

General Program Guidelines for Sites Hosting a National Conference on Undergraduate Research (NCUR[®])

The following are program guidelines for sites wishing to host future NCUR[®] conferences. These guidelines include features that the Board of Governors deems essential to the tradition of quality NCUR[®] conferences. Deviations from these guidelines must be approved by the Site Selection and Conference Oversight Committee (SSCOC) and the Board. The SSCOC provides *Conference Mentors* to host sites for the planning and implementation of conferences. The SSCOC works with host sites to comply with the features and guidelines listed below:

Section 1.

Letter of Institutional Support: A proposal to host an NCUR[®] conference must include a letter of institutional support from the President or CEO identifying the institution's dedication to and support of undergraduate research and creative activities and its commitment to hosting an NCUR[®] conference.

Section 2.

Proposal Guidelines

Institutions preparing a proposal to host NCUR shall prepare a document that addresses all the items outlined in the section 3 below, **Conference Guidelines**. In order to give the Board of Governors the most accurate picture of an institution's ability to host an effective conference, the Site Selection Committee advises addressing the following details in the proposal:

- overview of the institution's ability to host the "big event"
- campus map(s)
- photos of campus or virtual tour
- photos and floor plans of crucial building sites
- # of available classrooms for oral presentations (minimum of 50 required)
- # of "smart" classrooms available
- # of classrooms able to import technology
- 10,000 minimum square footage for posters
- detailed info about gallery space including security and lighting
- registration venue and information about timing and availability of registration
- lunch distribution venue and plan that includes bad weather options
- possible food vendors
- transportation considerations, including safety for pedestrians, shuttle service to/from airport(s) and hotels.
- # of hotel rooms and rates
- Ability to accommodate Thursday night participants with activity or dinner
- adequate local restaurants to feed participants who stay for the Saturday night
- Proposed dates
- Accessibility of campus (ADA) and accommodations for persons with disabilities

Section 3.

Conference Guidelines

Dates of the Conference: The annual conference of the National Conferences of Undergraduate Research (NCUR[®]) shall occur in the spring, either in March or April. Conference planners shall avoid the major religious holidays – Easter (including Orthodox) and Passover. Optimal timing places the dates between mid-march and late April. Dates before mid-March are problematic in that logistical timelines for conference organization and feedback are unworkably compressed. Conference dates that are too close to the end of April risk overlapping with final exams or graduation ceremonies at some institutions.

Conference Length: The length of the conference shall be two and one-half days, normally beginning with early registration on Wednesday evening and ending Saturday. The Board will meet on Wednesday at the host site prior to the start of the conference. Host sites should plan a social hour and dinner at the end of the Board meeting when Board members meet appropriate administrative personnel of the host institution.

Conference Size: The target size of the conference shall be between 1700 and 2200 student presenters. Host sites may aim for the lower or higher end of this range; their choice will depend on a given site's ability to host its chosen number and still mount a quality conference. Sites should anticipate shrinkage of about 5% in the number of student presenters selected who will not show up for the conference. Student presenters will likely make up about 80% of the total number of conference registrants. Total participants will likely range between 1800 and 2500 persons.

Conference Site and Logistics: Host sites shall be accessible by both reasonable ground transportation and convenient air service. Host sites shall ensure that adequate numbers of hotel rooms or other suitable accommodations are available for conference participants within walking distance or linked by bus/shuttle service provided by the host site to campus sessions and activities. Shuttle bus service should be provided by the host site to carry participants to and from distant venues.

Host sites should arrange for transportation to the registration site on Wednesday evening and provide shuttle service to hotels, if necessary.

Mailing Lists: the NCUR[®] Board will maintain updated distribution and mailing lists for the host site to use for the call for papers.

Web Site: The host site shall host the conference web site and work with upcoming conference sites to pass on any useable structures or design elements. Conference logo design elements must conform to NCUR[®] convention and be approved in advance of use by the Board.

Under-represented Participation:

The NCUR[®] Board of Governors has consistently supported the attendance of under-represented students at the conference. Host sites and the Board of Governors shall work cooperatively to sustain the presence of under-represented student presenters at the annual conference. Host sites will demonstrate a plan to support these goals according to their own state, as well as federal guidelines (e.g. McNair Scholars and other TRIO-related programs).

Conference Program: The conference shall feature both oral and poster presentations in a wide range of academic areas including visual arts exhibitions and performances.

Host sites shall provide **moderator/discussion leaders** for each oral session and performance. Moderators are most usually drawn from the faculty and staff of the host site. Host sites are encouraged to use students as co-moderators. Moderators shall hold to the assigned order of presentation for each session. Host sites are encouraged to plan for back-up moderators to ensure sessions flow smoothly. If presenters do not appear, the moderator shall put the session on hold until the next scheduled presentation.

Oral presentations shall normally be 20 minutes in length (15-minute presentation followed by 5 minutes of questions). Efforts shall be made to limit the number of concurrent oral presentations to allow maximum student attendance and participation. There should be a minimum of 50 classrooms set aside for oral presentations.

Poster sessions shall be 1.5 to 2 hours in length in a facility allowing for a minimum of 33 poster kiosks, each having three exhibit sides, for a minimum of 99 presenters per session. There should be adequate space for registrants to walk among the posters (at least 10-foot radius, from the center of the kiosk, spacing) and talk with poster exhibitors. Posters must fit on the display space without overlap. Host sites will insure that presenters attach posters to the kiosks with Velcro. Push pins are prohibited. The past year host site is responsible for shipping the poster stands to current year host site institution.

