

# Ontario Pest Management Conference

## Conference Presenter Instructions

Other than plenary and invited speakers, presenters in all student and general oral and poster categories must submit abstracts on the OPMC website by the submission deadline to be eligible for oral or poster presentations. All presenters will receive an email confirming their spot in the competition within 10 days of the submission deadline. That email contains the deadlines for acceptance, conference registration, and pre-conference submission of electronic copies of the presentation or poster. Failure to meet these deadlines may result in lost marks in the student competitions and/or loss of a spot in the program. Participants will not receive any reminder emails following the acceptance email, so should put the deadlines in their calendars.

This document includes all instructions for those accepted into the program including pre-conference submission requirements, electronic file submission formatting, poster and oral presentation formatting, and what to do and expect the day of the conference.

If conference presenters have any questions at any time, they can email the Ontario Pest Management Conference Organizing Committee at [ontariopmc@gmail.com](mailto:ontariopmc@gmail.com). Students are encouraged to ask questions if any instructions are not clear because failure to follow instructions can result in loss of marks in the competition. **5% of the student's competition marks are based on their adherence to conference submission instructions and deadlines.**

### Pre-Conference Instructions

**Acceptance and Conference Registration:** Presenters in each of the submission categories (general oral, general poster, graduate student oral, graduate student poster, and undergraduate student poster) will receive an email confirming their spot in the program. The email will contain a link to the acceptance form and ask the participant to register for the conference. Participants should register for the conference first and then fill out the acceptance form, since the form will require the participant to verify that they are registered for the conference. Failure to accept and register by the deadline may jeopardize the presenter's spot in the program and competitions. The deadline will be contained in the acceptance email.

**Pre-Conference File Submission:** Presenters in all five submission categories will have deadlines for submitting electronic files. These should be sent by email to the OPMC email address: [ontariopmc@gmail.com](mailto:ontariopmc@gmail.com). The deadlines for file submission will be contained in the acceptance email.

Graduate and Undergraduate Posters: Poster presenters must submit the final version of their poster as a pdf file that is no larger than 10 MB. The deadline will generally be around one week prior to the conference. This version will be distributed to the poster judges to assess all categories in advance except for 'Presentation' and 'Understanding'. See the section "Judging Criteria" for the full scoring breakdown. The emailed version of the poster will also be posted on the OPMC website after the conference if the participant has given permission for posting in the submission form.

Graduate Orals: Graduate Oral participants must submit nearly final versions of their presentations as a pdf file that is no larger than 10 MB. The deadline will generally be a few days prior to the conference. This version will be distributed to the oral judges to judge some of the categories in advance and prepare questions to ask the participants. See the section "Judging Criteria" for the full scoring breakdown. Minor changes made to the presentation after the deadline are acceptable and will be considered by the judges. The emailed version will also be posted on the OPMC website after the conference if the participant has given permission for posting in the submission form. If the student makes changes to the file and would like a new version posted instead, they must email the modified version by the end of the day after the conference.

General Posters and Orals: Participants in the general categories that gave permission to post their presentations on the OPMC website must submit their final presentation/poster as a pdf file that is no larger than 10 MB. These do not need to be submitted ahead of the conference but must be received by the end of the day after the conference.

## **Withdrawal Policy**

Student competitors and general session presenters must inform the OPMC of their withdrawal from the competition/program by two weeks before the conference date in order to receive a refund for their registration fee. Participants who fail to give two weeks' notice will not receive a refund for their registration fee. Two weeks' notice of withdrawal is required to give students or other participants on the waiting list sufficient notice that a spot has become available.

## **Oral Presentation Format and Instructions**

- Presentations must be 12 minutes in length + 3 minutes for questions and discussion. Graduate student oral competitors should strictly adhere to these

times. Failure to leave enough time for questions could result in low or no scores in the 'Timing' and 'Understanding' judging categories.

- Use Power Point format. To avoid incompatibility problems, limited use of animation is recommended.
- Do not rely solely on notes in Presenter Mode in Powerpoint. The computer screen may not be visible from the podium, depending on the set-up available at the venue. Print off any notes you need as a backup.
- Both student and general oral presenters will need to bring a copy of their presentation on a USB memory stick to the conference. **The copy sent ahead of the conference for the graduate oral competition will not be available on the day of the conference.**
- On the day of the conference, presenters should bring their USB to the front of the conference room 30 minutes prior to the start of the morning or afternoon sessions. If nobody is there to load the presentation, please ask for assistance at the registration desk.
- The final agenda with the oral presentation times will be distributed to all participants well ahead of the conference. Except in extraordinary circumstances, we cannot accommodate changes to the agenda once the program is distributed.

