

Rubric for SMSU Library Research Award @ the Undergraduate Research Conference

Applicant Name: _____

Project Name: _____

	Excellent	Above Average	Emerging	Beginning
Bibliography & Abstract				
Bibliography	An abundance of sources were included in the bibliography.	An acceptable number of sources were submitted in the bibliography.	A modest number of sources were submitted in the bibliography.	Minimal bibliography was submitted.
Types & Formats and Breadth & Depth	Extensive variety of source types and sources demonstrating either multiple perspective or pursuing comprehensive coverage.	Added format variety or utilized tools or resources outside disciplines.	Added other source types: books, scholarly articles, media. May have been limited in source diversity (e.g., majority from one journal).	Used basic sources: textbook, websites.
	<i>Possible Source Types include</i>	<i>Books, articles, conferences, government documents, dissertations,</i>	<i>archives, manuscripts, technical reports, working papers,</i>	<i>statistics, data sets, audiovisual materials, realia, primary sources</i>
Citation Style	Cited all materials correctly in a standard format.	Cited materials correctly with few errors.	Cited most materials in a consistent way and/or cited materials with many errors.	Cited most materials, but not in a standard or consistent way.
Abstract	Abstract clearly summarizes the project.	Abstract covers most project components.	Abstract included, but did not clearly explain project.	Abstract was poorly written.
Research Process				
Search Tools/Databases	Searched outside of the SMSU Library in tools such as Worldcat, other library catalogs, or digital collections, etc.	In addition to using discipline-focused databases, used applicable databases outside discipline.	Primarily used databases in the discipline.	Used basic tools or databases weren't specified.
Search Techniques	Continued to modify search strategies; used limiters; identified key authors; followed footnotes/references.	Used a combination of phrase searching, a variety of search terms, and/or identified subject headings.	Used phrase searching, variety of search terms, or natural language searching.	Used basic keyword searching or didn't indicate search techniques.

Finding Information	Thoroughly explained what was learned about searching for information, including specific challenges, strategies, and insights gained, and value of searching outside their discipline.	Explained what was learned about finding information with some detail and examples.	Provided limited explanation of what was learned; no examples or details were included.	Provided little or no meaningful explanation on the information-finding process.
Role of AI	Provided a thoughtful, detailed explanation of how AI was used (or why it was not used). Clearly described specific tasks, evaluated AI's usefulness and limitations, and demonstrated critical thinking about its impact on the research process.	Explained how AI was used (or why it was not used) with adequate detail. Included some discussion of its usefulness, limitations, or influence on the research process.	Provided a limited or vague explanation of AI use (or non-use). Discussion lacks detail, examples, or reflection on its impact.	Gave little or no explanation of AI use or non-use. Response is incomplete or demonstrates minimal reflection.
Consultations	Thoroughly addressed if consulted with others and explained value.	Minimally addressed if consulted with others and explained value.	Included who consulted with, but didn't expand on value of the consultation(s).	Didn't address prompt.
Change about Research Process	Identified potential improvements, explained the reasoning behind them, and demonstrated clear insight into how the changes would strengthen the research process.	Identified at least one meaningful change and explained how it could improve the research process. Demonstrated some reflection on lessons learned.	Identified a change but provided limited explanation, detail, or connection to improving the research process. Reflection is somewhat superficial.	Provided little or no discussion of changes to the research process. Response is vague, incomplete, or demonstrated minimal reflection on lessons learned.
Word Requirements	Met 300-500-word essay requirement.	**	**	Did not meet minimum word requirement.
The Presentation				
Mechanics & Punctuation	Virtually free of punctuation, spelling, capitalization errors.	Contains rare punctuation, spelling, and/or capitalization errors.	Contains few punctuation, spelling, or capitalization errors.	Contains some punctuation, spelling, or capitalization errors.

Visual Design	Exceptional utilization of URC template suggestions. Exceptional readability and balance of image and text.	Appropriate utilization of URC template suggestions. Appropriate readability and balance of image and text.	Minimal use of URC template suggestions. Unbalanced use of text and graphics and/or lack of clarity or readability.	Does not follow URC template suggestions. Unbalanced use of text and graphics and/or lack of clarity or readability.
Graphics & Text	Exceptional graphic selection and readability of font.	Appropriate graphics and acceptable font selection.	Poor quality graphics and/or font selection/ difficult to read.	Inappropriate or missing graphics and/or poor font selection/difficult to read.
Engagement, Communication, Presence	Actively and effectively engages audience. Communication suggests extensive knowledge and presents a mature professional demeanor.	Effectively engaged with audience, communication suggests appropriate knowledge, and presents a professional demeanor.	Somewhat enthusiastic but struggles to communicate clearly. Demeanor is appropriate.	Difficulty communicating (projection, mumbling, eye contact) or inappropriate demeanor.
Appearance	Appropriate presentation attire.	**	**	Inappropriate presentation attire.

Created October 2017; Updated December 2017; Updated August 2024; Updated March 2025; updated September 2026

Based on Rubrics from
UC Berkeley's Charlene Conrad Liebau Library Prize for Undergraduate Research
and the WSU Showcase for Undergraduate Research and Creative Activities