General Information and Guidelines

The first, most important, role of an ABRCMS judge is to encourage each student to continue their education and passion for the sciences. The second role as an ABRCMS judge is to judge.

Over 2,500 students will be presenting their research in a poster or oral presentation and competing for presentation awards which are given at the closing banquet. All presentations taking place in the Exhibit Hall will be judged. However, previous ABRCMS presentation awardees are ineligible for awards.

The purpose of the judging program is for students to:

- Talk about their research projects thereby demonstrating their scientific understanding and presentation skills
- Receive constructive, positive and specific to improvement feedback about their scientific understanding and presentation skills
- Have the opportunity to be recognized nationally
- Another less visible, but equally important purpose of the judging program is to set a national benchmark for excellence in STEM education and training

Returning Judges: Take Note of NEW Practices in 2019

- Returning ABRCMS J judges will have own webinar at Oct. 29 at 11 am ET
- Scientific Discipline Chairs will take attendance 15 minutes prior to the start of assigned session
- Judges should place initials on stickers
- New suggested feedback model (see number 8)
- Judges should check out with Scientific Discipline Chairs after completing assignments
- Judges are strongly encouraged to enter the scores of students immediately following the session

Judging at ABRCMS 2019

1. Watch the Judges Online Orientation Webinar.
   All judges are required to attend one of the two online orientation webinars. The webinar on October 29 at 1 pm EST will be for first time judges and the webinar on October 29 at 11 am EST will be for returning judges. These webinars will go over the judging process and provide an open forum for questions.

2. On Wednesday, Nov. 13, visit the Judges Lounge in room 207AB between 12-6:00 pm PST to pick up your assignments.
   If you cannot pick up the packet on Wednesday, you may pick it up during Thursday’s Mandatory Judges Meeting. If you cannot pick up your packet until after the Thursday morning meeting, please contact Leah Dixon ASAP. Otherwise, your assignments will be redistributed.

3. Attend the on-site Mandatory Judges Meeting on Thursday, Nov. 14 at 8:15 am.
   The main purpose of this meeting is to ensure all assignments have been distributed and all students have three judges. You will also meet your Scientific Discipline Chairs, Vice Chairs, and Ambassadors, who serve as your on-site point of contact.

4. Review the ABRCMS Presentation Rules and Judging Guidelines.
   Judging Guidelines
   - Do not recruit your assigned student while judging. Instead, you may give them your business card and set up a time to talk outside the presentation

FAQs: www.abrcms.org/abrcms-judge
• Never provide the presenter with their score or your predictions about their ranking
• Moral judging or opinion about the project should not be discussed with the presenter
• If you have a conflict of interest with any of the presentations assigned to you, please notify ABRCMS staff or your Scientific Discipline Chair immediately
• If you cannot attend your session, let your Scientific Discipline Chair or ABRCMS staff know ASAP
• Although we only need a limited number of oral presentation judges, we strongly encourage all judges to attend at least one oral presentation session. Oral presentations are very competitive and we want these students to feel supported by having the rooms filled

ABRCMS Poster/Oral Presentation Rules
Please indicate if any of these rules are broken while you are judging a poster or oral presentation:
• Only ONE student can present; the student who is listed on the judging form
• Faculty advisers and mentors are NOT allowed to coach or participate during student presentations
• Computers, ipads, and additional aids are not allowed during a poster presentation
• With exception of the university or funding logo, non-scientific images are not allowed on the poster or poster board

5. **Read your assigned students’ abstracts.**
   Before you judge, read each of your assigned students’ abstracts. Abstracts will be available on the Abstract Online Database and via the mobile app.

6. **Meet with your Scientific Discipline Chair, Vice Chair, and Ambassador 15 minutes prior to the start of your judging session.**
   Prior to the start of each session, the Scientific Discipline Chairs, Vice Chairs, and Ambassadors will meet with the assigned judges in the Exhibit Hall (oral judges will meet in their assigned rooms) by their respective disciplines to take attendance.

   Judges are typically assigned three presentations per session. You may decide the order you visit the posters, but please keep in mind only one judge should be at a poster at a time. Plan to spend about 15 minutes with each student: 10 minutes for the presentation and 5 minutes of Q&A.

   If you are running late to your assigned session, please contact your Scientific Discipline Chair, Vice Chair, and Ambassador ASAP.

7. **Place a sticker with your initials on the poster number of your assigned student.**
   This will help the Chairs, Vice Chairs, and Ambassadors keep track of the judges who have completed their assignments.

8. **Introduce yourself as a judge.**
   Let the student know that you are one of their assigned judges. Once the student has presented, ask questions to determine the student’s familiarity with the research. Your questions can be probing, but should not be critical.

9. **Provide feedback to your assigned student.**
   Providing constructive, positive feedback is a cornerstone of the ABRCMS Judging Program. The students are eager to learn how to improve, but also desire confirmation that they belong in science. We suggest using the following format to provide feedback:
   • Tell the student you are providing feedback. Specifically, state: “My feedback on your presentation is…”
   • Give a specific example of something they did well.
   • Describe one specific thing they can do to improve. Try to frame as a question (ie “have you considered…?” “what if you took this approach…?”).
   • Encourage them to continue with their studies in STEM.

