



Dr. Trisha Yarbrough Student Collaborative Research Project Competition

Call for Projects 2023-24

“Innovative Scholarship for Tumultuous Times”

Student Team Prizes: \$5,000 First Place and \$2,500 Second Place*

The theme for Alpha Chi’s 2024 National Convention is *Leaders for Tumultuous Times*, and in harmony with this, our collaborative research competition theme this year is *Innovative Scholarship for Tumultuous Times*. In an era marked with rapid changes, societal shifts, and technological advancements, the world is calling for innovative, multidisciplinary solutions. From understanding the dynamics of political polarization to exploring the ethical dimensions of artificial intelligence, and addressing the global impact of climate events, the need for creativity and collaboration has never been greater. That said, who better to rise to the challenge than Alpha Chi members—the leaders and scholars of tomorrow!

Thus, Alpha Chi invites collaborative research projects from student researchers on this year’s theme. Each campus team will develop a focused project that is relevant to the majors and research interests of the team members that contributes something original to a scholarly conversation. The element of “originality” could take several forms: the results of scientific experiments or surveys, viewing existing scholarship through a new lens, or adding a creative element to the research.

Collaborative Research Benefits:

- **Your student researchers**—improving their critical thinking and social interaction skills;
- **Your campus**—maximizing research talent and promoting interdisciplinary collaboration; and
- **Our society**—resulting from robust creativity and research.

The most competitive projects are those with divergent disciplines integrating around a common goal rather than piecing separate projects together—collaborative rather than segmented—with the work effort shared in a balanced way across the team’s membership. The paper needs to be scholarly and delivered in a common voice. During the presentation, extemporaneous speaking is preferred, as the judges and audience will have an opportunity to ask questions.

Some examples to get you started:

- Biology majors, education majors, and computer science or math majors might research the best educational methods for teaching children, then create CAD designs for innovative 3-D printable toys and puzzles that illustrate how DNA helices interlink, principles of the cell’s structure, or principles of geometry. Finally, they could make their 3-D printer designs available to download free-of-charge in areas where schools are stricken by economic upheaval.
- Creative writing students, history or geography students, and music majors might launch a “Peace Project” that seeks out and collects creative nonfiction such as memoirs, folk songs, or landscape images of Ukraine (or another war-torn region) that they can archive and put online to preserve the memory and ideal of peace before the conflict.
- Environmental science majors, art majors, and anthropology students might map the locations of Amerindian petroglyphs in North American regions expected to undergo desertification, then explore methods to preserve this art from changing climate and weather conditions.
- Students in astronomy, religion, and literature could study “Upheaval in the Heavens,” taking images from the James Webb space telescope and seeing if these new images can shed light on ancient legends about constellations in various world myths involving the creation or destruction of stars. They would seek out innovative connections between modern science and ancient writings revolving around the theme of upheaval or change in the sky.
- A health science study of the positive effects on the body of community support and mental health in times of polarization, identity conflicts, and contentious discourse. Disciplines involved might include psychology, sociology, anthropology, nursing, pre-medical studies, biology, and chemistry.
- Spanish, psychology, and political science majors contrast the rights of South and Central American refugees to seek safe haven with the traditional powers of governments to control their borders, developing innovative solutions for refugee protections.
- Computer science, philosophy, and sociology majors might research the ethics and technological advances of artificial intelligence to envision responsible and beneficial applications.

*2nd place prize given only if number and quality of projects justify such.

Collaborative Team Composition

- Each chapter may submit only one project to this competition.
- Each team must consist of 3-5 Alpha Chi student members representing at least 3 distinct academic departments.
- The team composition must be at least 2/3 undergraduate members during the Fall 2023 semester.
- Student members must serve as the principal researchers and writers, but the team is encouraged to identify a faculty mentor who is dedicated to the team's success.

Declaring Intention to Compete

- One student team representative must email the project title and an abstract to office@alphachihonor.org by **October 31, 2023**.
 - ✓ This email must also identify the Alpha Chi members on the team, their classifications, email addresses, the academic fields they represent, and the faculty mentor (can be an Alpha Chi chapter advisor or another faculty member).

Competition Elements

(1) Written Research Report

- 12-20 pages total (page count includes title page, citations, appendices, etc.)
- Double-spaced; 1" margins
- Title page should include each member's classification, discipline, part in the research project, and an overview describing how the team planned, divided, and conducted its collaborative project.
- Submit by email no later than **March 15** to office@alphachihonor.org.

(2) Live Convention Presentation with Q&A

- 10-minute presentation followed by a 4-minute question and answer period
- Each team must have at least one student member presenting the project in person to a multidisciplinary panel of judges during the Spring 2024 national convention. If the team has only one student able to present in person, the national office will work with the team to see if including one other team member via Zoom might be possible.

(3) Printed Poster

- Dimensions: max. 3' high x 4' wide. This will accompany the oral presentation.
- Bring poster to Alpha Chi Central at check-in on **April 4** for display and judging prior to presentation.
- To enhance audience visibility, up to 10 visual slides of content from your poster may be shown during the presentation.

Review of Deadlines

1st Deadline: **10-31-2023** (declaration of team composition and working title/abstract)

2nd Deadline: **03-15-2024** (written report)

3rd Deadline: **04-04-2024** (poster and presentation)

Award Distribution

Each award will be split evenly between the student team members after each member has submitted to the national office the documentation needed to claim the prize. If the team elects to share part of the award with their chapter and the office is informed of that before checks are mailed, the national office can accommodate that additional check.

If you have questions not addressed here, please contact Executive Director Lara Noah at Inoah@alphachihonor.org.