Society-Wide Student Competition FAQs

My division only holds an oral/poster competition. How do I prepare for the society-wide competition?
Students will have the option of presenting a paper or digital poster. If you only prepared an oral for the on-site competition, it is recommended you bring a paper poster or prepare a digital version in advance (or the night before the competition).

Is it open to everyone?
Eligible students are undergraduates, grad students, and if the division chooses, could include post-docs with no more than one-year post doc (must present on their doctoral research).

Can a student who competed in a previous society-wide competition compete again?
Yes, IF the presentation features different analysis/different discovery. Research must be sufficiently different (for example, a large data set analyzed with the same conclusion would not be sufficiently different but a large data set with different analysis would be).

If a student was selected in the previous year to compete in this year’s society-wide competition, can their presentation be different?
No. Divisions may select their student from their previous year’s division competition. However, the student must present using the same presentation as when they were selected.

Does the 5 minute rapid oral really have to be only 5 minutes?
Yes. Competitors will be given a visual cue with one minute left and time will be called and judging will stop at exactly 5 minutes. Students will be penalized if their presentation exceeds the allotted time as they will not be permitted to continue their presentation beyond exactly 5 minutes.

Does the 5 minute rapid oral really only include 3 slides?
Yes. Only 3 slides will be permitted. This also means that you cannot use overlapping animation to increase the length of your presentation. For example, overlapping multiple full screen images over one another on a single slide using animation is not permitted.

Can I use animations in my 5-minute rapid oral?
Yes, animations are very helpful and may be used, as long as new content is not overlapping any content already shown as an attempt to bypass the 3 slide rule.

How long is the poster presentation?
Plan on a poster presentation of 1-3 minutes. Be concise. This will allow the judges time for follow-up questions.

How technical should the presentation be?
The Society-Wide competition is presented before an audience of scientists and will be judged by scientists with a wide variety of backgrounds.

What is the digital format for the digital poster and oral presentations?
The widescreen 16:9 format must be used when creating PowerPoint slides. 4:3 formatted slides are not supported. Paper poster sizes follow the posted sizes at www.acsmeetings.org
How long will the entire competition take?
The competition has two facets so student competitors should plan on devoting the entire day (Wednesday) to preparations and competing. Results will be announced at the closing reception.

What if I can't change my flight to adjust for the oral competition?
Student competitors must participate in both events. Divisions will be asked to ensure their selected student will be staying at the meeting for the full day on Wednesday.