Sigma Xi
Student Research Showcase
a competition for virtual research presentations

GUIDE FOR STUDENT PRESENTERS

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Visit http://sigmaxishowcase.tumblr.com/ for a sample Student Showcase presentation site

Elements of a Showcase Presentation[1]

1. Short Title

A short title of the research project should appear near the top of the presentation page. This is not necessarily the formal title of the research project, which should appear in the abstract section (see below).

The short title should give a general idea about the topic and help confirm that the visitor is on the correct site. A formal title such as: "Fluctuating Asymmetry as an Indicator of Habitat Quality and Foraging Ability in the Tiger Salamander, *Ambystoma tigrinum*" could be shortened to simply: "Tiger Salamander: Foraging and Habitat."

The short title will appear on the Sigma Xi Student Showcase home page and will be used to identify student presentations to the judges.

2. Presenter Information

Presenters should be identified by name, current education status (examples: high school senior, graduate student, freshman) and institution name. Other information (field of study for example) may be included but is not required.

- ✓ Suggestion: include an image of either the presenter(s) or of something related to the research project.

3. Personal Video

- **Intended Audience**: judges as well as other visitors to the presentation site.
- **Length**: 2-3 minutes.
- **Goals:** serve as a means for presenters to introduce themselves and to generally introduce the research project to judges and guests visiting the presentation site.
- The video is also an opportunity to share enthusiasm for the research project.
    - ✓ Suggestion: video action of a presenter conducting research always makes for compelling content.
- Video capture by good quality cellphone camera, tablet, webcam or portable camera should work well.
- Include a statement of how the research fits into the **big picture** described in a way that judges and site visitors would find compelling.

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[1] Aside from the "Short Title," the elements of a Student Showcase Presentation may appear in any order on the presentation site.

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4. Discussion Widget

- **Intended Audience**: judges with a technical background that matches the student's research project. Some casual visitors may also comment.
- **Goal**: to afford students and judges an opportunity to dialogue about the student's research similar to how they might at a face to face event.
- **Requirements**: Students must add a Discussion widget to their presentation site. We suggest DISQUS but other similar widgets may do (see Resources below).
  - ✓ **The Discussion Widget must not require a judge to register or log in to submit questions**. Using DISQUS, allow Guest Commenting under Admin> Settings > Community Rules > Allow Guests to Comment.
  - ✓ If the presenter is unable integrate the discussion widget directly into the presentation site; a link to a separate site (such as a blog site) that can host the widget is acceptable.
- Student presenters must monitor judge responses throughout the discussion period (see Timeline below). Instantaneous responses are not required, but should be made in a timely manner.
- **Discussion behavior**: Discussion widgets typically allow presenters to moderate the discussion and flag/remove any inappropriate comments. As these forums are public, Sigma Xi cannot be responsible for the content of posts. Please do alert Sigma Xi if any student or judge does post inappropriate comments. This is not acceptable and we will follow up as necessary.

5. Abstract

- **Intended Audience**: judges and visitors with a general science background.
- **Suggested length**: 250 words maximum.

Abstracts should contain the following information

- Formal title of the research project (in bold font)
- Statement of hypothesis, research question or research goals
- Explanation of how the research fits into the "Big Picture"[2]
- General description of research methods and anticipated results
- Findings or conclusions

Images: Because of the limitations of some blogging/web creation software, the abstract may include an image of complex formulae (etc.) that could not otherwise be expressed. The abstract should, however, be primarily text.

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[2] A statement of the importance of a research project, the overall perspective or objective, not the fine detail.

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6. Slide Presentation

- **Intended Audience**: judges with a technical background that matches the student's general field of research.
- **Limit**: 25 content slides + 1 title slide + 1 acknowledgement slide (27 slides total).

Slide Presentation should contain the following:

- Formal title of the research project on slide 1 (may also include presenter information)
- Statement of hypothesis, research question or research goals
- Technical description of research methods and how they serve to test the hypothesis or answer the research question
- Data and results
- Findings or conclusions

Research that must remain unpublished (private)

If the technical slide presentation of your research contains information that must remain private (unpublished), you can create a secondary site that is password protected to host the slide presentation. Give the password to the Student Showcase organizers who will only share it with judges assigned to your presentation.

Your primary presentation site must contain your **personal video** and **abstract** and a **link to log in** to the secondary (password protected site). The private content page may contain your technical slide presentation.
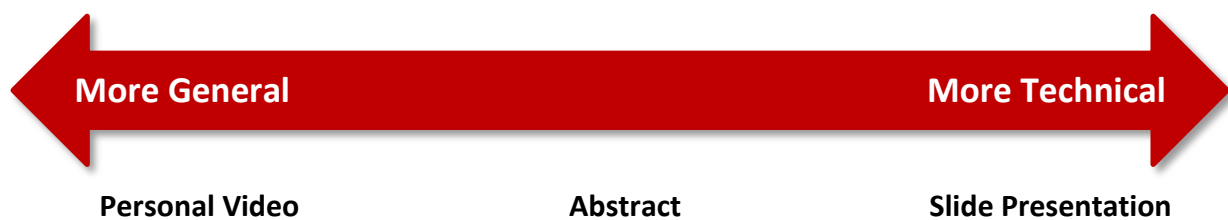
Information on creating a password protected page using Tumblr:

http://www.tumblr.com/docs/en/blog_management#versus

Including animation: some slide hosting sites, such as SlideShare, allow users to embed video into the presentation. An animated slide from PowerPoint, for example, can be saved as a .wmv file and uploaded to YouTube. The video can then be placed in the slide deck on the slide hosting site (follow directions for embedding on the hosting site).

**Note on Level of Technical Detail

Keep in mind the goals for the different elements of the presentation site. The level of technical detail should vary based on these goals. Consider the following when creating your presentation:

More General		More Technical
Personal Video	Abstract	Slide Presentation

Resources

An example student presentation site can be found at: http://sigmaxishowcase.tumblr.com/
Check out the slide presentation on that site for information on how to create a Student Showcase presentation site.

We suggest the following **free resources** to help create and host a Showcase presentation site:

- ☐ Tumblr https://www.tumblr.com/ : blogging software and hosting site that will allow you to add the elements of your presentation

- ☐ YouTube http://www.youtube.com/ or Vimeo http://vimeo.com/ : video hosting services that allow you to embed or add video to websites

- ☐ SlideShare http://www.slideshare.net/ : slide hosting site

- ☐ DISQUIS http://disqus.com/ : comment system that enables discussion on websites and connects conversations across the web

Important Note: Student-presenters are not required to use these resources to create their presentation site. HTML web pages or other resources are acceptable as long as the site includes the following:

1. Personal Video
2. Abstract
3. Slide Presentation
4. Discussion widget

Contact Information

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