

NAU UNDERGRADUATE SYMPOSIUM

2025 REVIEWER GUIDELINES

We are so excited for the 2025 NAU Undergraduate Symposium! Thank you for signing up to review presentations. Here are some guidelines on how to be a supportive and effective reviewer.

Your Role

As a reviewer, your role is to provide guidance, expertise, encouragement, and motivation to student research presenters, many of whom are first-time presenters. We ask you to provide constructive feedback and positive reinforcement. For many students, getting clear guidance can make all the difference in validating and motivating them to persist in their research, scholarly or creative path.

Before the conference:

One week prior to the conference, you can view your judging assignments. Please review your assignments for any conflicts of interest. Get familiarized with the reviewer platform! This platform works both on a computer or tablet (preferred) and on a mobile device.

During the presentation:

- Listen to the student, ask questions, and provide constructive feedback. It is important that you evaluate the student's ability to share their research and their comprehension of the topic, and not the science per se.
- Please submit your scores for the presenters immediately following the presentations, but no later than 12 PM Arizona Local Time on 4/26. PRO TIP: Submit your scores early so you don't forget important details!
- If you have any questions about reviewing, please contact ug-research@nau.edu.

For Virtual Reviewers:

- Since you will not be interacting with the student in person, you will only be able to provide feedback on what is provided in the reviewer platform.
- Students are strongly encouraged to include a video pitch in which they share their research, but many opt not to include this.
 - In these cases, you will not be able to evaluate their Presence, Speaking Style, and Delivery. However, the platform requires you to enter a score for every category.
 - You should enter “0” for this category and comment that an oral description of the work was not available.

Giving Constructive Feedback on Presentations

- Positive phrasing – provide a positive framework for the message
 - Explicitly identify and positively reinforce what was done well
 - Consider using a “compliment sandwich” - begin with positive feedback, sandwich in constructive feedback, and end with positive feedback
- Concreteness – ground feedback in specific, observable behavior
 - Constructive feedback should be specific and clear, not general or vague.
 - Be descriptive rather than evaluative. “You described your research methods very quickly, and others seemed confused.” is an observation; “You did a bad job describing your research methods” is vague and judgmental.
- Action-oriented – give a specific plan of action to follow
 - Don’t explain what *you* would have done in a similar situation; frame your feedback in terms of future presentations. ~~I would have done X...~~ Better: “Perhaps next time you could try using more visuals to communicate your outcomes.”

If you have any questions throughout the review process, please contact us at ug-research@nau.edu or find a Symposium volunteer during the in-person event for assistance.

Thank you for giving your time to support undergraduate research at NAU!