

# Mississippi State University

## Undergraduate Research Symposium Special Area Competition Fact Sheet

### Spring Symposium in Colvard Student Union

The Spring Undergraduate Research Symposium (URS) event offers a time and place for units or groups to showcase undergraduate student research and sponsor Special Area Competitions. SHC helps facilitate Special Area Competitions by promoting and communicating about the event, submission deadline, and planning many of the logistics.

#### What is a Special Area Competition?

A Special Area Competition is an externally hosted evaluation of a select group of students' projects at the spring Undergraduate Research Symposium. These Special Area Competitions give students the opportunity to be recognized for their work in a wide variety of areas. Special Area Competitions may span project categories, or they may be specific to a major. They may be theme driven or discipline driven. They may be hosted by departments, colleges, centers, classes, faculty members, or student groups and they may have student, faculty, or staff evaluators. Existing Special Area Competitions can be seen in listing of past winners on our webpage, <https://www.urcd.msstate.edu/symposium/spring>

**We encourage creativity in the development of Special Area Competitions and are open to a range of possibilities.**

We provide the time and place and planning of the Undergraduate Research Symposium event plus:

- Creation and monitoring of the abstract submission form
- Provide spreadsheet of student submissions and abstracts two weeks in advance of event
- Promote your competition/organization on our website, in the abstract booklet, and reports
- Communicate with students including deadlines and event reminders
- Provide students with handbook and event information & guidance on website
- Create and provide URS abstract booklet
- Support announcements of Special Area Competitions winners, distribution of awards if desired.

#### How to develop a Special Area Competition

1. Decide the pool of students or types of research projects that you would like to evaluate (for example, you may want to include all psychology research, or you may want to judge all projects related to sustainability). What is its name? How will you decide if they meet criteria for your Special Area Competitions?
2. Consider aspects of judging the Special Area Competition, including who you will seek to evaluate; how you will determine the winners of your competition; and whether you will be giving a prize and how many. These can be finalized later but it can be helpful to begin planning.
3. Write a paragraph explaining your competition to be included in the Abstract Booklet and on the URS website.
4. Confirm your commitment via email or submission to the Special Area Competitions portal by November 15<sup>th</sup>.

[https://msstate.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_bvVOEXm40srRKK2](https://msstate.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_bvVOEXm40srRKK2)

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