



Creating an Academic Poster

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Objectives

- Describe the steps for formatting and designing an academic poster.
- Discuss the creation of appropriate poster content.



Academic Posters...

- sell your work in ten seconds.
- should be eye catching.
- are a simple, yet effective way to display research data.
- contain a mixture of brief text mixed with visual data representations.



Poster Presentation

- At a conference, a member of the research team stands by the poster display while conference attendees can come and view the poster.
- If you succeed in capturing someone's attention, you have about 30 seconds to convey an overall understanding of the project.
- If they are interested, they will spend additional time exploring the information and asking questions.
- A poster provides an opportunity for making valuable contacts and engaging in meaningful dialogue with colleagues.
- A poster can convey your message to a large audience. However, if your poster does not grab people's attention, your efforts have been in vain.



So how can I visually share my research?

"It takes intelligence, even brilliance, to condense and focus information into a clear, simple presentation that will be read and remembered. Ignorance and arrogance are shown in a crowded, complicated, hard-to-read poster."

Mary Helen Briscoe



Poster Development Steps

- Conceptualize
 - Audience
 - Guidelines
 - Material
- Development
 - Sizing
 - Outline of content
 - Design
 - Layout
 - Flow
- Review
 - Outside perspective
 - Collaborator feedback
- Print



Where to begin

- Review conference poster guidelines
 - Check for sizing information
- **Correctly size poster before adding content**
- Use conference abstract submission to begin condensing your work into concise, easily understandable points
- Think about creating a **storyboard**
 - Create a rough visualization of your poster
 - Should contain no content or data
 - Enables you to visualize the dimensions of poster and provides a rough outline of the approximate proportions of space that will be devoted to each section



Choose Software

- Powerpoint
- Publisher
- Adobe Illustrator
- Photoshop

*Complete the entire poster on a single platform to avoid formatting issues or lost image files.



Design

- Color
 - Use sparingly
 - Stick to a few colors that compliment each other
- Font
 - Keep it consistent
 - Bigger is better: Information should be readable from 6 – 10 feet away
 - Sans serif
 - Keep word count low
- Create columns for structure
 - Avoid blocks of text longer than 10 sentences
- Background=light colored
 - Make sure there is contrast between background and text
- Use headlines, bullets, numbering to make it easy to read
- Use all space
- Label clearly
- Keep it clean – simple colors, simple background, simple font





A Good Title is Key

- Should briefly convey the most interesting finding or issue of your research
- Sell your work!
 - Needs to be catchy in order to reel in conference attendees
 - Pose a question, define project scope, or hint at major finding
 - Short, sharp, and compelling
- Never use all caps in title
- Eye catching and prominent on page
- Avoid confusing acronyms



Poster Layout

- Many templates can be found online
- Make sure the layout is:
 - Organized
 - Has a clear flow
 - And well defined sections
- Use prominent category headings
- Leave breathing room around text
- Guide eyes from one succinct frame to another in a logical fashion from beginning to end
- Use arrows, numbering, etc. to move from one logical step to another
- Make sure the main points can be read at eye level
- Don't bury conclusions
- Use lists of sentences rather than blocks of text



Content

- Effectively summarize project information and generate discussion
- Well structured just like academic writing
- Concise distillation of the work
 - Limited space to share your work
- Highlight major findings and most interesting things about research



Content Elements

- Introduction
 - Get your viewer interested in the issue or question
 - 200 words
- Objectives
 - <100 words
- Methods
 - Briefly describe procedure, but not with the detail used for a manuscript
 - Use figures and flow charts to illustrate experimental design
 - Mention statistical analyses
 - 200 words
- Results
 - Briefly describe qualitative and quantitative results
 - Include presentation of data analysis
 - Refer to supporting charts and figures
 - 200 words
- Conclusions
 - Remind reader of the major result and try to convince why the outcome is interesting
 - State the relevance of your findings to other published work, relevance to real world, and/or future directions.
 - 200 words



Visuals

- Keep posters visual – think of it as an illustrated abstract
- Incorporate images, diagrams, graphs and figures when appropriate
- Visuals can be used to create a clear portrayal of complex concepts
- Graphs and figures should be saved as PNGs before being imported
- Make sure to include headings, labels, scales and brief explanations for visuals
- Picture resolution – at least 150 dpi
- Make sure that details on graphs and photographs can be comfortably viewed from 6 feet away
- Use web graphics with caution (low resolution and copyright)
- Don't clutter your poster with images, logos, etc.



Poster Review

- Ask someone outside the project to review poster
 - Format
 - Flow
 - Content
 - Spelling/grammar
- Get feedback from co-authors
- **ELIMINATE** all extraneous material



Printing

- Export to PDF before printing
- Confirm size with printer
- Specify matte or gloss paper

Finished Poster Size	Page Size in PPT	Enlargement when printed
36" x 48"	36" x 48"	100%
36" x 56"	36" x 56"	100%
36" x 60"	18" x 30"	200%
36" x 72"	18" x 36"	200%
48" x 56"	48" x 56"	100%
48" x 60"	24" x 30"	200%
48" x 72"	24" x 36"	200%
48" x 84"	24" x 42"	200%
48" x 96"	24" x 48"	200%



Other components to remember

- Acknowledgments
- Citations
- Provide further information
 - QR code
 - Provide URL to electronic copy of poster
 - Printed handout
- Contact information



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Fig. 3. Hsp70 transcription factor 1 that binds to transcription element WRE-1 (TRE-1) differs. Treating cells with the appropriate stressor (either 40°C or 40% DMSO) for 30 min in the case of heat, transcription factor 1 (TF1) was isolated using a synthetic binding site for WRE-1 (TRE-1) as a transcription probe. However, it was interesting to find that the two heat-transcription isoforms also interact with the WRE-1 probe. This suggests that these two isoforms are able to recognize the same site on the WRE-1 probe. In these stress-treated cells, a specific band that binds to the WRE-1/TRE-1 probe is shown (arrowhead).

Category	Number of Publications (n)
Too small	85
Too much	25

[illegible][illegible][illegible]

Figure 4 Surface morphology and roughness of the samples. (a) Average surface roughness (R_a) of the samples. (b) Average surface roughness (R_a) of the samples. (c) SEM images of the samples.

[illegible]

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A photograph showing a woman with long blonde hair and a man in a dark shirt looking at several documents spread out on a table. The man is pointing at one of the documents. The scene appears to be an office or a meeting room.

Viewers reading this line demonstrate the poster's success!



Remember!

- Catch the readers attention
 - Reel them in with eye-catching and descriptive title
- Make your poster visually pleasing
 - Large, easy to read font
 - Prominent section headings
 - Clear and effective visuals
- Poster layout and format are critical
 - Create a logical organizational flow of information
- Content is key, but keep it concise
 - The number one mistake is to make your poster too long!
- Add a little personality!



References

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