

Call for submissions now open for Student Research Conference

By Kayla Gaffney

Southeast Missouri State University graduate and undergraduate students are invited to participate in the 24th annual Student Research Conference April 20 and 21. The conference is open to all fields of study and the research submitted can be based on either observation or theory.

According to Dr. Scott Brandhorst, instructor of psychology, the conference is a way for students to gain experience presenting and sharing their work with others.

"It's an opportunity for students to share their research and what they're doing -- get experience in terms of sharing that information with others and then also on the flipside for students to see what's going on and what other people are doing," Brandhorst said.

The conference is primarily organized by the SRC student committee, which this year is made up of two students, Destiny Brooks and Brady Nahlik. Brooks said the committee takes care of things such as organizing the catering for the event, ordering T-shirts and organizing student and faculty judges.

Brooks said even though there is much work involved in the conference, the benefits outweigh the costs.

"I really love SRC every year, as much hard work as it takes to put it together, it's always really worth it -- it's really rewarding," Brooks said. "This is kind of like a home game for research, that you're in a setting that you're comfortable with. It's not like going out to a research conference somewhere else -- so it's very supportive."

Every year the conference features a keynote speaker to talk about the importance of involving students in the research process.

"When we do our research we want to be able to get it out for other people to read, so the keynote usually is designed on some aspect of the value of doing research as an undergraduate," Brandhorst said.

This year the keynote speaker is Dr. Drew Appleby, professor of psychology at Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis. He will discuss how students can benefit in the job market from doing undergraduate research.

"He's specifically going to talk about what are skills that you glean from doing research that can actually help you when it comes time to apply for jobs," Laura Delgado, instructor of psychology, said. "I think he's going to really try to hit home to students that this isn't just something that's good while you're an undergraduate, it's something that is going to be beneficial to you in your career once you leave here."

This conference is not just for the students who are presenting, it is open to anyone who wants to attend.

"Anyone can come to any part of the conference, we encourage that -- we hope that we have an audience there," Delgado said. "There's something for you to glean from that

conference even if you're not presenting, and that is to see what's going on and maybe learn something about the actual research that was done."

Breakfast and lunch will be offered free of charge, and the conference is adjusted to follow the class schedule, making it easy for students to attend.

Brooks has been on the SRC student committee for three years now and, even though it is her last year at Southeast, she is looking forward to seeing how the conference will grow in the future.

"I really hope to see it continue to grow throughout the coming years as undergraduate research is promoted more and that becomes more of a central focus at our university," Brooks said.

Research can be independent, part of a course or in collaboration with a faculty member. Students can choose if they want their research to be judged, as it is not a requirement for the conference. Submissions can be in the form of a paper or poster presentation; there is no limit to how many research papers or posters an individual submits, and all submissions are due by April 1.

For more information or to submit research, visit semo.edu/src.