

Research Presentation Guidelines

A Comprehensive Guidelines for Undergraduate Medical Students | Oral Presentation Research Symposium

Prepared by Dr Faryal Shaikh

Research Module Coordinator

1. Executive Summary & Purpose

Participating in an undergraduate medical research symposium is a foundational milestone in academic medicine. This official handbook outlines the mandatory standards, structural expectations, formatting rules, and evaluation metrics required for delivering a high-impact oral presentation. The goal is to equip student researchers with the tools to translate complex clinical and epidemiological data into concise, persuasive, and scientifically rigorous presentations.

Core Objective of the Symposium

To evaluate the student's understanding of research methodology, analytical rigor, ethical integrity, and ability to effectively communicate scientific findings to a peer and faculty audience.

2. Session Structure & Time Management

Strict adherence to time limits is enforced to maintain the symposium schedule and ensure fair assessment across all candidates. Presentations exceeding the allotted timeframe will incur point deductions.

Segment	Duration	Key Focus
Oral Presentation	10 Minutes	Structured walkthrough of Background and Methods
Questions & Answers (Q&A)	3 Minutes	Defense of methodology, clinical or public health implications and limitations before judges.

Speaker Transition	2 Minutes	AV check and introduction of the subsequent presenter.
--------------------	-----------	--

3. Recommended Slide Deck Architecture (10–12 Slides)

A standard 10-minute presentation should contain between 10 and 12 slides. Below is the mandatory sequence for slide organization:

- **Slide 1: Title Slide** — Study title, full names of presenters alongwith enrollment numbers, co-authors, institutional affiliation, and supervisor name.
- **Slide 2–3: Introduction & Rationale** — Background context, magnitude of the problem, research gap, and precise study objectives/hypotheses.
- **Slide 4–5: Methodology** — Study design, target population, sample size calculation, inclusion/exclusion criteria, data collection tools, plan of analysis and ethical approvals.
- **Slide 12: References & Acknowledgments** — Essential references (Vancouver/AMA format) and disclosures/funding source declarations if any.

4. Visual & Formatting Standards

Slide Typography & Visual Hierarchy

- **Font Style:** Use highly readable sans-serif fonts such as Arial, Calibri, or Segoe UI.
- **Font Sizes:** Slide Titles (32–36 pt Bold), Section Subheadings (24–28 pt), Body Text / Bullet Points (18–20 pt), Captions / Footnotes (12–14 pt).
- **Color Palette:** High contrast between background and text (e.g., dark navy or dark charcoal text on a clean white/light gray background). Avoid high-contrast dark-mode backgrounds unless necessary for medical imaging.

Data Presentation & Design Principles

- **6×6 Rule: Maximum of 6 bullet points per slide, with no more than 6 words per line.** Limit body text to key phrases. Never copy-paste dense paragraphs into slides.

5. Rubric & Evaluation Criteria

Judges will evaluate presentations across four key domains (100 total points):

Evaluation Domain	Weight	Key Criteria
-------------------	--------	--------------

Scientific Merit & Methodology	8 Points	Rigor of study design, sampling technique, statistical validity, and clarity of objectives.
Communication	1 Point	Logical presentation flow.
Oral Delivery & Engagement	1 Points	Clarity of voice, eye contact, pacing, professional demeanor, and adherence to time limits.
Q&A Defense & Mastery	5 Points	Ability to answer technical questions, address study limitations, and demonstrate subject depth.

6. Oral Delivery & Presenter Etiquette

- **Eye Contact & Body Language**
- **Pacing & Voice:** Practice speaking at 110–130 words per minute. Pause intentionally after stating key findings.
- **Handling Questions:** Listen completely to the questioner before answering. Concede limitations gracefully without defensive language.