
SOCIETY OF TEACHERS OF FAMILY MEDICINE:

“PREPARING A GREAT CONFERENCE SUBMISSION: A PLANNING GUIDE”*

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Many members who have never submitted to the STFM Annual Spring Conference have requested a framework for developing a submission. This worksheet is intended to stimulate and guide your thinking so you can process your ideas on paper before actually submitting online. Include brief phrases or ideas to help conceptualize your thoughts. Contact Ray Rosetta at STFM (rosetta@stfm.org) or Dr. Stephen Wilson, Chair, STFM Program Committee (WilsonS2@upmc.edu) if you need more guidance in preparing your submission.

What general idea do you have for this presentation?

Attendees from which of the following group(s) would likely attend your presentation? (check all that apply)

- Medical Student faculty
- Preceptors/clinicians
- Residency faculty
- Faculty developers
- Chairs/administrators

What title would explain your topic to attendees?

*While these concepts and guidelines are widely applicable to submissions for the STFM Annual Spring Conference, there are separate guidelines specific to “completed projects and papers.”

What might potential attendees already know about the topic you plan to present?

What do you want attendees to learn? (i.e., knowledge/skill/attitude they will gain from your presentation)

1) _____

2) _____

3) _____

What does the literature document on your topic, and what will your presentation add that is new or innovative to this area?

Is there a theory or model that will help the attendees understand the issue, project, or topic? If so, briefly describe that theory or model and tell why it is relevant.

Imagine you are describing your work, project, curriculum and/or topic to a colleague. Answer each of the following questions in one sentence:

How much time is required to present your project or topic?

Note, review the data in the following table. The more time you request, the less likely you may be to have your submission selected for presentation.

| Submission Category | # Submitted* | # Accepted* | Acceptance Rate* |
|---|---------------------|--------------------|-------------------------|
| Preconference Workshop (4-8 hours) | 5 | 2 | 40% |
| Seminar (90 minutes) | 100 | 65 | 65% |
| Completed Projects & Papers (90 minutes) (including Hames Award Winner & Best Research Papers) | 50 | 40 | 80% |
| Lecture-Discussion (45 minutes) | 160 | 100 | 62% |
| Work in Progress (15-25 minutes) | 80 | 50 | 62% |
| Research Poster** (including Award Winners & Fellows) | 15 | 40 | 265% |
| Scholastic Poster** | 45 | 100 | 222% |
| Scholarly Topic Roundtable** (50 minutes) | 40 | 80 | 200% |

*numbers and percentages represent 5-yr average

** # accepted includes submissions moved between categories for acceptance/presentation.

What problem or need does your work address?

Why is this problem or need important to address?

How does your project address the problem or need?

What is unique about your approach? What outcomes does your project produce?

What details (time, funding, training, people) and barriers must the attendees know to implement or integrate this work at their institutions?

What interactive teaching method(s) (e.g., group brainstorming, small group work, discussion) will you use to involve the attendees in your presentation? (Note: A presentation with limited or no audience interaction is unlikely to be accepted.)

What handouts will you provide the attendees so they can adapt your topic at their institutions?

Background and Knowledge Gap

Describe what makes your proposed presentation attractive to family medicine educators. Specifically, articulate how your content will advance the knowledge or skills of faculty who attend the Annual Conference. This section should not focus on the content itself, but on the context surrounding the content. For example, describe the deficits of current teaching methods, failure of current curriculum to improve outcomes, lack of awareness of an issue, or a need to create dialogue. A section below provides space to describe how your content addresses these gaps. Remember, reviewers assess many excellent proposals, so help them understand why they should accept your proposal. Word limit: 300 words

Substance of the Presentation

Describe the subject matter content (e.g., new information, data, outcomes, results, teaching techniques/approaches) you will present to the participants who attend your session. For example, what is the new curriculum, new instructional method, or theory or ideas forming the core learning of the participants? This section should allow the reviewers to understand what the participants will be exposed to during your session. Word limit: 500 words

Teaching Methods Employed During Session (Replaces Methods)

Describe the instructional methods (e.g., lecture, small group discussion, movies) you will use to achieve the objectives you stated above and how will the methods will be organized. Tell how the participants will actively participate in the session. Include breakdown of scheduled use of time, required for CME.
Word limit: 500 words

Abstract

Write a 125-word abstract for your submission. This abstract will be printed in the conference program so participants can decide whether they want to attend your session. Your abstract should summarize the problem, background/rationale, setting, method, outcome and learning objectives as relevant to your presentation.

COMMONLY LOOKED FOR ELEMENTS IN SUBMISSIONS

Originality

- Does your presentation provide a new model, idea, theory, application, method, or concept? In contrast, is this being portrayed as innovative when in fact it is well-documented in literature?
- If the topic or issue is not innovative, does it take advantage of a unique element of the conference to allow discourse or communication that otherwise might not take place?
- Does the submission help further the work of a group or component of the range of educators within family medicine in a unique way?
- If this submission has been presented before, have substantial changes been made to update the work, and is there a specific need to repeat it again if unchanged?

Clarity/Quality

- Is the submission easy to read and understand? How much time will the reviewers have to spend to understand the core purpose, methods and content? Will someone who is unfamiliar with the submission have to read the submission multiple times to understand it?
- Is the language clear, concise, and grammatically correct? Does it contain jargon or highly complex and convoluted sentences?
- Are the objectives stated in terms of attendee learning and achievable given the time limit of the submission category?
- Do the session objectives, content, and teaching methods match?
- Was sufficient information given to determine what the participants will gain and experience in the presentation?
- How well might the speakers present?

Organization

- Does the submission conform to the Call for Papers criteria? Are the number of words excessive or inadequate?
- Are the sections completed appropriately, or are some lacking information? Is the submission logically organized? For example, is the rationale found in the content section?

Appropriateness to the Category

- Is the category time period appropriate to the objectives, content, and methods?
- Is there sufficient time allotted for participant discussion and dialogue?
- Would this submission fit better in a different submission category (e.g., does the content of a 90-minute Seminar fit better in a 45-minute Lecture?)
- Are the number of speakers effective for the time given to the session (e.g., can eight speakers effectively present a 15-minute Peer In-Progress paper?)

Conformity

- Does your submission completely conform to the Call for Papers guidelines and instructions?

Relevance

- Is this submission going to help the discipline of family medicine progress into the future?
- Is the content something on the mind of many or most family medicine educators?
- Is this a topic many or most family medicine educators struggle or cope with implementing?
- Is this a less important topic that the authors tried to convince you should be a major topic?
- Does the topic have important ramifications for patients, learners, or policy development?

Creativity to Presentation

- Is this devised as active or passive learning for the participants?
- Will the teaching methods provide insight to the participants?
- Will the teaching methods actually help the participants experience the topic, curriculum, or insight?
- Is the teaching method novel in application?

Track Record

- Has this submission been presented before at STFM? If so, have changes or updates been included?
- Is this a completed project able to report on the actual experience of the faculty, learners, organization, or research? Or is this a project in a planning stage or in the midst of implementation?
- How long has this project been in effect, and does the submission quality reflect the length of experience? Projects with years of experience should include more detailed information on outcomes, logistics, problems, challenges and responses.

Successful Implementation

- Does the submission include outcomes (educational, clinical, administrative, research)?
- Does it include information about the logistics of the program, curriculum, or project such as financial costs and support, how implemented in to the curriculum, faculty time commitments or recruitment, etc., to give participants knowledge about implementation?