

Undergraduate Research Symposium - Assessment Matrix

*	1	2	3	4
<p>Articulate purpose/ research question/ description of problem <i>Considerations:</i> Clarity and completeness of statement; Significance explained for a non-expert audience</p>	Central purpose or question was not sufficiently clear, insufficient context or significance is provided to engage the audience.	Central purpose or question was partially clear, but some needed context or significance is missing.	Central purpose or question was clear, but aspects of context and significance may be underdeveloped or the audience not fully considered.	Central purpose or question was very clear and compelling, and the context and significance were engaging for the audience.
<p>Selection of methods/ approach <i>Considerations:</i> Choice of methods/ approach explained clearly; Selection and use of suitable methods or approach</p>	The approach to the project was not sufficiently explained, or the selected methods were not appropriate to the topic or discipline.	The approach to the project needed additional consideration, or the selected methods could have been more appropriate to the topic or discipline.	The approach to the project was clear, and the selected methods were mostly appropriate to the topic or discipline.	The approach to the project was clearly explained, and the methods selected for conducting the project were highly appropriate to the topic or discipline.
<p>Identification of findings and next steps <i>Considerations:</i> Identification of valid findings or results of the work; Acknowledgement of what is learned and limitations of the work; Projections of next steps/future directions</p>	Findings or results of the work were not clearly identified and were not fully evaluated. Next steps/ future directions were not identified or were implausible.	Findings or results of the work were partially identified and evaluated generally in terms of success and failure. Next steps/ future directions for study were not entirely plausible.	Findings or results of the work were identified and evaluated with regard for both strengths and weaknesses, but perhaps in a generalized way. Next steps/ future directions were suggested.	Findings or results of the work were clearly identified and evaluated specifically in terms of both strengths and weaknesses. Interesting next steps/ future directions were suggested.
<p>Presentation style <i>Considerations:</i> Delivery quality; Use of visuals</p>	Presenter lacked poise or the style was unprofessional; speech was difficult to hear or follow, or visuals detracted from the content.	Presenter was sufficiently poised and professional, but speech was somewhat difficult to hear or follow, or visuals somewhat distracted from the content.	Presenter was poised and professional, used appropriate vocal quality. Visuals were helpful and appropriate and did not distract viewer from the content.	Presenter was exceptionally poised and professional, excellent vocal quality. Visuals enhanced the content and comprehension of the ideas.
<p>Quality of Question and Answer (Q&A) <i>Considerations:</i> Answers reflect good understanding of the question; Answers are clear and concise</p>	Questions were not addressed sufficiently, details were lacking or inaccurate, or answers digress	Questions were addressed with partial clarity, but may not have been complete, accurate or concise	Questions were addressed clearly, through minor supporting points may be missing or underdeveloped	Questions were addressed completely and effectively, conveying a genuine sense of understanding and engagement.

Updated: 12/18/2025 Rubric informed by UMass Lowell Student Research Symposium Judging Rubric