2026 NACTA JUDGING CONFERENCE

ILLINOIS STATE UNIVERSITY

NACTA
NORTH AMERICAN COLLEGES AND TEACHERS OF AGRICULTURE

ILLINOIS STATE Agriculture

Poster

Contest Official Rules

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Hosted by Illinois State University

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Poster Contest Guidelines

The goal of the NACTA Posters session is to promote the sharing of learning and research that support agriculture.

Poster Submission Requirements

Posters are accepted in two categories: non-empirical and empirical. The contest is open to students who are the **primary author** of the poster and present the poster at the meeting.

Non-Empirical Category
Posters in this category should address agricultural teaching/learning/experiences at the post-secondary levels. This category does **not** use or require collected data and standardized statistical methods. Examples would be course experiential learning projects or lab experiences, comprehensive coverage of an agricultural topic, teaching methods, or an innovative or entrepreneurial idea for future application.

Empirical (Research) Category
Posters submitted in this category involve examining a research question that is clearly defined and answerable by using standardized statistical methods on collected data. This may include either quantitatively or qualitatively collected data. Must represent agricultural research completed prior to the submission.

Poster Format
The poster should have these headings/sections when appropriate:

NON-EMPIRICAL:
- Introduction
- How it works/methodology/phases/steps involved
- Results to date/implications
- Future plans/advice to others
- Costs/resources needed
- References

EMPIRICAL:
- Introduction/need for research
- Methodology
- Results/findings
- Conclusions
- Implications/recommendations
- References

Presentation
Posters are requested to be 48” x 36” or smaller in size. Larger sizes may not be accommodated.

Submission Instructions:

1. The Poster contest will take place on Wednesday evening at the Interstate Center.
   Bring your printed poster to registration. You will be notified of your poster number at that time and can then set up your poster immediately. Push pins will be provided.

Authors must be present at their poster on Wednesday, April 22, from 6:00 pm to 7:00 pm to answer questions by judges and anyone else viewing the posters. Business casual or business professional dress is expected. Part of the judging process will be how well the poster author addresses questions. Authors must be present during the presentation to be eligible for awards.

Tips:

- Do not copy images from the internet and paste them into your document – the result may be pixelated or blurry. Please give credit if you do not own/did not create the image.
- A clear, dark font on a light background is the easiest to read.
- Do not use a font smaller than 24 pt.
- Don’t forget to proofread or ask someone to proofread your poster and fix typos!

Poster Evaluation

Non-Empirical Poster

General Notes: These guidelines are designed to assist reviewers in assigning point values for the scoring categories. The reviewer is free to assign values between those suggested and to apply additional criteria. Missing sections may be scored a zero since the rubric was available to all authors.

	Points Possible	Needs Improvement	Acceptable	Outstanding
Introduction	20	Idea is very limited appeal or benefit (e.g. specific to a small number of programs) and poorly described 0-10 points	Idea has appeal to many programs, but need/goals are not well addressed. 11-15 points	Idea has broad appeal and need/goals are well described. Could be implemented in many programs. 16-20 points
How it works / methodology/phases/ steps involved	20	Methods seem inappropriate, poorly described and hard to follow. 0-10 points	Methodology is appropriate, but would be hard to reproduce from the description given 11-15 points	Methods are very appropriate and implementation is well described. Could be easily reproduced. 16-20 points
Results/implications	20	Results not complete or poorly described. Idea not fully implemented 0-10 points	Results complete, but not tied to implications. 11-15 points	Results fully described with implications well addressed 16-20 points
References	10	No References 0 points	Minimal references 1-5 points	References provide a good foundation for the poster. 6-10 points
Style, clarity and grammar	10	Difficult to read, spelling and grammar errors common 0-3 points	Minimal spelling and grammar errors, easy to read, generally follows style requirements 4-7 points	No obvious grammar or spelling errors. Easy read. Follows style requirements. 8-10 points.
Author presentation	20	Did not understand questions or answer directly. Lack of general knowledge of subject. Does not handle criticism. 0-10 points	Mostly understands questions and answers fairly directly. Good general knowledge of subject. Handles criticism somewhat. 11-15 points	Clearly understands questions and answers directly. Excellent general knowledge of subject. Can handle criticism. 16-20 points
Total points Earned	100			

NACTA POSTER Non-Empirical Poster Session

Reviewer's Number: _____

For each of the categories below, please indicate the number of points earned. Please total the scores.

	Poster Number								
	Points Possible	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#
Introduction	20								
How it works/methodology/ phases/steps involved	20								
Results/implications	20								
References	10								
Style, clarity and grammar	10								
Author presentation	20								
Total points earned	100								

Poster Evaluation

Empirical (Research) Poster

General notes: These guidelines are intended to assist the reviewer in assigning point values for the scoring categories. The reviewer is free to assign values within the range shown below and to apply additional criteria. Missing sections may be scored a zero since the rubric was available to all authors.

	Points Possible	Needs Improvement	Acceptable	Outstanding
Introduction	10	Research is esoteric and would have limited implications to the broader Agriculture community 0-4 points	Research has a regional need and is tied to general agricultural research needs 5-7 points	Research has a broad need and is tied general agricultural research needs 8-10 points
Methodology	15	Methods seem inappropriate, poorly described and hard to follow. 0-5 points	Methodology is generally appropriate, but would be hard to reproduce from the description given 6-10 points	Methodology is very appropriate, well described and could be easily reproduced. 11-15 points
Results/findings	15	Study has not been completed (0 points) or results poorly described 0-5 points	Results are adequately described and tied to the methodology. 6-10 points	Results are well described and clearly connected to the methodology. 11-15 points
Conclusions	15	Conclusions are not supported by results. 0-5 points	Conclusions are generally supported by the results of the research. 6-10 points	Conclusions are clearly supported by the results of the research. 11-15 points
Implications/ Recommendations	15	No or minimal implications / recommendations. 0-5 points	Author makes adequate recommendations or description of the implications of this research. 6-10 points	Author makes excellent recommendations or description of the implications of this research. 11-15 points
References	5	No References 0 points	Minimal references or inappropriate references 1-3 points	References provide a good foundation for the poster. 4-5 points
Style, clarity and Grammar	10	Difficult to read, spelling and grammar errors common 0-4 points	Minimal spelling and grammar errors, easy to read, generally follows style requirements 5-7 points	No obvious grammar or spelling errors. Easy read. Follows style requirements. 8-10 points.
Author presentation	15	Did not understand questions or answer directly. Lack of general knowledge of subject. Does not handle criticism. 0-5 points	Mostly understands questions and answers fairly directly. Good general knowledge of subject. Handles criticism somewhat. 6-10 points	Clearly understands questions and answers directly. Excellent general knowledge of subject. Can handle criticism. 11-15 points
Total Points Earned	100			

NACTA POSTER Empirical Research Poster Session

Reviewer's Number: _____

For each of the categories below, please indicate the number of points earned. Please total the scores.

	Poster Abstract Number								
	Points Possible	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#
Introduction, need for research	10								
Methodology	15								
Results/Findings	15								
Conclusions	15								
Implications/Recommendations	15								
References	5								
Clarity/Grammar	10								
Author presentation	15								
Total points earned	100								

**These rules and guidelines were adapted from those written and used by the American Association for Agricultural Education