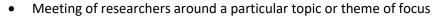
What to Expect at an Academic Conference

What is an Academic Conference?





- Smaller conferences may have a narrow topic and/or draw from a small geographic region of researchers, while larger conferences may have very broad topics and/or draw from a large geographic region of researchers
- Typically, researchers (and/or students) submit an abstract outlining their presentation and the conference will either accept or reject the presentation for inclusion in the conference program
- There may be oral or poster presentations (more traditional in STEM fields) or research discussion panels (more common in social sciences) or performances (more common in performance arts) or a combination of these types undergraduate students most typically give poster presentations

Benefits of Presenting at a Conference

- Builds communication skills written and/ or oral presentations, sharing your research ideas one-on-one, etc.
- Resume builder presenting your research at a conference as an undergraduate student will set you apart
- Networking opportunities UWF students have been offered jobs and graduate school positions during conferences or by people they met at conferences and followed up with

Types of Conferences

- Campus Events, such as the campus-wide UWF Student Scholars Symposium held in April each year
- Undergraduate-focused research conferences, such as the National Conference on Undergraduate Research
- Discipline-specific research conferences that are hosted by professional organizations, such as the American Chemical Society, the American Choral Directors Association, and the Society of Applied Anthropology

To Make the Most of a Conference

- If possible, travel with a faculty member to help you navigate the conference, introduce you to colleagues, etc.
- Ask your faculty mentor about conference or discipline-specific etiquette, for example:
 - It is perfectly acceptable to quietly come/go during oral presentations at Ocean Sciences not at all acceptable to do this at NCUR
 - The typical dress might be different for different disciplines/conferences— make sure you are comfortable, but appropriate for conference
- Take full advantage of the conference
 - o Go to the entire conference and participate in all sessions
 - Engage in social aspects of the conference talk to speakers, join groups for dinner, go on student field trips, etc. – networking happens in social settings
 - o Participate in conference programs geared toward students, such as field trips, networking events, etc.

How to Pay for Travel to Conferences

- Check the conference website for:
 - Student travel awards
 - o Discounts for students who volunteer
 - Student roommate boards to reduce cost (added benefit of meeting someone)
- OUR Travel Awards (support up to \$1,000 in conference travel expenses for presenting students)
- Council on Undergraduate Research student travel awards – several discipline divisions of CUR offer these

Do's and Don'ts of Attending an Academic Conference:

- Do go through the agenda and create an itinerary
- Do properly represent yourself and UWF
- Do ask for business cards and follow up
- Do ask thoughtful questions of presenters
- Do talk with people you don't know network!
- Do attend the social events
- Do take notes during presentations of researchers you want to look up or connect with
- Do dress professionally
- Don't wear uncomfortable shoes
- Don't be disruptive during a presentation