

Eastern Colleges Science Conference Guidelines for Full-length Manuscript

General Information

Full-length research manuscripts are especially noteworthy accomplishments, and students who are ready are encouraged to submit full-length manuscripts for consideration for excellence awards at the annual Eastern Colleges Science Conference (ECSC). Students are encouraged to have their research mentors help with the process. All full-length manuscripts are to be sent electronically as an attached file to an email addressed to Dr. Lance Evans at lance.evans366@gmail.com by the deadline posted on the ECSC web page (ecsc1.org). There can be no exceptions to this deadline. One condition for submission of a manuscript is that the author must also register for and give either a platform or a poster presentation at the conference.

Quoting from the minutes of the 64th ECSC board meeting, April 24, 2010 (posted in the Minutes section of ecsc1.org), "The content of a full-length manuscript... must have data that usually takes one of two forms: Discovery-based science in which the investigator is presenting novel, goal-directed findings; or hypothesis-driven science in which data are analyzed to test a hypothesis."

Each manuscript submission should be a single document file, with all components (e.g., manuscript text, tables, figures, figure legends) included in that single file. (If more than one file is necessary, please make that decision in consultation with Dr. Evans.) The first author should be the student who is submitting the manuscript for award consideration. (If the manuscript is being submitted as a group effort involving no more than three undergraduate authors, the manuscript will be considered for a single excellence award going to the entire group. In such a case, please make it clear who the undergraduate authors are.) Dr. Evans will copy the uploaded document file, remove author name(s), institution, and Acknowledgments section, and send the manuscript for evaluation. All materials for a manuscript must be in Microsoft Word. Do not send in pdf format.

Each manuscript/paper is evaluated by someone who has professional expertise in the discipline covered by the research topic and who is not from the same institution as the author(s). The evaluator is charged with

examining the manuscript and determining whether or not it is excellent and deserving of an award, or not. The decision of the evaluator is final. Excellence awards are presented during the conference's award banquet. Only one award is presented for each excellent manuscript. In the case of multiple undergraduate authors, the manuscript award is presented to the group as a whole. All authors in the group can cite the award on their resumes.

Each full-length manuscript that ECSC considers must be original, empirical research that presents a testable hypothesis, describes the laboratory or field experimental design to test the hypothesis, presents the results, and discusses those results in the context of other research that addresses the hypothesis.

Format for the Submitted Manuscript

Page 1 must contain only the title, name(s) of author(s), and institution(s) of author(s). The full mailing address of the first author must be provided. The address should include: name, street address, city, state and zip code. Post office boxes are not accepted. Note: The name(s) of author(s) and institution(s) of author(s) should not appear on any other page.

Page 2 must contain the Abstract, a short and concise summary of the hypothesis being tested, the methodology, the results, and the discussion.

Page 3 must begin the Introduction section. The introduction should provide some overview of the general research topic, leading to the specific hypothesis being tested in the manuscript as a logical next step.

The Introduction section is followed by the Materials and Methods section, where the experimental design is presented so that the reader can clearly understand how the experiment was conducted.

The Materials and Methods section is followed by the Results section, where results are stated in concise paragraphs and where references are made to particular figures and/or tables that show those results. Note: Please do not discuss results in this section.

The Results section is followed by the Discussion section, where one concludes whether to reject or accept the tested hypothesis, based on the results. Here, the results are interpreted intelligently in the context of other peer-reviewed, published information dealing with the research topic. A case is made here regarding the significance of the research undertaken.

The Discussion section is followed by the Acknowledgments section, where special thanks are given to those who played a major role in the research. This is also the section where reference is made to the funding source for this research, if known.

The Acknowledgments section is followed by the Literature Cited section, where all information sources referred to in the manuscript are fully cited following a standard scientific format for reference citations. (Note: Please consult your research mentor regarding which format to follow for this section.)

The Literature Cited section is followed by the Tables section (if there are tables). Tables should be presented in numerical order and cited in the manuscript text as Table 1, Table 2, etc. Each table should have a title that is so complete that a reader can understand the table without having to read the manuscript text. All tables should be cited at least once in the text of the manuscript.

The Tables section is followed by the Figure Legend section (if there are figures). Here, the figure titles are presented in numerical order (Figure 1, Figure 2, etc.), separate from the figures themselves. Each figure title should be so complete that a reader can understand the figure without having to read the manuscript text.

The Figure Legend section is followed by the actual figures, presented in numerical order. Please label each figure as Figure 1, Figure 2, etc. All figures should be cited at least once in the text of the manuscript.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is defined as the practice of taking someone else's work or ideas and passing them off as your own. Each of our institutions has a plagiarism policy and you may use your institution's guidelines for writing your ECSC manuscript. The author should pay close attention to the following explanation of plagiarism and the use of citations: "It is still plagiarism if you use an author's key phrases or sentence structure in a way that implies they are your own, even if you cite the source" (p. 29 of Victoria E. McMillan's *Writing Papers in the Biological Sciences*, 4th ed. (2006), New York: Bedford/St. Martin's. 269 p.)

Questions?

If you are a student with a question regarding this process, please contact your research mentor. If you are a research mentor with a question, please contact Dr. Lance Evans at lance.evans366@gmail.com.

Evaluation of Manuscripts

An email will be sent to the person that submitted the manuscript acknowledging receipt of the manuscript.

All students that submit a full-length manuscripts must present their research in a platform or poster presentation at the conference.

The manuscript will be judged by one judge as close to the field as possible. ECSC has a list of possible judges on hand.

Before sending to a judge, the name of the author(s) and all identifiers of institutions will be removed.

A list of manuscripts for review with authors names will be sent to the host institution for inclusion in the conference booklet but this booklet will not be released for viewing until all evaluations of manuscript have been received.

Judges are only to determine if the manuscript is 'excellent' or 'not excellent'. No review is expected so persons submitting a manuscript should not expect any responses or explanations from judges.

The only acknowledgement is given at the Awards Ceremony.

Only mention of persons the received an "excellent" rating will be acknowledged at the Awards Ceremony.

Only the first student author of the manuscript that received an 'excellent' rating will be given a plaque at the Awards Ceremony.

It is recognized that the submission of a full-length manuscript by a student represents a great deal of work well beyond the effort required to present a platform presentation or poster presentation. ECSC recognizes that students that submit manuscripts have worked closely with a professor and that such collaborations form the basis of science. So, even though a manuscript is not judged as 'excellent' does not slight or diminish the high level of effort of a student that submits a full-length manuscript. The goal of a scientist is to produce a product at the level of publication after a review by their peers. Students that submit a full-length manuscript are far along that path. So, congratulations.