FALL 2019 STUDENT RESEARCH SYMPOSIUM GUIDELINES

2019 Highlights:
- Poster session is Friday, 6th December, 2019 11am-2pm
- Attendance at poster not required, even for judging
- Gift card awards for best posters
- No poster printing in the Biology office – free printing in Cook Library
- Posters will stay up from Thursday to Tuesday

Research Symposium
The Student Research Symposium will be hosted by the Department of Biological Sciences and Beta Beta Beta Biological Honor Society on December 6th, 2019, from 11:00am-2:00pm on the third floor of Smith Hall. 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 encouraged if you can. Lunch will be provided by the department and Beta Beta Beta National Biological Honor Society.

Registration
Students must register online by 5:00pm EST on Friday, November 22nd, 2019. Register using the QR or at https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=knP5y_ZJ3Umophn3EO_MNWBPvmmMXwZCmNqbVnga84FURVpOUkM4T11KU1dWM1RRVkJRkdHQ1ZORS4u&qrcode=true

Judging
You can submit your poster for judging (this is required if you are enrolled in BIOL 491) during registration. Only the poster will be judged, not your in-person presentation. There will be two categories, one for undergraduate and one for graduate students. First place winners will receive a $75 gift card; second place winners will receive a $50 gift card, and third place winners will receive a $25 gift card. Honorable mentions may also be awarded at the discretion of the judges. Winners will be announced at the Department Holiday Lunch on December 13th and in TU Today.

Poster Making
PowerPoint is useful for making your poster; save it to a flash drive before printing. The printer in the Biological Sciences office is out of order, but there is free poster printing available in Cook Library. You must make a reservation, however, and there will be large demand for the

Questions? Ask Steve Kimble, skimble@towson.edu, room Smith 283
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 Hanging
Your specific poster location will be assigned by email. Each poster presenter should hang their poster in the assigned board before 6pm on THURSDAY, 5th December. The poster session will be held from 11am to 2:00pm, then leave your poster up until TUESDAY, 10th December.

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?