FAQs: [www.abrcms.org/abrcms-judge](http://www.abrcms.org/abrcms-judge)
Avoid negative comments (ie. “Can’t”, “Never”, “Wrong”, etc) and do not make comments on the student’s personal characteristics. Remember the students are IN TRAINING and take your comments seriously.

10. Use the rubric to determine student’s score.
All poster and oral presentations are evaluated using common criteria and indicators of success. The criteria used to review students are based upon competence in:

- Developing background and a hypothesis or objective
- Incorporating methods
- Interpreting results
- Developing a conclusion and predicting future work
- Presenting work orally and handling questions
- Presenting work in writing (poster board or PowerPoint appearance)

The rubric utilizes a set of indicators by which students are assessed and assigned a score. When using the rubric, start from the score of 1(weakest) and move upward to 5(strongest). Students need to perform each indicator at a single level (1 through 5) before moving up to the next higher level. For instance, if a student has mastered all indicators described at level 1, then you should proceed to level 2 to determine if they have mastered all indicators, and so on. If a student has mastered all indicators in level 1, 2 and 3, but not 4, then they receive a 3 for that criterion.

11. At the end of the session, check-in with your Scientific Discipline Chairs to see if they need additional help covering students whose judges did not show up.
About 15 minutes before the end of the session, check in with your Scientific Discipline Chairs to see if additional help is needed to cover students whose judges did not show up.

12. Enter the scores of your students.
It is imperative that you enter your scores into the online system. You may do this via the conference mobile app or in the Judges Lounge. Students are competing for monetary prizes and in order to give each student a fair chance, it is essential to have all scores entered by 12:00 pm PST on Nov. 16.

2019 ABRCMS Student Presentation Chairs (C), Vice Chairs (VC), Ambassadors (A)
Please direct on-site questions to one of these individuals

**Biochemistry & Molecular Biology** - Drs. Charles Bevins (C), Candice Etson (VC) & Gustavo Silva (A)
**Cancer Biology** - Drs. Juanita Merchant (C), Manu Platt (VC) & Luise Ricks-Santi (A)
**Cell Biology** - Drs. Tracy Johnson (C), Brent Benwin (VC) & Gustavo Arizabalaga (A)
**Chemistry** - Drs. Squire Booker (C), Claudio Ortiz (VC) & Laura Sanchez (A)
**Computational & Systems Biology** - Drs. Bolaji Thomas (C), Jeanette Papp (VC) & Dana Crawford (A)
**Developmental Biology & Genetics** - Drs. Marlene De La Cruz (C) & Cristian Aguilar (VC) & Tyrell Carr (A)
**Engineering, Physics & Mathematics** - Drs. Rafael Diaz-Escamilla (C), Angela Alexander-Bryant (VC) & Abiraman Srinivasan (A)
**Immunology** - Drs. Chérie Butts (C), Harlan Jones (VC) & Cleber Ouvemey (A)
**Microbiology** - Drs. Alfredo Torres (C), Michael Johnson (VC) & Danielle Graham (A)
**Neuroscience** - Drs. Crystal Watkins (C), Ramesh Raghupathi (VC) & Michael Burton (A)
**Physiology & Pharmacology** - Drs. Latanya Hammonds-Odie (C), Amanda Marie James (VC) & TanYa Gwathmey (A)
**Social & Behavioral Sciences & Public Health** - Drs. Cherrie Boyer (C), Karen Singer-Freeman (VC) & David Córdova (A)

