

Western Society of Weed Science Student Oral and Poster Presentation Contest Rules

GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR ORAL PAPERS AND POSTERS

The Student Paper and Poster contest at the Western Society of Weed Science (WSWS) annual meeting offers students an opportunity to improve their presentation skills and increase their visibility within the Society. All graduate students from member states of the WSWS are encouraged to enter one paper **AND/OR** one poster in the contest. Undergraduate students may enter one poster **OR** one paper in the contest. Students attending institutions in states that are not WSWS members may enter and receive evaluation but will not be considered for awards. Students entered in the contest will be judged by at least three independent anonymous judges. A sample score sheet is attached for students to review criteria they will be judged upon. A separate score sheet will be used by each judge for each student. A numerical scale is provided for judges to use as a guide during their evaluations. Judges should also provide comments on areas that will greatly aid the students in enhancing their communication skills. After judging, all contestants will be ranked from high to low based on their representative scores with prizes awarded to top individuals in that division depending on number of contestants.

Oral paper and poster presentations will be judged in two major categories: **Content** (methods and mechanics) and **Presentation Skills**.

- **For Content:**
 - There must be a clear scientific merit and justification for research that is **original and unique** research to Weed Science. Additionally, oral and poster presentations entered for competition by the same person should be substantively different from each other (not just changing the title or simply adding more data to the poster). There should be no overlap between the data presented in the poster and oral format by the person (if entered in a competition)
 - Each author is responsible to following the guidelines for submission in the WSSA journals Style Manual. SI (metric) units are preferred. Herbicide rates must be expressed as rates ai (active ingredient) or ae (acid equivalent) per unit of area (acre or hectare)
 - A clear and technically competent abstract is required for both oral and poster contest entries. Abstracts for the student competition must be **no longer than 250 words**.
 - All presentations should briefly outline background content relevant to the subject and provide pertinent references if applicable.
 - All presentations should include brief but descriptive “Materials and Methods” used in the experiment as well as justification for methods chosen.

- A description of the experimental design and statistical treatment of the data utilized should be included as well.
 - Discussion of Results is an essential part of any research paper. It is important that Results are supported by the data collected and interpretation is logical. Findings should be related to other work if applicable. Importance of results should be addressed and related to future research needs that could potentially allow a better understanding of the subject.
 - Conclusion should be clear, concise, and easy to follow. It should reemphasize the main point of significance of this research.
 - To be entered in the contest, all presentations **MUST** be uploaded to the WSSA "Title/Abstract website" (<http://www.weedscimeetingabstracts.com/>) prior to the cutoff date. If submission by this time or method is not possible, it is the responsibility of the author/presenter to contact the project chair and make arrangements to have the presentation uploaded onto the session computer. Only as a last resort are they to be submitted directly to the Project Chair via flashdrive.
- **For Presentation Skills:**
 - Presentations should clear and interesting manner that will make the audience engaged and want to learn more.
 - Physical demeanor / appearance of the speaker, ease of movement, gestures poise and enthusiasm should all be kept professional and consistent with the gravity of the contest
 - Visual aids should be easy to read and understand. In short, visual aids should aid, not distract, from presentations.
 - For oral presentations, the quality and quantity of sound being delivered by the speaker as well as speech inflections, variations in pitch and enthusiasm all should be considered in delivery of presentation. Language is the medium of expression. Proper grammar, sentence structure, and correct pronunciation and use of terminology should be employed.
 - For poster presentations, the physical development of the poster should lend to an organization and pattern that effectively conveys the text, figures and pictures to the audience. Posters should be created to maximize the transfer of information into an easily understandable format. Proper grammar, sentence structure, spelling, and use of terminology should be considered.
 - Last minute editing is **strongly discouraged** and up to the discretion of the section chair if they are willing to make special accommodations.

OTHER GUIDELINES FOR PREPARATION OF ORAL PRESENTATIONS

- Oral presentations are strictly limited to fifteen (15) minutes and that includes a 2 to 4 minute period to respond to questions from the audience.
- All oral presentations must be created in PowerPoint for MS Windows for optimum compatibility with session computers and will be presented by using LCD projection equipment if possible.
- Project chairs and computer operators are not responsible for changes in fonts, bullets, and other formatting at the time of presentation due to file transfers. It is the responsibility of the author/presenter to contact the project chair and make arrangements to view their presentations on the session computer prior to their scheduled presentation time.
- Contestants are expected to be present and prompt prior to their allotted speaking time.
- Previous first place winners in the paper contest are ineligible for the paper contest, but may enter the poster contest.

Paper Contest*	Points	Criteria
Abstract:	10	Length: 5pt ≤ 250 words; 0pt > 250 words Appropriate content, format and grammar
Introduction:	10	Concise background to topic Clear objectives and hypothesis
Methods:	15	Correct and clear experimental design Clear treatments and measurements Correct statistical analysis
Results:	10	Clear and clean demonstration of data Methods support data collected
Discussion:	15	Clear interpretations based on data Concise conclusions based on data Future research recommendations
Visual aids:	15	Easily readable and uncluttered Balance of tables, figures, pictures Proper grammar, spelling and units
Oration:	20	Speaker confident and enthusiastic Effective gestures, mannerisms and voice Eye contact and appropriate behavior Speaker answers questions confidently
Time:	5	Allow 2-4 min for questions 11-13 min presentation = 5 points 10-11 or 13-14 min presentation = 3 points <10 min or >14 min = 0 points
Total	100	
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OTHER GUIDELINES FOR THE PREPARATION OF POSTERS

- Each poster must fit within 42 inches by 42 inches of display board space. This is **not** guaranteed as poster boards may vary from venue to venue.
- Titles, headings, text, graphs, and tables contained on the poster should be easily read from a distance of at least 6 feet.
- All posters must be set up on evening prior to the Tuesday morning poster session. All posters should remain on display until after the end of sessions on Wednesday afternoon. All posters must be removed from display by Wednesday evening. It is the presenter's responsibility to setup and remove their poster. Noncompliance may result in point deductions.
- Limit fonts used in presentations to basic, legible fonts (e.g. Times, Arial, Courier, Calibri or Tahoma).
- All presenters **MUST** be present at their poster during designated times in coordination with the program instructions.
- Previous first place winners in the poster contest are ineligible for the poster contest, but may enter the paper contest.

Poster Contest*	Points	Criteria
Abstract	10	Length: 5pt ≤ 250 words; 0pt > 250 words Appropriate content and format
Mechanics	5	Proper grammar, spelling and units
Overall Content	15	Appearance and creativity in design Effective layout and logical flow Balance of tables, figures, pictures
Appearance	10	Uncluttered and easily read text size Tables and figures clear and concise
Introduction	10	Uncluttered and easily read text size Tables and figures clear and concise
Development	15	Correct and clear experimental design Clear treatments and measurements Quality of research and discussion
Results	20	Correct statistical analysis Methods support data collected Clear interpretations based on data Future research recommendations / implications
Oration	10	Eye contact, voice and behavior Speaker answers questions confidently
Physical	5	Interaction, enthusiasm and confidence
Total	100	

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