Interdisciplinary Biological Sciences Symposium

Abstract Committee
Standard Operating Procedures

7/23/2025

Abstract Committee Overview

Purpose: The abstract committee is responsible for reviewing and selecting abstracts submitted for presentation at the symposium. This ensures the quality and relevance of the content presented.

This committee needs to work closely with the **Judges and Social Committee**.

Responsibilities:

1. **Review Submissions**: Evaluate abstracts based on criteria such as originality, significance, methodology, and clarity.
2. **Selection**: Choose abstracts that align with the symposium's themes and goals.
3. **Coordination**: Work with the symposium organizers to schedule presentations and ensure a balanced program.

Process:

1. **Call for Abstracts**: Announce the submission guidelines and deadlines.
2. **Initial Screening**: Check submissions for adherence to guidelines.
3. **Detailed Review**: Committee members review and score each abstract.
4. **Final Selection**: Discuss and finalize the list of accepted abstracts.
5. **Notification**: Inform authors of the acceptance or rejection of their abstracts and send email reminders.
6. Finalize materials: Create a list of oral and poster presenters, print posters, communicate with Judges committee.

Timeline:

- Create Abstract committee: 3.5 months before symposium
- Send out Call for Abstracts: 3 months before symposium
- **Submission Deadline**: 2 months before symposium
- **Review Period**: six – eight weeks before symposium
- **Notification of Acceptance**: one month before symposium
- **Check the availability of posters and presentations:** one week before the symposium

Abstract Committee Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for the Interdisciplinary Biological Sciences Symposium

1. Purpose

To establish a clear and consistent process for the review and selection of abstracts for the Interdisciplinary Biological Sciences Symposium, ensuring high-quality and relevant presentations.

2. Scope

This SOP applies to all members of the abstract committee and covers the entire process from the call for abstracts to the final selection and notification.

3. Responsibilities

- **Committee Chair**: Oversees the process, coordinates meetings, and ensures adherence to timelines.

- Communicate effectively with rest of the committee and chairs of other committees
- Set deadlines for when things should be accomplished
- Send abstract submission deadlines to Marketing Committee chair
- Divide abstracts for committee members to review, keeping in mind any conflicts-of-interest in their background for better review process
- Remind advisor to approve the abstracts that their students submitted
- Assign specific tasks to committee members with clear deadlines, and have backup plans
- **PLEASE NOTE: THIS POSITION CANNOT SUBMIT AN ABSTRACT TO THE SYMPOSIUM**
- **This is to ensure that there is no conflict of interest during the initial abstract ranking and no bias occurs during this process**

    - **Committee Secretary**:

        - Keep meeting minutes

        - Send emails and reminders to committee members

        - Keep track of documents to be sent to other committees

- **Committee Members**: Review and evaluate abstracts, provide feedback, and participate in selection meetings.

- Review designated abstracts and rank them
- Help advertise the symposium and abstract deadlines by word of mouth.
- Create the 'presentations portion' of the program booklet including abstracts of the presenters
- Check the poster submission status **via bssymposium@iastate.edu email**

- Print the posters

4. Procedure

4.1 Call for Abstracts

- **Announcement**: Publish the call for abstracts on the symposium website and through relevant academic and professional channels.
- **Submission Guidelines**: Clearly outline the submission requirements, including format, length, and deadline.

4.2 Submission Management

- **Receipt of Abstracts**: Collect submissions through an online portal.
- **Initial Screening**: Verify that each submission meets the basic requirements (e.g., format, length).
- **Blind the Abstracts**: Create a document that contains only the title and the abstract text (do not include the authors), ready to be reviewed by committee members

4.3 Review Process

- **Assignment**: Distribute abstracts to committee members for review.
- The chair divides the submitted abstract after the first deadline among the committee members (after removing those that do not meet basic requirements – see materials) and has them rank the abstracts
    - Chair needs to make sure each abstract is reviewed by at least 5 people. Every abstract must be reviewed and scored by the same number of people
- **Evaluation Criteria**: Assess abstracts based on originality, significance, methodology, and clarity.
- **Scoring**: Use a standardized scoring system to rate each abstract.

4.4 Selection Process

- **Meeting**: Convene a meeting to discuss and finalize the selection of abstracts.
- **Consensus**: Aim for consensus in decisions; if necessary, use majority voting.
    - **Note (added after IBSS 2025):** Prioritize presenters that have not presented in previous symposium
- **Final List**: Compile a list of accepted abstracts for poster presentation and oral presentation. Match the abstracts with their authors

- **Scheduling:** Place accepted oral presentations into sessions based on the symposium schedule. Place the posters into sessions (if applicable)

4.5 Notification

- **Acceptance**: Notify authors of accepted abstracts, providing details on presentation format and schedule. Ask presenters to report their time conflicts.

4.6 Post-selection

- Send the list of oral presentations and poster presentations (with presenter names and emails, and which session they are in) to Judges committee and AV/IT committee
- The people's choice forms for each session will be created within one week of the symposium
- **Coordination**: Work with symposium organizers to finalize the program schedule.
- **Documentation**: Maintain records of the review process and decisions for future reference.

5. Timeline (Date TBD for 2026)

- Create Abstract committee: [Insert Date]
- Send out Call for Abstracts: [Insert Date]
- **Call for Abstracts**: [Insert Date]
- **Submission Deadline**: [Insert Date]
- **Review Period**: [Insert Date Range]
- **Selection Meeting**: [Insert Date]
- **Notification of Acceptance**: [Insert Date]
- **Deadline for poster printing and PowerPoint submission:** [Insert Date]

6. Review and Revision

- This SOP should be reviewed annually and updated as necessary to reflect changes in procedures or symposium requirements.

7. Approval

- This SOP is approved by the symposium organizing committee and is effective as of [Insert Date].

Materials:

Basic Requirements:

Abstracts MUST have a title, authors list, department and at most 250 words of text other than the title and authors. Up to 5 keywords can be included.

Please note: A member of the abstract committee may submit a poster or oral presentation but must not participate in the decision-making process for the format they entered, regarding which presentation will be selected.

Templates (TBD)

Call for Abstracts email:

Reminder for Call for Abstracts:

Reminder for Abstract Advisor Acceptance:

Oral Acceptance email (with PowerPoint format included):

Poster Acceptance email (with poster dimension included):