



## GRADUATE STUDENT PAPER COMPETITION GUIDELINES AND SCORE SHEET

**Purpose:** To provide graduate students with opportunities to develop and advance their abilities to communicate scientific data in oral and written formats.

**Eligibility and Requirements:** Graduate students that wish to compete in the Graduate Student Paper Competition MUST be current members of WSASAS; please verify membership BEFORE submitting a paper. Graduate students enrolled in institutions outside the WSASAS must pay an additional \$10 fee to add a WSASAS membership to their current ASAS membership. Membership forms require the signature of an advisor to verify the student's enrollment. Please direct questions concerning membership status to ASAS headquarters (asas@asas.org).

Students may compete in the WSASAS Graduate Student Paper Competition as many times as they desire during their M.S. and Ph.D. programs. If a student places first, they are ineligible to compete in future competition events.

**Deadlines:** Contestants MUST submit an *Abstract* and a *Competition Paper* for the general meeting by the due date. See the WSASAS Meeting website for information on due dates and submission guidelines.

The *Competition Paper* submitted to the WSASAS Graduate Student Competition Paper will not be published in *Translational Animal Science*. However, the *Competition Paper* will be an ESSENTIAL part of the students' written evaluation in the competition.

**Competition Process:** The competition consists of two graded categories; written *Competition Paper* (40%) and *Oral Presentation* (60%). Judges will individually score the competition papers and oral presentations. Following the conclusion of the presentations, the judges will meet and compile scores for both criteria and rank contestants. Winners (1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 3<sup>rd</sup> places) will be announced at the WSASAS Awards Banquet.

Updated January 2026



**Instructions, Sample Competition Paper, and Score Sheets:** Competition Papers are to adhere to *Translational Animal Science* style and formatting requirements. Specific instructions are described in the *Translational Animal Science* Instructions to Authors, with the FOLLOWING EXCEPTIONS:

1. **Running Header should include the words:** Graduate Competition followed by the running header (i.e., Graduate Competition: Reproductive performance in beef heifers).
2. **Lay Summary:** Authors must summarize the main findings of the *Competition Paper* for non-expert readers. The Lay Summary follows the Title Page and is limited to 500 keystrokes (characters + space). Authors should avoid scientific jargon and abbreviations.
3. **Implications:** Authors must explain without abbreviations, acronyms, or citations, what the results imply for animal production and (or) biology. This section aims to highlight the main findings of the Competition Paper and the practical implications of the results.
4. **The Competition Paper** should be no more than 20,000 keystrokes, 20 citations, and may contain up to 4 tables or figures.

Oral presentations must follow the general format for scientific presentations. Contestants are assigned a total of 15 minutes per oral presentation (10-12 minutes for presentation and up to 3 minutes for questions). Contestants are encouraged to read the score sheet for the Competition Paper and the grading matrix for the Oral Presentation. Both scoring tools provide information on how contestants will be evaluated.



**GRADUATE STUDENT PAPER COMPETITION SCORE SHEET**

**Written Presentation Presenter:** \_\_\_\_\_

**1. WSASAS Competition Paper Format.....(4 points) \_\_\_\_\_**

- 1.1. Use of references minimized to those most pertinent ( $\leq 3$  per concept).
- 1.2. Non-standard abbreviations are defined and used according to TAS style and form guidelines.
- 1.3. Literature citations follow TAS style and format guidelines.
- 1.4. Manuscript length ( $\leq 20,000$  keystrokes;  $\leq 20$  Citations; 4 Figures/Tables).

**2. Lay Summary .....(4 points) \_\_\_\_\_**

- 2.1. Follow Lay summary length limit 500 keystrokes (characters + space).
- 2.2. Summarized the relevant findings of the competition paper for non-expert readers.
- 2.3. Avoided scientific jargon and abbreviations.
- 2.4. Clear and concise.

**3. Abstract .....(3 points) \_\_\_\_\_**

- 3.1. Abstract length limit (2,500 characters + spaces).
- 3.2. Includes clearly identifiable statement of objective(s).
- 3.3. Includes appropriate methodologies and results.
- 3.4. Includes important conclusion(s).

**4. Introduction .....(4 points) \_\_\_\_\_**

- 4.1. Research justified relative to previous work (i.e., rationale).
- 4.2. Included research objective(s).
- 4.3. Clearly stated or demonstrated hypothesis(s).
- 4.4. Written in a logical, organized, and concise manner.

**5. Materials and Methods.....(8 points) \_\_\_\_\_**

*Explicitly described or cited recognized authoritative source(s) for the following:*

- 5.1. IACUC or equivalent approval statement.
- 5.2. Biological and analytical procedures.
- 5.3. Statistical procedures (included explicit representation of the statistical model and associated measures of variability and(or) confidence).
- 5.4. Deviations from standard analytical and statistical procedures.
- 5.5. Written in a logical, organized, and concise manner.