## **Poster Presentation Format and Instructions**

- Posters must be **120 cm (4 ft) in height x 90 cm (3 ft) in width, portrait format.** The header should include the title, authors, and institution where the work was conducted. Photos of the presenting author can be included on the right side of the header.
- Student competitors must be present at the poster during the designated judging time and during the morning and afternoon breaks. General poster presenters are encouraged but are not required to be present at their posters during the breaks.
- The final agenda with the poster presentation judging times will be distributed to all participants well ahead of the conference. Except in extraordinary circumstances, we cannot accommodate changes to judging times once the program is distributed.
- Posters can be set up on the board displaying the assigned Poster Number beginning at 8:00 am the day of the conference, must be up by no later than 9:00 am the day of the conference, and must remain in place until afternoon break is over. It is the presenter's responsibility to hang up the poster. Any posters not claimed at the end of the conference will be removed and discarded by organizers unless other arrangements have been made.
- Student competitors will have 10 minutes for their poster judging session which will occur DURING the oral sessions at the poster. Students should be courteous to their fellow competitors by showing up near their poster no sooner than 10 minutes prior to the judging time and standing well back of other competitors until the judges head towards the student's poster. Students should avoid having conversations while other competitors are being judged.

- The 10-minute judging session should include a 3-minute summary of the poster, leaving 7 minutes for questions from the judges. Competitors should strictly adhere to these times. Failure to leave enough time for questions could result in low or no scores in the 'Presentation' and 'Understanding' judging categories.

## **Student Competition Judging Criteria**

Students will be scored by a panel of judges using standardized judging criteria as outlined below. The panel of judges usually consists of a mix of industry experts in pest management from OMAFA, local universities and industry. Due to conflicts in judging their own students, it is usually not possible to have faculty on the judging panel. Judges that are affiliated with a research project or listed as an author on a presentation are not permitted to judge that presentation or poster and an alternative judge is appointed.

### **Posters:**

#### **A. Scientific Content and Context – 60 points**

##### *1. Introduction: 10*

Presents background of previous work; states clear objectives of present study and shows relationship to previous work.

##### *2. Body of Presentation: 10*

Clearly states materials and methods, relates them to objectives; states results and specifies strengths and weaknesses of procedures used. Clearly states materials and procedures used.

##### *3. Summary: 10*

Discussion of results and conclusions, emphasizing significance and implications of study; compares results with earlier studies.

##### *4. Research: 20*

Contributes new information to a particular field; the work is thorough and of a high quality; experimental design and methodology are appropriate and results substantial enough to support conclusions.

##### *5. Understanding of Subject: 10*

Originality of presenter demonstrated in the assembly of ideas; responds effectively, clearly and comprehensively to questions from the judges.

#### **B. Presentation style – 40 points**

##### *6. Organization: 10*

Panel sequence is clearly evident; topical sequence is logical and evident; statements clear and unambiguous.

*7. Visual Impact: 20*

Appropriate and effective use of graphical and tabular presentation of data leading to improved understanding of topic; easily read and understood; use of backgrounds and colours to enhance visual impact but avoiding collage.

*8. Presentation: 10*

Presenter is familiar with content of poster; frequent eye contact maintained with the judges; voice modulation appropriate; maintains composure and deportment during the course of the presentation.

**Orals:**

**A. Scientific Content and Context – 60 points**

*1. Introduction: 10*

Presents background of previous work; states clear objectives of present study and shows relationship to previous work.

*2. Body of Presentation: 10*

Clearly states materials and methods, relates them to objectives; states results and specifies strengths and weaknesses of procedures used. Clearly states materials and procedures used.

*3. Summary: 10*

Discussion of results and conclusions, emphasizing significance and implications of study; compares results with earlier studies.

*4. Research: 20*

Contributes new information to a particular field; the work is thorough and of a high quality; experimental design and methodology are appropriate and results substantial enough to support conclusions.

*5. Understanding of Subject: 10*

Originality of presenter demonstrated in the assembly of ideas; responds effectively, clearly and comprehensively to questions from the audience. *NOTE: If questions are not posed from the floor, it is the responsibility of the judges to ask at least two questions (time permitting).*

**B. Presentation style – 40 points**

*6. Organization: 10*

Topical sequence is logical and evident; statements clear and unambiguous.

