



A Judging Survival Guide for CURC



Welcome to CURC Judging 101!

Congratulations on presenting at the Celebrate Undergraduate Research and Creativity (CURC) Showcase! If you're feeling a little nervous about the judging process, don't worry—you're not alone. This guide is here to demystify the process and help you put your best foot forward when engaging with judges.

Who Are the Judges?

Judges at CURC come from a variety of backgrounds, including faculty members, industry professionals, and graduate students. Some may be experts in your field, while others might have a more general understanding of research or artistry. Their goal is to evaluate your work based on its clarity, impact, and presentation.

How Will I Know Who the Judges Are?

Most judges will introduce themselves as such, but sometimes they may blend in with general attendees. Keep an eye out for name badges or any event markers indicating their role. If someone seems particularly engaged in your work and is asking structured questions, there's a good chance they're a judge! Most of the time the judge will have a clipboard.

When Will They Come to My Presentation?

Judging times vary, but typically, judges circulate throughout the event. There's no set time for them to arrive at your presentation location, so be prepared at all times. Stay near your display and be ready to present when someone stops by. For performing art or film students be prepared to speak directly before you begin performing or displaying your work.

How Many Judges Will I Have?

You will likely be assigned at least three official judges, but other judges and attendees may stop by out of curiosity. Be prepared to present multiple times and adjust your explanation depending on your audience's familiarity with your field.

Should I Only Talk to My Assigned Judge?

No! Engaging with passing attendees and other judges is a great way to practice your presentation and refine your key points. Plus, you never know who might have useful feedback or connections.

How Long Should I Talk to a Judge?

Judges usually spend around 5-10 minutes at each poster, but this can vary. Start with a concise 1-2 minute overview of your research, or artistry, and let them guide the conversation with their questions. If they seem interested, be ready to dive deeper. If they appear to be wrapping up, respect their time and thank them for stopping by.



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What Do Judges Want to Know?

Judges are looking for a clear explanation of your research question, methods, findings, and impact. They also want to see your ability to communicate effectively and think critically about your work.

What Information Will Impress Judges?

- A **clear and concise** research or artistry summary (avoid rambling!).
- The **real-world impact** of your work—why does it matter?
- Your ability to **answer questions confidently** and adapt your explanation based on the judge's background.
- Enthusiasm! Passion for your topic goes a long way.

What If a Judge is Confused by My Work?

Stay calm! If they seem lost, try breaking down your explanation into simpler terms. Use analogies or real-world examples to make complex ideas more relatable. If you're unsure what they don't understand, ask, "Would you like me to clarify a specific part?"

Will Judges Be From My Field of Study?

Not necessarily. Some judges may be well-versed in your subject, while others may come from different disciplines. Be prepared to adjust your level of detail based on their familiarity with your topic.

Should I Use Technical Jargon or Simplify My Explanation?

Gauge your judge's background! If they seem to understand field-specific terms, feel free to use them. If they appear unfamiliar, opt for a more general explanation. A good strategy is to start with a layperson-friendly version and ask, "Would you like me to go into more detail?"

Final Tips for a Smooth Judging Experience

- ✓ **Practice your pitch** before hand to ensure you can explain your work smoothly.
- ✓ **Be adaptable**—read the judge's body language and level of engagement to adjust your response.
- ✓ **Have a positive attitude**—judges aren't here to tear you down; they want to learn from you!
- ✓ **Ask for feedback**—judges may have valuable insights on how to improve your presentation.
- ✓ **Enjoy the process!** This is a great opportunity to share your research or artistry and refine your communication skills.

Good luck at CURC! You've got this!