



Student Collaborative Research Project 2019 Competition

Lines of Identity, Polarizing Perspectives, and Civil Discourse

Each year Alpha Chi invites collaborative research projects from student researchers, and this year's topic invites an endless number of ideas. Each campus team will develop a focused topic, depending on the majors and research interests of the team members, which allows for both secondary and original research. The best projects are those with clearly divergent disciplines that integrate around a common goal rather than tacking several different 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 the opportunity to make comments and ask questions.

Here are just a few possibilities illustrating the diversity of topics that could emerge:

- A study of how the use of classical rhetoric during a political struggle in the 1st century matches (or doesn't match) rhetorical strategies during political conflict in a 21st-century controversy—combining history, literature, and political science majors.
- A project combining sociological insights about what triggers violence with a study of marketing and advertising campaigns that may or may not overlap with those triggers.
- A political science project that combines game theory from mathematics and computer science publications to determine the likelihood that online polarization in a country is "home grown" or a result of external manipulation.
- A financial study looking at the projected costs to deal with various environmental disasters affecting a minority ethnic group—along with the likely economic sacrifices of doing so for a particular nation-state or an impoverished region.
- A project that combines nursing, statistical analysis, and urban planning to determine the most likely types of injuries to occur when a civil protest turns violent, and the most likely locations in a particular city where medical resources would need to be deployed.
- A study of artistic reactions as a form of discourse in response to polarizing politics and identity conflicts in a particular society at a particular moment in history. Besides students from the various arts (music, graphic arts, drama, dance) this project could include business, history, and social science majors.
- A health science study of the effects on the body of the stress caused by polarization, identity conflicts, and contentious discourse. Disciplines involved might include psychology, sociology, anthropology, nursing, pre-medical studies, biology, and chemistry.
- The literature of polarizing identity politics could be a collaborative project of language and literature students, history students, and the education majors who will teach this literature.
- A study of the effect of polarizing politics and discourse on environmental science and conservation. In addition to social and environmental science majors, this project could attract psychology majors, business majors, and language students.

Overview

Each team will identify a problem or formulate a hypothesis and conduct the necessary research. A research report of no more than ten pages (including title page and citations) will be submitted prior to the convention. The title page must identify the team members and their disciplines as well as a research overview describing how the team planned, divided, and conducted its collaborative project. Findings will be displayed at the convention on a printed poster to be hung in a 4x4 ft. area of poster wall during the Research & Creativity Forum. A panel of judges will evaluate a 10-minute oral presentation on Friday or Saturday morning of the convention.

**The winning team will receive a \$5,000 prize. (Sponsored by Alpha Chi's partner, Nationwide Insurance®)
A \$2,500 second prize may be given if the number and quality of the projects justify such.**

Guidelines

- Each chapter may submit one project to the competition. The project should be mentored by a faculty member committed to its success. The team should also communicate regularly with its chapter sponsor.
- Each team must consist of 3-5 Alpha Chi student members, representing at least 3 different departments on the campus. The team composition must be at least 2/3 undergraduates during the fall semester. As long as student members serve as principal researchers, one faculty member may serve as part of the research team. Each member's part in the research project should be carefully documented.
- **To enter the competition, a team representative must email the formal project title and an abstract to office@alphachihonor.org by Nov. 1. This email must name the faculty mentor and the Alpha Chi members on the team, their classifications, email addresses, and the academic fields they represent.**
- Each team will send at least one student team member to the national convention in Cleveland to present the project results to a panel of judges. Each team will be contacted with its presentation time.
- **The competition consists of three elements: (1)** a written research report (double-spaced) of no more than 10 pages to be emailed by Mar. 1 to office@alphachihonor.org; **(2)** a printed poster to be brought to Cleveland and hung by 5 p.m., Apr. 4; and **(3)** a 10-minute oral presentation on Apr. 5 or 6. For visibility and ease of reference only, a single PowerPoint slide of the poster can be brought on USB and a 1-page printed copy of the poster provided to each judge.
- The paper, poster, and presentation must conform to the posted rubric by which all projects will be judged.