



Dear KAS members,

We want to share some updates about changes for our 2024 Annual Meeting for evaluations of student presentations. Students tell us overwhelmingly, in their meeting evaluations, that they want feedback to improve their presentations & research. KAS wants to offer this feedback in an environment that is inclusive and encouraging, and that upholds scientific integrity. We know that positive interactions are very impactful for us when we are at the beginning of our scientific careers! KAS has also adopted a [Code of Ethics](#) and we expect all attendees to abide by it.

We are adjusting our student evaluation process this year in response to students' comments about what is important to them at the Annual Meeting. We have considered our own administrative capacity, and that of KAS Section Leaders & volunteer judges. We have also taken into consideration our observations and experiences during Annual Meetings in recent years, and comments from participants in your 2023 Annual meeting evaluations. We may continue to adjust this process in future years.

Here is an outline of the 2024 process:

1. Junior Academy Talks

Because we need to identify Kentucky's Delegates for the [American Junior Academy of Science](#) (AJAS), we will identify & train Junior Academy judges who will be identified with a yellow nametag ribbon. We will assign judges to specific Junior Academy presentations. Judges must complete a training & we will have alternates identified. We are committed to identify at least six eligible students to represent Kentucky in February 2025 at the AJAS, one from each congressional district. Our rubric will be the same as in 2023, and high school oral presenters will get a numerical score.

Volunteer judges will get a thank you Letter from KAS recognizing them. Presenters may request their (anonymized) feedback & scores after the event. If you have enjoyed judging in the past, and would like to volunteer again, we welcome faculty and graduate students to serve as judges in their general areas of expertise.

Undergraduate presentations

All annual meeting participants will be involved this year in connecting with undergraduate presenters & providing feedback. KAS will provide some tips ahead of time with suggested questions to ask, and advice on how to engage with presenters. Attendees will receive notecards on arrival, with these prompts for questions & conversations. These prompts apply to oral or poster presentations.

Undergraduate Posters and Junior Academy Posters: All attendees will draw two random poster numbers upon arrival, and we ask that you visit that poster & engage with the presenter. You will probably be visiting posters outside your discipline! Focus on the quality of the interaction - there is no paperwork to fill out. We are scheduling poster presentations to allow students presenting posters to circulate in the poster session and interact with fellow presenters.

We will call upon participating faculty members to make a special effort to visit poster presenters who may not be getting high traffic during the session. We'll encourage you to please make your first poster visit each session to someone who is getting less attention at their poster or someone who is from a lab that you are not familiar with.

Undergraduate Talks- KAS and Section Leaders will ensure there are people in the room who are committed designated folks to engage presenters. KAS will make a special appeal to graduate students in each section. Focus on the quality of the interaction - there is no paperwork to fill out. We're also planning presenter meet & greet times for Q&A after presentations end, to encourage additional discussion.

We thank you for your participation in this adjusted process. We will be asking for your input about your experiences in your Annual Meeting Evaluations, and we are planning to revisit this process after the 2024 Annual Meeting.

KAS Section Leaders- we will request that you put an item on the agenda in your section meeting and get feedback from your section members about this system. Are participants having good engagements? Are students getting good questions and feedback about their research?

We look forward to seeing you at Kentucky State University, November 1&2.

KAS Board of Directors

Amanda Fuller, KAS Executive Director

Melony Stambaugh, KAS Program Coordinator and Junior Academy Director