Outstanding Student Achievement Award—Criteria and Regulations

Student Eligibility

1. Must be a registered student, or have graduated within the past 12 months. If a recent graduate, the presentation must be on thesis/dissertation research. This will be verified by contacting student’s major professor.
2. Must be first author on the presentation and paper
3. Must submit a full manuscript at the meeting—this is a requirement for oral and poster presenters.
4. Must fill out the Abstract Submittal Form located on the GCFI web page (www.gcfi.org). There is a check box that will ask if the author wishes to be considered for a student award; when the student checks this box, the current criteria for qualifying will pop up. The student must also fill in the major professor’s email address. Upon submission of the form, the abstract will be forwarded to the Student Awards Committee as well as the Program Committee. If a student does not indicate their desire to compete by the abstract submission deadline, they will not be judged at the meeting. Students may withdraw their presentation from consideration for an award up until 8 AM on Monday, the first day of the meeting.
5. Student winners from the previous year are not eligible to compete during the current year. (ie, a student can not win the award 2 years in a row, but they could win an award twice, as long as it is not in consecutive years).

Judging Criteria

1. Criteria will follow approved oral/poster judging forms (see criteria below).
2. The maximum score a student can receive is 50
3. There will be a minimum of 3 judges for each presentation (oral or poster); at least 1 judge in each group must be bilingual. All poster judges will be bilingual.
4. Oral and poster presentations will have separate teams of judges.
5. A major professor may not evaluate his/her own undergraduate or graduate student.
6. A judge may not evaluate a student if they serve on his/her thesis committee.
Criteria for Determining Awards

1. Awards will be given for 1 oral presentation and 1 poster presentation annually. Both oral and poster presentations are considered to be equal, but are judged separately for a more equal comparison among competitors. If there are 4 or less entries in either category, oral and poster presentations will be judged together and 2 awards will be given, regardless of type of presentation.  

2. Winners will be determined based on the highest mean score in each category (oral or poster) after the final student presentation, and the awards will be presented during an awards ceremony at the end of the meeting. Winners will receive a certificate of award at the meeting.  

3. In the event of a tie, the score with the smallest standard deviation will win. 

4. When the first call for abstracts goes out the following year, the award winners from the previous year will be contacted to make arrangements to attend the meeting. The winners must let the committee know within 1 month of contact if they will be able to attend the meeting. Winners are responsible for dealing with potential visa requirements to attend the meeting in a foreign country such that they have the appropriate visa prior to receiving travel funds to the meeting. 

5. The award cannot be transferred by the winner to another person. 

6. If an award winner cannot attend the meeting the next year, the award will be offered to the next highest student in that category, providing their score is no more than 5 points lower than the original winner’s score. (This represents a 10% deviation in potential score, and limits giving the award to a student who had a low score, even if they were next on the list. Ie, the award is only given to a “Best” paper).

Record Keeping 

1. At the meeting, each judge’s score for each student will be entered into an Excel spreadsheet. 

2. Any notes, comments, special circumstances will also be noted on the spreadsheet. 

3. The results for each year will be archived with the Chair of the judging committee and the Chairman of the GCFI—a CD containing all information will be burned at the meeting. 

4. The names of the award winners and the titles of their presentations will be posted on the GCFI web page.

Criteria for dealing with “unused awards”

1. Each award can only be reoffered once. 

2. In the event 2 award winners cannot attend the current meeting, we propose these options: 
   i. Return the money to the agency 
   ii. Pending approval by the agency, give 2 travel awards of $750 each to the current meeting. Criteria for determining these “extra” travel awards will be identical to criteria outlined in the “travel awards” document. Winning students would receive a check at the meeting to help cover their travel
expenses to the meeting. All students giving a presentation, even those not competing for the best student awards, would be eligible for this travel award.

iii. Pending approval by the agency, award an additional “student achievement” award for that year only; the student would receive the money for the award at the meeting (rather than getting a trip to the next year’s meeting—this would allow using the funds during that fiscal year). For this option, the 3rd highest overall score (considering poster and oral presentations together) would be the winner.

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**Criteria for Oral Presentations**

*Printed Abstract:* concise and accurate summary

*Introduction:* clear objectives and background

*Methods:* appropriate and clearly explained

*Results:* logical, clear, and pertinent

*Conclusion:* based on presented results, clear on salient points

*Presentation:* voice clear, loud enough, voice modulations appropriate, eye contact maintained

*Audiovisuals:* well organized, appropriate number for length of talk, simple to understand, not cluttered

*Organization and Timing:* logical sequence, appropriate time for each section of talk, keeps within allotted time

*Understanding of Subject:* presenter has good grasp of study and related areas, clear and effective response to questions

*Impact of the Paper on Audience:* audience attentive due to quality presentation, subject or innovative presentation
Criteria for Poster Presentations

Printed abstract: concise/accurate; summary of pertinent details; follows poster

Introduction: literature/background; objectives

Methods: scientific method; clear; appropriate; explained; originality.

Results: logical; clear; strength of data

Conclusion: are they supported by the data; interface with current theory

Poster Quality: appropriate figures/tables; readability of text

Organization: logical sequence of information

Presentation: ability to cover material; enthusiasm

Understanding of subject: presenter has good grasp of subject; ability to deal with questions

Impact on audience: clear take-home message; contribution to scientific discipline

Criteria for selecting judges for Student Achievement awards

1. An equal number of U.S and non-U.S. professionals (MS or PhD level) will be judges.

2. Judges will be selected based on past judging experience and knowledge/contribution to their field of research. The Student Awards Committee will be responsible for selecting judges.

3. GCFI Board members will always make up a portion of the judging pool.

4. All poster judges will be bilingual (English/Spanish). There will be a mix of native English and Spanish speakers as oral judges. The first language of at least 1 judge for each oral presentation will be the language of the presentation.

5. Potential judges will be contacted prior to the meeting to ascertain their interest/availability for judging. All judges will be provided with a written set of judging criteria, and a brief judges meeting at the start of the conference will provide orientation to assure that all judges use the same criteria for judging.

For more information, contact studentawards@gcfi.org.