entire audience?
2. Were the visuals creative and emphasized main points?
3. Did the presenter handle them unobtrusively and focused on audience?

#### **D. Voice**

1. Volume
2. Rate/Pacing
3. Quality
4. Pitch
5. Energy

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### **WHAT TO EXPECT ON THE DAY OF THE EVENT**

- Please arrive during the Registration/Breakfast portion of the event.
- When you register, you will receive a packet of materials including a brochure, map, and your assigned easel or table.
- Oral presenters should familiarize themselves with the room and any equipment that will be used in their presentation.
- Ask AURS directors and volunteers if you have any questions.

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### **SYMPOSIUM ETIQUETTE**

An AURS Undergraduate Research Symposium is not only a chance for you to proudly present your research but also an opportunity to celebrate others’ achievements together with faculty and the community. Participate actively in the event and support your peers by attending their presentations and learning about their research. When you are a presenter or an audience member, please demonstrate the utmost respect and courtesy for your fellow researchers throughout the entire session. If you must leave at anytime during the sessions, please kindly inform the room monitor and leave quietly at the appropriate time. We hope you enjoy the undergraduate research symposium and would appreciate feedback after the event!

### **ATTIRE: BUSINESS/PROFESSIONAL**

## SAMPLE DESIGNS FOR POSTER PRESENTATIONS

<b>Title of Project</b> <b>Name of Student(s), Major</b> <b>Faculty Mentor(s), Department</b> <b>University</b>			
<b>Abstract</b>	<b>Results</b>		<b>Conclusion</b>
<b>Introduction</b>			<b>References</b>
	<b>Figures</b>		
<b>Methods</b>			<b>Acknowledgments</b>

<b>Title of Project</b> <b>Name of Student(s), Major</b> <b>Faculty Mentor(s), Department</b> <b>University</b>			
<b>Abstract</b>	<b>Methods</b>	<b>Results</b>	<b>Discussion</b>
<b>Introduction</b>			<b>References</b>
	<b>Figure</b>	<b>Figure</b>	<b>Acknowledgments</b>