

Student Paper Competition Rubric
SWAAG/AGX Annual Meeting, 6-8 October 2024, San Marcos, TX
 Prepared by Michaela Buenemann, 3 October 2024

Evaluation Criterion	Outstanding (4)	Competent (3)	Adequate (2)	Insufficient (1)	Not Evident (0)
Introduction, including problem statement	Clearly articulates the problem with a compelling introduction.	States the problem clearly, but lacks depth.	Problem is identified, but the intro is vague or lacks focus.	Problem statement is unclear or underdeveloped.	No clear introduction or problem statement.
Research objectives / questions / hypotheses	Specific, well-defined, and align with the problem.	Clear but may lack specificity.	Present but poorly articulated or too broad.	Vague or not aligned with the problem.	Unclear or not present.
Research methods	Well explained, appropriate, and executed.	Explained and appropriate, but may lack detail.	Present but lack clarity or completeness.	Inadequately described or inappropriate.	No clear description of methods.
Results	Clearly presented and well-analyzed.	Presented but may lack depth or clarity.	Present but poorly presented or under-analyzed.	Incomplete or poorly analyzed.	No results are presented.
Discussion and conclusion	Discussion is insightful, and conclusions are well-supported by data.	Discussion and conclusions are logical but may lack depth.	Discussion and conclusions are present but underdeveloped.	Discussion and conclusions are weak or poorly supported.	No discussion or conclusion.
Engagement with supporting literature	Extensive and relevant literature is well-integrated.	Relevant literature is cited but may lack integration.	Literature is cited but either limited or poorly integrated.	Minimal engagement with literature.	No engagement with literature.
Originality	Introduces a novel research approach or significant new insight.	Thoughtful extension or new application of existing research.	Builds on existing research with minor new contributions.	Little innovation, largely reiterating existing research.	No new contribution, mirrors existing research closely.
Significance	Research is very significant and has strong implications.	The research is significant, but its impact may be limited.	The research is of moderate significance.	The research is of little significance or relevance.	The research has no clear significance.
Content	Well-organized, focused, deep knowledge, clear purpose, relevant examples, strong evidence, and excellent preparation; content flows	Organized, clear focus, proficient knowledge, relevant examples, and good preparation; content supports key points well.	General organization, some focus and knowledge, some examples and evidence, adequately prepared;	Loose organization, limited knowledge, weak purpose, minimal evidence, and preparation; content lacks clarity.	Disorganized, unclear purpose, little knowledge or evidence, no preparation; content is unclear and ineffective.

	logically and supports the poster's message.		content provides basic support.		
Use of visual aids (quality and quantity)	Visuals are highly effective, clarify and reinforce the poster's key points, are easily readable from a distance, error-free, and not distracting.	Visuals mostly clarify and support the poster's content, are readable, with only minor distractions or errors.	Visuals clarify the poster's content some of the time, but may be confusing, distracting, or lack consistency in clarity.	Visuals are either lacking or often confusing, distracting, and detract from the message; limited legibility, with noticeable errors.	Visuals are either inappropriate, illegible, highly distracting, flawed, or missing entirely.
Legibility and readability	Highly legible and readable from a distance; excellent font size, style, spacing; no issues with contrast or alignment; clear information flow.	Mostly legible and readable; good font size, style, and spacing; minor contrast or alignment issues; clear flow of information.	Legible but may require effort; inconsistent font size or spacing; minor contrast or alignment problems; some impact on readability.	Often hard to read; small or inconsistent font size; cramped spacing; noticeable contrast or alignment issues; difficult to follow.	Illegible or unreadable; severe issues with font size, spacing, contrast, and alignment; text inaccessible to audience.
Overall visual appeal of the poster	Exceptional quality; professional attire; displays exceptionally positive and engaged attitude.	High quality; professional attire; consistently positive and engaged.	Good quality, casual attire; generally positive and professional attitude.	Fair quality, casual attire; attitude lacks engagement or clarity.	Poor quality; less-than casual attire – lacks neatness; displays disinterest or negative attitude.
Overall clarity of presentation	Visually striking, well-organized, balanced use of color and whitespace; attractive and inviting, with a professional, polished design.	Appealing and well-organized; good use of color and space, mostly professional design; minor improvements could enhance appearance.	Moderately appealing; color and layout work but lack cohesion; design is functional but could benefit from refinement.	Somewhat cluttered or plain; color use is inconsistent, and the layout feels disorganized; lacks visual appeal.	Unappealing and disorganized; poor use of color and spacing; poster lacks coherence and professionalism, making it hard to engage.
Attitude and engagement with audience	Fully engages, convinces, leaves many new ideas, maintains attention with interactive discussion.	Engages and informs well, leaves some new ideas, holds attention with interesting interaction.	Engages on most points, generally clear but lacks full support, holds attention with some interaction.	Limited engagement, vague ideas, minimal interaction or enthusiasm.	Fails to engage, doesn't convince, leaves no new ideas, little interaction, audience disengaged.
Responses to questions	Answers questions with authority and confidence.	Relevant and concise answers.	Adequate responses.	Brief responses, questions not fully addressed.	Inadequate, awkward, or inappropriate responses.
Total	60	45	30	15	0

Best Applied Geography Research Paper Award Bonus Questions

1. This research uses geographical knowledge, methods, and techniques to address contemporary, real-world problems.

Strongly agree
(5)

Agree
(4)

Neutral
(3)

Disagree
(2)

Strongly disagree
(1)

2. Of the presentations I have seen, this research is the most deserving of the Applied Geography Student Award.

Strongly agree
(5)

Agree
(4)

Neutral
(3)

Disagree
(2)

Strongly disagree
(1)