

RULES FOR THE WEED SCIENCE SOCIETY OF AMERICA STUDENT POSTER CONTEST

A. ELIGIBILITY:

1. Any student who is a WSSA member and has registered to attend the current WSSA annual meeting is eligible to compete in the contest. Students are eligible for participation in the Student Poster Contest multiple times during a M.S. program and a Ph.D. program; however, a student cannot participate in both contests concurrently. A student can only win 1st place in the poster contest once per degree program. A student may win 1st in the poster contest in the M.S. degree program and then compete and win 1st place again while in a Ph.D. degree program. A student is eligible to finish 2nd or 3rd if they have previously won 1st place during the course of a given degree program.

B. RULES AND PROCEDURES:

1. Notice of the contests will be included with the Call for Papers.
2. A contestant may the poster contest multiple years per degree program. Persons who have graduated from a degree program (M.S. or Ph.D.) and are not actively pursuing an additional degree may only enter the contest for that degree program during the first annual meeting following graduation.
3. Contestants will indicate in the title submission that they wish to enter either poster contest. Title and contest declaration must be turned in by the deadline that title submissions are due. If a contestant does not turn in a title and contest declaration by the time that title submissions are due, they will be ineligible for the contest unless the Student Program Chairperson declares the student eligible based on student's situation. **ABSTRACTS FOR CONTEST POSTERS SHALL BE DELIVERED PRIOR TO THE ANNUAL MEETING** (this allows time for the committee to prepare copies or e-mail abstracts to the appropriate judges prior to the contest). If a contest abstract is not received by this deadline, points will be deducted.
4. Evaluation forms and rules will be posted to the WSSA website.
5. Awards will be presented at the WSSA business meeting.

C. AWARDS:

Awards of \$300, \$200, and \$100 will be presented to 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place winners, respectively, in each section of the Poster Contest. When there is a tie for 1st place, there will be no 2nd place winner. When there is a tie for 2nd place, no 3rd place award will be given.

D. CHAIRPERSON OF THE CONTEST:

Duties of the Student Contest Chairperson include the following:

1. Divide contestants into sections and into divisions of 6 to 11 posters according to the associated crop, weed or herbicide, M.S. or Ph.D. degree presentations, and/or laboratory or field research studies. Dividing student presentations is at the discretion of the Student Contest Chairperson.
2. All contest posters are to be displayed by the time specified in the annual meeting program. In addition, students will be present at their posters during the time specified in the program of the annual meeting.
3. Five judges will be selected for each section. If at all possible, no judge shall be selected for a division in which one of his/her students participates or includes a paper that the judge has co-authored.

4. Make presentation of awards at the business meeting.
5. Ensure photographs of winners are taken at the annual banquet.
6. The Student Contest Chairperson will serve a term of two-years. The initial Student Contest Chairperson shall serve for a term of three-years to ensure continuity. After the term has expired, the Vice-Chair will assume responsibilities as Student Contest Chairperson and a new Vice-Chair will be elected.

E. JUDGING AND JUDGES:

1. Judges shall be provided with evaluation forms and instructions from the Chairperson of the Student Contest concerning methods for judging and evaluating the contestants.
2. Five judges will be selected for each section. The Student Contest Vice-Chair is to assist the Student Program Chair in judge recruitment, and to become familiar with the entire contest procedure so they can serve as Chair of the Student Program.
3. The Chairperson should try to assign judges to sections of their interest and competence and in which the contestants are from different institutions or unrelated industries.

F. WEED SCIENCE SOCIETY OF AMERICA STUDENT POSTER CONTEST
INSTRUCTIONS FOR JUDGES

Presentation of a scientific poster is intended to allow the poster to stand alone and provide the audience the best understanding of the author's work and results. Poster presentations will be judged in two major categories: Appearance and Content. A sample score sheet is attached. 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 to evaluate the posters. Please use these to assist the students in evaluating their strengths and weaknesses in their research and presentation of said research.

Scores will be tallied and presentations will be ranked in descending order by overall score. The winners of the contest will be determined by adding together judge's scores and ranking student presentations based on these scores. The rankings of the judges and the contestant with the highest (i.e. 1.5 compared to 2.3 with 1.5 being the winner) total rank will be the winner. In an effort to prevent ties, individual judges should not allow any ties to occur within the division they judged; however, if after compilation of scores from all judges a tie occurs, then both contestants will receive the 1st place award for that division of the contest and there will be no second place winner. **Please try to provide some overall comments at the bottom of the judging sheet along with specific comments in the area provided within each section of the score sheet. Critical comments will greatly aid the students in enhancing their communication skills by pointing out specific areas and points they should improve; however, comments of a complimentary nature for a job well done are also important and appropriate.**

Criteria

1. A clear and technically competent abstract should be provided. The abstract should provide all pertinent information with respect to the research project. Abstract formatting should not be judged given that the WSSA electronic submission abstract submission system does not put all abstracts into a standard format.
2. Appearance and flow refers to the physical development of the poster. This includes the organization and pattern of the poster and effective use of text, figures, and pictures to convey information in an easily understandable manner. The use of creative “art work”, illustrations, color balance, and general organizational layout of the poster should be a consideration in the category. Proper grammar, sentence structure, spelling, and use of terminology should be considered.
3. The Introduction section of the poster of the poster should provide an adequate introduction to the problem as well as provide a thorough, yet concise review of relevant previous research. Contestants should clearly justify reasons for conducting the research and then state objectives. Material should be presented in a clear and interesting manner that will make the audience want to learn more. Originality includes scientific merit and the contribution of the research to Weed Science.
4. Materials and Methods should clearly describe how the research was conducted. All pertinent information with respect to how experiments were conducted should be included. A description of the experimental design utilized should be included as well as statistical analysis of the data. Materials and Methods should be brief but descriptive enough for the audience to understand and evaluate the overall approach used to address the stated objective(s).
5. Results and Discussion are an essential part of any research paper. It is important that the Results and Discussion be supported by the data and interpretation of the data is logical. Findings should be related to other work if available. References should be made to graphs, tables, figures etc. as necessary in the Results and Discussion section.
6. Conclusions should be clear, concise, and easy to follow. In addition, Conclusions must be supported by results. Conclusions should address stated objectives and/or hypothesis.
7. Future Research needs should be included that provide ideas that may result in a greater understanding of the subject. Future Research should address areas of study that are currently lacking data and/or require a greater understanding of the subject matter to determine scientifically sound solutions to the problem at hand.
8. Student Interaction is a vital portion of the presentation process. Students should be able to intelligently discuss all aspects of the material they are presenting. In addition, students should present themselves appropriately given that the WSSA is a professional, scientific society. If judges are unable to interact with all students in the contest, no points should be awarded to any student that a judge is assigned to in order to not give one student an advantage over another in terms of scoring.
9. Students are strongly encouraged to provide 8” x 11” color copies of their poster presentations to interested parties. Copies should be made available by displaying them at the poster board.