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

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<th>Enlargement when printed</th>
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Other components to remember

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

• Designing conference posters (Colin Purrington) - http://colinpurrington.com/tips/poster-design
• The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill Graduate School (Poster and Presentation Resources) - http://gradschool.unc.edu/academics/resources/postertips.html
• University at Buffalo Libraries (Poster Presentations) - http://libweb.lib.buffalo.edu/guide/guide.asp?ID=155
• Designing an Academic Poster (prezi.com) - https://prezi.com/0e1ftr5f7zlz/designing-an-academic-poster/
• University College (Poster Presentation Tips) - https://nau.edu/undergraduate-research/poster-presentation-tips/
• Creating Effective Poster Presentations (An Effective Poster | Creating Effective Poster Presentations) - http://www.ncsu.edu/project/posters/
• Poster Design Tips (Poster Design Tips) - http://liti.lse.ac.uk/poster-design/
• Creating Large Format Posters Using PowerPoint (Wake Forest Baptist Medical Center) - http://www.wakehealth.edu/Creative/Resources/Tip-Sheets/Creating-Large-Format-Posters-Using-PowerPoint.htm
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