<p>| Poster Session 1 (A) | Thursday, November 14 | 2:00 p.m. – 3:15 p.m. |
| Poster Session 2 (B) | Thursday, November 14 | 3:30 p.m. – 4:45 p.m. |
| Oral Sessions 1 – 12 | Thursday, November 14 | 5:30 p.m. – 6:45 p.m. |
| Poster Session 3 (C) | Friday, November 15 | 10:30 a.m. – 11:45 a.m. |
| Poster Session 4 (D) | Friday, November 15 | 3:15 p.m. – 4:30 p.m. |
| Poster Session 5 (E) | Friday, November 15 | 4:45 p.m. – 6:00 p.m. |
| Oral Sessions 13 – 24 | Saturday, November 16 | 8:00 a.m. – 9:15 a.m. |
| Poster Session 6 (F) | Saturday, November 16 | 10:00 a.m. – 11:15 a.m. |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SCORE</th>
<th>BACKGROUND AND HYPOTHESIS OR OBJECTIVE</th>
<th>METHODS (Study Participants, Research Design, Procedures)</th>
<th>RESULTS</th>
<th>CONCLUSIONS AND FUTURE WORK</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>• Background was not stated</td>
<td>• Methods were not stated</td>
<td>• Results were not provided</td>
<td>• Conclusions were missing</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hypothesis/Objective was not stated</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Statement about Future Work was not included</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>• Background was not clear or</td>
<td>• Methods were not clear or</td>
<td>• Results were provided but lacked sufficient data to address the Hypothesis/Objective</td>
<td>• Conclusions were included but little connection was made to the Results</td>
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<td></td>
<td>appropriately linked to the Hypothesis/Objective</td>
<td>relevant to Hypothesis/Objective</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Statement about Future Work was provided but did not logically follow Results</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Hypothesis/Objective was not clear or relevant to the project</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>• Background was not clear or was</td>
<td>• Methods were appropriately linked to the</td>
<td>• Results included sufficient data to address the Hypothesis/Objective</td>
<td>• Conclusions were supported by the Results but the relevance to the Hypothesis/Objective was not provided</td>
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<td></td>
<td>incomplete</td>
<td>Hypothesis/Objective but lack relevant information to fully understand what was done</td>
<td>• Data were difficult to comprehend</td>
<td>• Statement about Future Work somewhat followed the Results</td>
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<td>• Hypothesis/Objective was clear but not appropriately linked to the Background</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>• Background was clear and relevant to the Hypothesis/Objective but included relevance beyond project’s scope</td>
<td>• Methods were clear and appropriately linked to the Hypothesis/Objective with sufficient details to understand what was done</td>
<td>• Results included sufficient data to address the Hypothesis/Objective</td>
<td>• Conclusions were supported by the Results but the relevance to the Hypothesis/Objective was unclear or incomplete</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Hypothesis/Objective was clear and appropriately linked to the Background</td>
<td>• Data were sufficient to comprehend</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Statement about Future Work logically followed the Results</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>• Background was clear and provided a relevant and concise overview of previous research that informed the project’s Hypothesis/Objective</td>
<td>• Methods were clear and appropriately linked to the Hypothesis/Objective with a clear rationale and comprehensive details to fully understand what was done</td>
<td>• Results included sufficient amounts of high quality data to address the Hypothesis/Objective</td>
<td>• Conclusions were strongly supported by the Results and the relevance to the Hypothesis/Objective</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Hypothesis/Objective was clear and appropriately linked to the Background</td>
<td>• Data were clear, logical, thorough and easy to comprehend</td>
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<td>• Statement about Future Work logically followed the Results and included next steps</td>
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<tr>
<td>SCORE</td>
<td>OVERALL PRESENTATION AND HANDLING QUESTIONS</td>
<td>QUALITY OF THE POSTER OR ORAL PRESENTATION</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| 1     | • Does not demonstrate any knowledge of the research project  
       • Reads from the poster (slide or script) all the time  
       • Does not understand questions  
       • Presentation is very confusing | • Not all of the expected components* are presented and the layout is confusing to follow in the absence of the presenter  
       • Text is hard to read, messy and illegible, or has spelling or typographical errors  
       • Poster/slides’ background is very poor  
       • Photographs/tables/graphs are poorly done |
| 2     | • Demonstrates a poor knowledge of the research project  
       • Reads from the poster (slide or script) most of the time  
       • Has difficulty answering questions  
       • Presentation is generally unclear | • Not all of the expected components* are presented and the layout is untidy and confusing to follow in the absence of the presenter  
       • Text is hard to read due to font size or color, or has spelling or typographical errors  
       • Poster/slides’ background is distracting  
       • Photographs/tables/graphs are not related to the text or are poorly labeled or do not improve understanding of the project |
| 3     | • Demonstrates some knowledge of the research project  
       • Has some difficulty answering challenging questions  
       • Presentation is somewhat unclear and has inconsistencies | • Most of the expected components* are presented, but the layout is confusing to follow in the absence of presenter  
       • Text is relatively clear and legible, but has spelling or typographical errors  
       • Poster/slides’ background is distracting  
       • Photographs/tables/graphs are not related to the text, or labeled correctly or do not improve understanding of the project |
| 4     | • Demonstrates good knowledge of the research project  
       • Speaks clearly and naturally; makes eye contact  
       • Answers most questions  
       • Presentation is clear for the most part, but has a few inconsistencies | • All expected components* are presented, but layout is crowded or jumbled making it confusing to follow in the absence of presenter  
       • Text is relatively clear, legible, and mostly free of spelling or typographical errors  
       • Poster/slides’ background is unobtrusive  
       • Most photographs/tables/graphs are appropriate and labeled correctly, which improve understanding of the project |
| 5     | • Demonstrates very strong knowledge of the research project  
       • Speaks clearly, naturally and with enthusiasm; makes eye contact  
       • Answers difficult questions clearly and succinctly  
       • Presentation is logical and very clear | • All expected components* are presented and are clearly laid out and easy to follow in the absence of presenter  
       • Text is concise, legible, and free of spelling or typographical errors  
       • Poster/slide background is unobtrusive  
       • All photographs/tables/graphs are appropriate and labeled correctly, which improve understanding of the project and enhance the poster/slides’ visual appeal |

*Components are defined as Title, Authors and Institutional Affiliation, Hypothesis/Objective, Background, Methods, Results, Conclusions, Future Work, Bibliography, and Acknowledgments