POSTER PRESENTATION TIPS

LEADERSHIP SYMPOSIUM

The intent of posters is to have students present a research idea, research project, service-learning project or other related paper in a visual manner. The final “product” should be self-standing 24” x 36” professional poster that will be on display during the Leadership Symposium.

PURPOSE OF A CONFERENCE POSTER PRESENTATION

• To educate others about your research findings or writings;
• To get feedback/critique from peers before submitting a manuscript for publication;
• To network with other scholars who are interested in the same research; and/or
• To promote one’s work and ideas.

ADVANTAGES OF POSTER PRESENTATIONS OVER ORAL PRESENTATIONS

• A poster session has potential to reach larger numbers of people than a typical oral presentation.
• A poster can invite others to engage who might not have before been interested in the topic or research you present.
• A poster presentation allows you to have one-on-one discussions with people interested in your research/topic.
• There is more time to present your research at a poster session; versus the 12-20 minutes allotted in most oral sessions.
• Speaking in front of a group is not required.

ETHICAL & PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIOR

• Do not list your name on a poster as a coauthor/presenter unless you had an active role in the research and development of the content of the presentation.
• Give citations on a poster when paraphrasing other’s work just like you would in a manuscript.
• Use APA style when citing and include a reference section on your poster.
• The same poster typically should not be presented at multiple conferences, however the symposium is a different situation.
• Be on time for your poster, and be sure to take your poster down at the end of the time.
• Stay close to your poster during the session so that you are available for discussion.
• Smile and make eye contact with people who pass the poster, greet viewers and offer to answer any questions they may have.
• Have an information sheet of the poster as a handout (e.g., hard copy, disc, electronic copy) for interested scholars. If you run out of handouts, be prepared to collect information from interested
parties to email the poster to them as soon as possible (preferably as soon as you get access to the internet).

- Accept feedback both positive and even negative. Don’t take criticism personally; remember this is an opportunity for feedback and conversation. One of the purposes of a poster (or oral) presentation is to get critique prior to submitting for publication.
- Also, many scholars who attend the poster session are there to mentor others and engage in critical thought processes. Be sure to converse profusely with those scholars especially those who are known to have expertise in your area of research.
- Bring business cards or include your contact information on your information sheet.

**POSTER HANDOUT**

During the symposium, please create a one page (double-sided is accepted) informational flyer describing your poster. This sheet should have very similar/same material as your poster, and includes information for symposium participants to “walk away with” as a resource about your presentation. Photos are not necessary for the info sheet.

**CREATING A POSTER USING POWERPOINT**

- Open a blank PowerPoint slide
- Go to “Page setup” o Create a custom size – 24” wide 36” height
- Select landscape for the slide (see diagram to the right)
- Next, you can select a slide theme or just leave it blank.
- If you go under ‘view’ to ‘master’ to ‘slide master’, you can designate the font size, type, color, and color/type of bullets for the text boxes. It is much easier to change it in the slide master than to change the text manually for each text box in your slide. • Also, you can designate a color scheme for the slide. • Then go back to ‘view’ to ‘normal’. • You can now add your individual text boxes and/or graphics.
- Refer to the following page for working with graphics, text, etc. in PowerPoint
  [http://abacus.bates.edu/~bpfohl/posters/](http://abacus.bates.edu/~bpfohl/posters/)

**FORMATTING**

- For PowerPoint 24” x 36” display
- Wording:
  - Do not overwhelm the reader with too much information.
  - Use phrases instead of sentences as much as possible.
  - Use bullets.
  - Use appropriate grammar and spelling.
  - Use active, not passive, verbs.
Avoid visual chaos that distracts the reader (e.g., numerous jagged edges, various-sized boxes and font sizes, gratuitous images).

Provide visual cues to guide readers through your poster.

Avoid visual clutter/chaos. Use a logical structure that guides the reader along the main points from beginning to end.

In large poster sessions, viewers slow down or stop at posters that catch their attention. Style matters!

Make it aesthetically pleasing (because it enhances a person’s desire to read it).

- **Pictures/figures:**
  - Use figures, diagrams, graphics, or easy-to-read tables to explain/illustrate ideas or findings.
  - Note: Using graphics downloaded from the Internet will often look terrible when printed; especially if you make the image bigger. Make sure images you use are public domain. Images should only be used when they complement/explain the subject matter.
  - Avoid background graphics that make the text difficult to read.
  - Use plenty of white space.
  - Maintain logical column alignments.

- **Color**
  - Color is encouraged, but limit the number of colors to create an overall theme for the poster.
  - Use a light-colored background with black or dark-colored text printed.
  - Avoid dark backgrounds with white letters because it uses a tremendous amount of ink.
  - Use large enough print, graphs, charts, or designs to be read easily from a distance of at least 5 feet.

- **Fonts**
  - Do not use ALL CAPS. Don’t mix a large number of fonts. Instead, make the headings/title a sans serif font (e.g., Arial, Helvetica) and the body text a serif font (e.g., Palatino, Times New Roman).
  - All type should be a **minimum** font size of 18 – preferably bigger.
  - You can find templates for posters at [http://www.csun.edu/~cor/templates.html](http://www.csun.edu/~cor/templates.html)
  - The templates are easy to customize with text, color, etc. Do not adjust the page setup width and height on the templates as it will mess up the formatting of the textboxes.
  - Type in all the text before adjusting the sizes of the text boxes. It is easier to move things around once you know how much text will be in each box. Try to consolidate as much information as possible.
MISCELLANEOUS

➤ Printing your poster

• Printing your poster will require the use of a plotter printer. You can print your poster at the Faculty Print Shop (In Room 011 College Hall http://www.gonzaga.edu/campus-resources/Offices-and-Services-A-Z/Faculty-Services/default.asp (They have a downloadable form)

• At Kinko’s

• At Walgreens

• You will need to allow at least a week to print your poster in case there are unexpected glitches (e.g., plotter printer runs out of ink, no paper, a graphic or table on the poster is causing printing errors).

➤ Other Poster criteria (for the Leadership Symposium)

• Make sure to use the 26"x 36" Poster size, and obtain a cardboard tri-fold to mount the poster to. For this conference ALL posters must be able to stand on a table on their own.

POSTER PRESENTATION TIPS

• Tips when printing a PowerPoint poster

  • If you use a slide background that is a picture or a texture, it will often create a large file that can exceed the plotter printer’s memory and/or take a long time to print. It is best to use a single color or a fading color for the background.

  • Sometimes embedded Word tables, Excel charts, and Visio drawings in PowerPoint files don’t print correctly. Convert them to images (JPEGs, TIFFs, EPS, etc.) before adding them to your slide.

  • Feel free to use other programs to create your poster, (i.e.: Microsoft Swag, Prezi, Photoshop, etc.). However, please keep the above criteria in mind if you use another method.

ONLINE RESOURCES FOR POSTER PRESENTATIONS

http://www.swarthmore.edu/NatSci/cpurin1/posteradvice.htm
http://www.asp.org/Education/Howto_onPosters.html
http://www.ncsu.edu/project/posters/NewSite/index.html
http://colinpurrington.com/tips/academic/posterdesign