Venues for fine arts/design/performing arts sessions shall be approved by consultation with the SSCOC and appropriate Board members. Provisions must be made for music, dance and drama performance spaces. Gallery space shall be provided for studio art and design such that oral presentations by student artists/designers can be given in the same or closely adjoining space.

The **conference program** shall not include major events that compete with student sessions. Host sites should plan on at least three or four plenary sessions, the opening plenary to be scheduled on Thursday morning, having a diversity of academic interests, ethnicity, and gender. NCUR[®] has traditionally preferred that student researchers/creative artists from the host site introduce these plenary sessions and then serve as moderators during the question and answer period. Thought should be given to an appropriate space to hold plenary sessions with a communications link to another site for potential overflow.

Host sites shall design a **program book** that is fully paginated. The book shall be designed so readers can easily negotiate the schedule by conference day, discipline, poster versus oral session, and other special sessions. All presenters shall be indexed. A campus map shall be placed in a part of the book that can be easily accessed (such as the back cover). The program book draft shall be reviewed by the Site Selection chair before publishing.

Host sites should ensure **host visibility** (session moderators, student helpers, organizers, trouble shooters) through the effective use of t-shirts, name tags, and signage.

Host sites shall hold a **special event on the Friday evening** (*Big Event*) of the conference such as a banquet, arts festival or special program that may spotlight the

unique nature of the host institution or the region. Other appropriate activities and opportunities for students should be scheduled throughout the conference.

Host sites shall hold a **reception for faculty and administrators to meet the Board of Governors** on the Friday evening of the conference before the special Friday evening *Big Event*.

Host sites shall provide designated **faculty/administrator lounge** space that includes internet access.

If appropriate, host sites shall provide a designated time and table space, in close proximity to the poster session venue, for **representatives from graduate or other programs** to meet with prospective students.

During years NCUR is actively recruiting possible host sites, the current host site shall provide an information table to be staffed by BOG members to provide information and encouragement to schools to consider hosting a future conference.

Host sites shall **provide box lunches and morning and afternoon refreshments** for all participants on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday of the conference.

Faculty Administrator Network (FAN): FAN activities, which are planned for each conference by a standing committee of the Board of Governors, are designed for faculty and administrators who are involved in the promotion of undergraduate research and creative activities. These activities include special topic lunches and/or formal presentations in which faculty and administrators can discuss or address issues of undergraduate pedagogy and research program administration. Host sites shall provide FAN-sponsored locations during the conference where faculty and administrators can meet formally and informally. FAN sessions shall not overlap with student presentation time blocks.

Abstract Review: Host sites have responsibility for review and selection of 250 to 300 word abstracts for presentations at the conference. The work presented at the conference should represent the nation's best undergraduate research, scholarly or creative work. Host institutions should be rigorous in their review of student abstracts and may be faced with the need to reject or suggest revision of a substantial number to ensure presentation quality, student participation, and the prestige of the conference. While the quality of the abstract should remain the main criterion for acceptance, the host site reviewers should make every effort to have a diversity of academic interests and disciplines. Host site shall post abstract review criteria on the website. Students are encouraged to submit one abstract. Any institution found to be negligent in paying their NCUR[®] registration fees shall not have their abstracts and/or manuscripts considered for review for a period of two years.

Abstract CD: Host sites shall plan to fund, assemble, and publish in CD-ROM format an abstract “book” for the spring conference. The Abstract Book is a mark of a first-class professional meeting and an excellent archive of the conference for student presenters, future host sites, and the conference planners. The host site shall provide a copy of the CD-ROM to BOG members and the NCUR[®] archives at UNC Asheville.

Sponsor Recognition: Appropriate forms of sponsor recognition shall be reviewed by the Board prior to their implementation.

Proceedings: The host site shall provide adequate space for the *NCUR[®] Proceedings* editorial staff and student paper submission and pick up. The locations shall be highly visible and accessible. It shall also be as close to registration as possible. Host site will insure that there are a minimum of two electrical outlets at the *Proceedings* venue.

Fall and Spring BOG Meetings: Host sites shall host a two-day planning meeting for the Board to introduce its members to the venues where the conference will take place and to provide details of the host site’s plans for running the conference. These meetings are usually held toward the last week of September (fall meeting), and on the Wednesday (spring meeting) just before the conference opens.

Section 4.

Board of Governors Membership:

Upon acceptance of proposal, the institution shall appoint a representative to serve on the Board for a three year term, twenty-one months prior to the conference.

Section 5.

Final Report: Host sites shall provide a Final Report on the Conference to the Board by September 1 of the year of the Conference for the approval of the Board. The report shall consist of at least the following terms:

- a signature page
- complete financial accounting
- attendance data, to include paid and unpaid registrants, broken down by presenters and non-presenters, students, faculty, administrators, others, and schools for which payment was not received (see section 3, Abstract Review)
- data on all registrants, broken down by ethnicity, gender, and discipline (and a way to correlate that data)
- data on numbers of abstracts submitted, accepted, accepted with revision, and rejected, by discipline, data on cancellations and no-show presenters
- listing of institutions represented at the conference, with number of conference registrants and the number of students/mentor for each institution, by Carnegie Classification
- the number of student participants from schools that have been awarded NCUR[®] /Lancy grants.

Updated and Approved:

September 29, 2007

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