

University of Delaware Chapter of Sigma Xi

2011 Undergraduate Thesis Award

Nomination Procedure

The University of Delaware Chapter of Sigma Xi is pleased to announce the 2011 Undergraduate Thesis Award. Nominations may be made by department chairs or individual faculty members who are Sigma Xi members in good standing. Only one nomination per individual will be allowed. It is the responsibility of each department or faculty Sigma Xi member to arrive at a procedure for determining its nominee. Please note, faculty Sigma Xi members cannot be the mentor of their nominee. Nomination packages should be compiled as a single pdf document that contains the following:

- A copy of the final version of the Senior Thesis, including a copy of the signed cover page indicating successful completion of the thesis defense
- A letter from the student's thesis advisor, no more than 2 pages in length, explaining the unusual merit of the thesis (no less than 2/3 of letter) and the student (no more than 1/3 of the letter)
- A letter from a member of the thesis committee, no more than 2 pages in length, explaining the merit of the thesis

Nomination packages should be submitted via the UD drop box to Prof. Erica M. Selva <selva@udel.edu> in the Department of Biological Sciences, **by** Tuesday, May 17, 2011 before 10:00 p.m.

Award Criteria

Nomination packages will be reviewed in confidence by a committee established by the University of Delaware Chapter of Sigma Xi. No more than five Senior Theses awards will be made from the university-wide pool of nominees. The review committee will consider the following award criteria:

- Scientific merit: The thesis should be a substantial research effort that either advances knowledge of a scientific or mathematical topic, or synthesizes existing areas of knowledge in a new way. Both immediate and potential impact will be considered.
- Exposition: The thesis should be a substantial effort to communicate scientific results in a way that is meaningful to both specialists and a general scientific audience.

The review criteria shall have equal weight. However, not all thesis topics are equal. Reviewers shall weigh the degree to which theses advance the Sigma Xi mission: "To enhance the health of the research enterprise, foster integrity in science and engineering, and promote the public's understanding of science for the purpose of improving the human condition."

Eligibility

Nominees must be graduating seniors who have fulfilled all requirements for completion of UNIV 402, including successful defense of their senior thesis. The fields of activity of Sigma Xi are the pure and applied natural sciences. In general, these include the physical sciences, the life and agricultural sciences, the earth sciences, the medical sciences, mathematics, engineering, and economics.

Awards

We plan to announce awards no later than Wednesday, May 26. The awards will consist of a Certificate from Sigma Xi, a \$100 gift card from Barnes & Noble, and a 1-year student membership in Sigma Xi. Departments may wish to announce award recipients at departmental convocation ceremonies.