

STUDENT PAPER PRESENTATION AWARD GUIDELINES

Revised July 7, 2009

Thanks to Linda Rayor & Paula Cushing!

I ELIGIBILITY

- A. **The student must be a member of the AAS.** Membership information can be found at http://www.americanarachnology.org/AAS_membership/membership_online.html. If the presenter is from a developing nation and cannot afford to join the society, contact the membership secretary who will find a membership sponsor for the student.
- B. The student should email the President Elect a CV or statement explaining whether the work to be presented is part of a master's thesis, a doctoral dissertation, and whether it is the culmination of the graduate project or just a small component of that project. An abstract must be submitted to the meeting organizer ([see meeting website at americanarachnology.org](#)) for deadlines, names and addresses). The major professor or supervisor must email the President Elect indicating the extent to which the work was independently developed and executed.
- C. The presentation must represent a completed body of independent or joint research in which the student's contribution has been substantial. If co-authored, the student must be first author.
- D. Entry is limited to one poster or oral presentation.
- E. Previous winners of the Student Paper award are not eligible. However, runner-ups are eligible, and past poster winners may compete in the oral competition and vice versa.

II JUDGES

- A. The President-Elect will appoint a panel of judges representing different disciplines prior to the meeting and email to them abstracts, judging guidelines, and forms.
- B. To avoid bias or conflict of interest, judges should not have competing students or, if unavoidable, should abstain from voting on their own students.
- C. President-Elect or committee chair of competition must provide one score sheet per student competitor for all judges.
- D. Judges should meet beforehand to review guidelines and afterwards to vote, with at least one hour between the last eligible presentation and the award announcement.

III EVALUATION

- A. Judges should rate presentations as "Outstanding, Good, Adequate, or Poor" based on the criteria listed below. In co-authored papers, the judges will carefully evaluate the student's contribution to the presented research. In case of a tie or very close ranking, the judges may decide on a joint award.
- B. Judges should consider returning score sheets to the President Elect or the competition committee chair so that the score sheets can be provided to students as feedback.

IV CRITERIA AND GUIDELINES FOR A GOOD PRESENTATION

A. Scientific Criteria

1. Introduction:

- a. Was the research problem clearly introduced? Was the importance of the research question explained? Why was the work done? Did the presenter provide background and context for the research? What was the state of the field prior to this study?
- b. Was a clear statement of the hypothesis(es) provided or, in studies that did not test hypotheses, were the objectives and importance of the research clearly stated?

2. Methods:

- a. Were techniques appropriate and clearly explained?
- b. How creative was the work? If the work employed common techniques, were they used to approach novel issues or novel questions?

3. Results:

- a. Were the results a valuable contribution to the field?
- b. Was the significance clearly demonstrated?

4. Discussion & Conclusions:

- a. Were the results well-summarized and related to the introduction?
- b. Were the conclusions warranted by the data?
- c. Did the results provide a valuable contribution to our knowledge of arachnids or did they merely provide details about a phenomenon that is already largely understood?
- d. Was the research sufficiently independent, unique, or creative?
- e. Were the conclusions placed in a broader context?

B. Presentation Style and Logistics:

1. Were the graphics lucid? Were figures intelligible with clearly labeled axes? Were tables legible and intelligible? Were the graphics designed to be as self-explanatory and informative as possible?
2. Was specialist jargon minimized so that non-specialists could understand?
3. How well did the speaker respond to questions?
4. Did the student project a professional demeanor? Did s/he avoid inappropriate references, private jokes, and making excuses for poor graphics?
5. (oral) Was the speaker clear and logical or confused and disorganized? Was eye contact made with the audience, or was the paper simply read from notes or the screen?
6. (oral) Was the speaker poised? Was the presentation “timed” correctly?
7. (poster) Was the poster clearly organized and well planned? Was the poster clearly arranged with minimal text for maximal effect? Were the visuals used appropriate for the point being made? Was the font large enough to be easily read from a distance? Was the poster visually appealing and not overly busy? Did the student try to cram too much information on the poster?
8. (poster) Was the oral presentation (to the judge) succinct, clear, and focused?

V ADDITIONAL PROCEDURES

Traditionally, the award is announced at the society’s banquet. Students are strongly

encouraged to attend the banquet since this is an ideal setting to “schmooze” with established arachnologists and to see George Uetz, auctioneer extraordinaire, and his minions at their best.

VI AWARDS

The top ranking and runner-up individuals traditionally receive a monetary award.

SCORE SHEET (Judges, consider providing this to committee chair to give to student for feedback)

Name of Student and co-authors: _____

Title: _____

OVERALL RATING ____/60 total.

Rank as 1 (poor); 2 (adequate); 3(good); 4 (outstanding). Comments welcome.

Abstract

1. ____ Good summary, especially results.

Introduction

2. ____ Broader conceptual framework & overview of previous work.

3. ____ Hypothesis(es), goals, or predictions clearly stated.

Methods

4. ____ Clearly presented, appropriate to question.

5. ____ New or new use of techniques.

Results

6. ____ Clearly presented.

7. ____ Valuable, significant contribution.

Discussion

8. ____ Conclusions well supported.

9. ____ Work extended beyond advisor's other projects vs. minor increment to work.

10. ____ Placed in broader context.

Presentation style (oral or poster)

11. ____ Clear, well organized, eye contact.

12. ____ Lucid graphics (meaningful, clearly labeled; legible tables).

13. ____ Minimal jargon, no verbal "ticks," no inappropriate humor, not read.

14. ____ Responded well to questions.

15. ____ Met time limits [talk] or minimal text for maximal effect [poster].