*7. Timing: 10*

Keeps within allotted time for presentation; time is proportioned and balanced.

### *8. Presentation: 10*

Presenter is familiar with content of paper; frequent eye contact maintained with the audience; voice modulation appropriate for size of room and audience; maintains composure and deportment during the course of the presentation.

### *9. Visual Impact: 10*

Appropriate and effective use of graphical and tabular presentation of data leading to improved understanding of topic; easily read and understood.

## **Judge's Feedback**

The OPMC was created in part to help students prepare for larger scientific conferences and competitions. All students in the three student competition categories will receive judge's comments and scores back after the conference. When looking at those scores, students should not be too concerned that they are receiving a lot of negative feedback. The judges have very little time to score each student and prioritize providing areas for improvement rather than pointing out what was done well. It may take up to 7 to 10 days after the conference to compile the judge's comments and send them to each student.

## **Student Competition Tips and Cautions**

Regardless of whether you are doing an oral or poster presentation, here are some tips and cautions to keep in mind when preparing and delivering your presentation:

1. Follow all instructions and deadlines: Conference instructions and deadlines are necessary to allow the Organizing Committee to create the program/agenda and ensures consistent formatting. When 5% of the competition score is assigned for your ability to follow all instructions and deadlines, that is sufficient to knock an otherwise excellent paper out of contention for a prize.
2. Know your audience: The Ontario Pest Management Conference is attended by a diverse audience of entomologists, pathologists and weed scientists working on a diverse range of cropping, livestock, environmental, or natural systems. Do not assume everyone in the audience knows the lingo, acronyms, standard methods, background research, or graphical tools used in your industry. Fully explain all methods and graphics and spell out all acronyms, at least the first time they are used, unless they are universally known (e.g., DNA).
3. Don't miss a judging category: The judging criteria are clearly outlined above. If you don't have content in a category, for example, you don't have an introduction, the judges may not be able to assign any marks in that category. A student that receives zero marks in a category is very unlikely to win the competition.
4. Explain why your research was necessary: An introduction is key so the audience knows why you did your research and what previous research has

been done to lead to your research project. It is important for you to demonstrate that you understand the bigger picture of why the research was necessary, who is impacted by the pest problem you researched, and how they could benefit if your research is successful. Explain why you chose the treatments and methods used in your research.

5. State clear objectives or hypotheses: It is not always clear what the goal of the research was. Not only is it important to clearly state these, it is also important to re-visit them at the end of your presentation to state whether they were met.
6. Pace yourself: Do not spend too much time on any one section of your presentation or poster. A good scientific presentation should spend roughly equal times on background (including objectives or hypotheses), methods, results, and discussion/conclusions/next steps. This can vary depending on the study, but all four sections deserve sufficient time. Breathe between sentences and slides so you are not speaking too fast for the audience.
7. Avoid excessive graphics: While you may have done a tremendous amount of work in your research, not all of it can fit into a poster or 12-minute presentation. Only include key graphs and figures that demonstrate your results. Due to the diverse audience at OPMC, spend sufficient time on each graph to fully explain what was done and the axes, statistical comparisons, treatments and key trends.
8. Avoid excessive written verbiage: A poster or oral presentation is not an essay. A good presentation uses as little words as possible. Use photos, tables and graphics to replace words wherever possible. Ensure the font size is readable by the audience. Ensure plenty of space around text fields to not clutter up the poster or slide. For posters – highlight key sections so a reader can get a good summary of what you did in under 30 seconds of viewing your poster.
9. Use consistent colour and fonts: Multicoloured graphics can be overwhelming in both a poster and a slide. Use a consistent colour scheme, formatting and fonts throughout.
10. Have a logical flow: While this is more relevant to posters, it can be useful in presentations as well. Make sure the reader/audience can easily follow your poster/presentation. Ensure the reader knows where to start reading your poster or slide and where to finish. For example, do not insert your results ahead of your methods on a poster just because it fits better on the page. Sometimes creative layouts can be difficult to follow.
11. How will your research lead to improvements in pest management?: Ensure you are linking your research with the bigger picture. How could your results lead to improvements in the industry? What needs to be solved before that can happen? If your research didn't work as planned, how does this benefit the next researcher to tackle the problem? A student that does not know how their

research fits into the bigger picture has very little chance of winning a competition.

12. Don't read: While delivering your presentation, avoid reading notes, slides or poster text. You should have practiced your presentation sufficiently to not rely on text. Use presentation notes only to trigger your memory. Spend sufficient time looking at your audience rather than the slides or poster.