FALL 2023 STUDENT RESEARCH SYMPOSIUM GUIDELINES

2023 Highlights:
- Poster session is Thursday, Dec. 7th, 2022, from 11:00 am- 2:00 pm in the Science Complex Commons
- Attendance at poster, while strongly encouraged, is not required, even for judging
- Awards for best posters
- *No poster printing* in the Biology office- free printing in Cook Library

Research Symposium
The Student Research Symposium will be hosted by the Department of Biological Sciences on December 7th, 2022, from 11:00am-2:00pm in the Science Complex Commons. Undergraduate and graduate students will present posters that showcase their scientific research conducted at Towson University. Attendance at poster session is not required to submit and present a poster but is strongly encouraged if you can. Refreshments and light fare will be provided by the department.

Judging
You had the option to submit your poster for judging (this is required if you are enrolled in BIOL 491) during registration. In order to be judged, you must submit a PDF of your poster to https://forms.office.com/r/0TUwdGXZEK by the start of the symposium with the file format **poster#_YourLastName_MentorLastName**. Only the poster will be judged, not necessarily your in-person presentation (though if you do present in person, judges have the ability to note their feedback on it). There will be two categories, one for undergraduate and one for graduate students. Winners will receive prizes in the form of cash/and/or an Amazon gift. Honorable mentions may also be awarded at the discretion of the judges. Winners will be announced at the Department Holiday Lunch on December 15th and in TU Today.

Poster Making
PowerPoint is useful for making your poster. There is free poster printing available in Cook Library. You must make a reservation, however, and there will be large demand for the printer in the days before the symposium, so plan ahead! More information and reservations are at https://www.towson.edu/technology/studentservices/printing/templates.html
Poster dimensions should be a maximum of 4 feet wide and 4 feet tall, though a slightly smaller size (and vertical orientation) is preferred.

Poster Hanging
Your specific poster location will be assigned to you just before the symposium. Each poster presenter should use the map to locate their poster and hang their poster on the assigned board (with tacks, which will be provided) on Thursday morning (12/8) by 10:00am. The poster session will be held from 11:00am to 2:00pm on Thursday. Please plan to either remove your poster at the end of the symposium (though not before 2:00pm), or if you wish to leave it up longer, to remove it before 8:00am on Friday morning. Since judging can occur entirely online, it is no longer necessary to leave your poster hanging for it to be evaluated.

Questions? Ask Dr. Katherine Sayers, ksayers@towson.edu, Science Complex Rm. 5150N

Poster Labeling and Sections

At the top of your poster, prepare a title section indicating: (1) The title and (2) the author(s) and their institutional affiliation(s). Generally, you should include the following major sections: Abstract, Introduction, Materials and Methods, Results, Discussion, and References Cited. NOTE: References Cited section is required! Sections should be labeled and appear in a clear order. See the judging rubric below for how your poster will be judged.

Visual Appearance-Characteristics of the Layout

The poster is a visual presentation of information. Use text sparingly, rely instead on graphs, charts, tables, and pictures to communicate information. Your text should focus on the main points of your design, rationale, etc. Your poster should NOT be a copy of your written paper glued onto poster board. Some tips include:

- Use an attention-getter near the title- it should be the element with the most visual impact of the whole poster.
- Photos, maps, drawings, graphs, or the title often capture interest. Use a large font size (24 point or larger) and list your major points as bullets (smaller font size is acceptable for references).
- Consider using colored section backgrounds to help group your major headings.
- Information is easier to read if it is arranged in vertical columns rather than horizontal strips.
- Colors can be used to attract attention.
- Avoid discipline-specific jargon. Anyone with training in biology should be able to understand what you have done and found.

Interacting with the Audience

Interacting with the audience is chiefly useful to YOU as the researcher. If you are able to stand by your poster during the poster session, your availability and interaction style can influence the number of people who read your poster and talk with you about it. Don't be afraid to initiate conversations; many viewers appreciate having key information pointed out to them. Use visual aids! Get creative!

Things to Keep in Mind

- Do you display a professional appearance and demeanor?
- Are you responsive to questions about your research?
- Are you willing to approach people who appear interested in your poster?
- Are you able to talk about your study with different audiences?
- Do you know how your research fits into various fields of study?
- Are you enthusiastic about your research, and can you convey this to others?

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