**6. Results and Discussion (can be separate or combined) ..... (8 points) \_\_\_\_\_**

- 6.1. Written in a logical, organized, and concise manner.
- 6.2. Results explained or elaborated on the tabular data.
- 6.3. Data presented with some index of variation attached, including significance level (i.e. *p-value*).
- 6.4. Tables and figures contained sufficient information to interpret results without referring to information in the body of the competition paper.
- 6.5. Key points related to data in tables and figures were explained without excessive repetition.
- 6.6. Interpreted results clearly in terms of underlying mechanisms.
- 6.7. Integrated pertinent results from the literature.
- 6.8. Included sufficient evidence in support of or in contrast to the research hypothesis(s) and allowed for the reader to infer a conclusion(s).
- 6.9. Avoided unwarranted extrapolation of results.
- 6.10. Limitation of research and future directions were addressed.

**7. Implications..... (3 points) \_\_\_\_\_**

*Explained without abbreviations, acronyms, or citations, what the results imply for animal production and(or)biology.*

**8. Scientific Merit .....(6 points) \_\_\_\_\_**

*The merit of the research must be evaluated based on its rationale, impact on animal production, and (or) the advancement of important scientific principles.*

**Written Score ..... (Maximum 40 points) \_\_\_\_\_**



## GRADUATE STUDENT COMPETITION ORAL PAPER SCORE SHEET

Oral Presentation Presenter: \_\_\_\_\_

Criteria	Exemplary	Proficient	Marginal	Unacceptable	Comments
<b>Delivery (20 points)</b>	Presents in an engaging, enthusiastic manner, maintained good eye contact and distinct voice, minimized use of notes, and was dressed neatly and appropriately. (20 pts.)	For the most part, presented in an engaging, enthusiastic manner, with reasonable eye contact and dress. (16 pts.)	Presents in somewhat unenthusiastic manner, with some issues concerning eye contact, dress or distracting mannerisms. (11 pts.)	Presents in monotone or unenthusiastic manner, with major issues concerning eye contact, dress or distracting mannerisms. (5 pts.)	
<b>Overall Organization (10 points)</b>	Appropriate, relevant, and compelling introduction. Material presented in a logical sequence in the appropriate time frame. Stimulated questions and discussion (10 pts.)	Minor issues with introduction, organization, and summary or time allocation. Stimulated some questions and discussion. (8 pts.)	Substantial issues with introduction, organization, and summary or time allocation. Minimal stimulation of question and discussion. (6 pts.)	Introduction not relevant or compelling. Organization hard to follow. Issues with summary and time allocation. No stimulation of question and discussion. (4 pts.)	
<b>Visual (5 points)</b>	Visual aids were easy to read, understand, and were used to illustrate concepts, present data and increase knowledge of the material presented. (5 pts.)	Visual aids mostly easy to read, understand, and used to illustrate concepts, and present data. Minor issues with images, colors, or font sizes. (4 pts.)	Visual aids sometimes distract from presentation. Some issues with images, colors or font size. Too much text or some typographical errors. (3 pts.)	Visual aids distract from presentation, font is too small or not readable, color scheme is unappealing, text with typographical errors or images unclear. (1pts.)	
<b>Subject Matter (10 points)</b>	Clear objectiveness and procedures; Relation of results to objectives. Innovation and high- quality science. (10 pts.)	Adequate explanation of objectives, procedures, results, and good quality science. (8 pts.)	Objectives, procedures, or results not fully developed or explained. Reasonable quality of science. (6 pts.)	Objectives, procedures, or results not developed or explained. Quality of science is concern. (4 pts.)	
<b>Knowledge of Subject (15 points)</b>	Demonstrated a thorough understanding of subject, background, statistics, interpretation of results, and answering questions. (15 pts.)	Demonstrated an adequate understanding of subject, background, statistics, interpretation of results and answering questions. (11 pts.)	Demonstrated awareness of subject, background, statistics, interpretation of results, and answering questions. (6 pts.)	Demonstrated minimal understanding of subject, background, statistics, interpretation of results, and answering questions. (4 pts.)	
<b>Length</b>	No under- or over-time. Presentation was between 10 – 12 min and 3 minutes for questions. (no loss in pts.)	Under- or Over-time (10-12 min) by ~30 sec (-1 pts.)	Under- or Over-time by 30 to 60 sec (-2 pts.)	Under- or Over-time by over 1 min (-3 pts.)	

**TOTAL POINTS (Maximum 60 points):** \_\_\_\_\_