What Is a Poster?

A visual communication tool!

- No magic formula for success
- Rather, tried-and-true methods to make the process easier
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Poster</th>
<th>Talk</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less intimidating</td>
<td>Less</td>
<td>More</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More intimidating</td>
<td>More</td>
<td>Less</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less weight on CV</td>
<td>Less</td>
<td>More</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More weight on CV</td>
<td>More</td>
<td>Less</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More time for prep</td>
<td>More</td>
<td>Less</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less time for prep</td>
<td>Less</td>
<td>More</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More time for disc</td>
<td>More</td>
<td>Less</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less time for disc</td>
<td>Less</td>
<td>More</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Poster vs. Talk</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>More time for interaction</strong></td>
<td><strong>Less time for interaction</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Good way to meet people</strong></td>
<td><strong>Not a good way to meet people</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>More relaxed atmosphere</strong></td>
<td><strong>Less relaxed atmosphere</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Noisy and cramped</strong></td>
<td><strong>Not!</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Poster vs. Talk</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Repetitive and tiring!</td>
<td>Not!</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Play”, “forward” and “rewind”</td>
<td>Just “play” baby!</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Viewable when you’re day-dreamin’</td>
<td>Not!</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portable</td>
<td>Not!</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Types of Posters

1. Arts-and-crafts poster
   - Cut-and-paste onto panels on a matte board

2. Software-generated poster
   - Adobe PageMaker
   - Adobe Illustrator
   - Microsoft PowerPoint
Dress Code?

What do y’all think about these shirts?

Dress Code?

Coordinate your poster and wardrobe!

Where to Start?

First, address these questions

1. Who is your target audience?

2. What is your core message?
Important Guidelines

Remember the KISS Principle!

The poster is NOT a manuscript!
- It should be as concise as possible

Convey the Big Picture!
- NOT the details
Important Guidelines

Posters are primarily visual presentations!
- **Graphics, not text, should dominate!**

Don’t overload your poster
- Keep some **empty space** between sections
Let’s Get it Started, HA!

Title
Abstract??
Introduction
Methodology
Results
Conclusions
References
Acknowledgements
**Title**

- Typically across the top of the poster
- Should be eye-catching but not too cute!
- Never more than two lines long
- **Use 72-font (~ 1” in height)**
- Include author(s) and affiliation(s)
  - Use smaller font
Don’t use all CAPS

- TOWN OFFICIAL TAKES STAND ON MANURE PILE
- Town official takes stand on manure pile

Headlines – The Tonight Show with Jay Leno
It’s OK to use a “sentence case” format instead of “title case”

- Winery says it was a mouse, not a rat, that was found in sandwich
- Winery Says It Was a Mouse, Not a Rat, that Was Found in Sandwich

Headlines – The Tonight Show with Jay Leno
It’s OK to use a “sentence case” format instead of “title case”

- Winery says it was a *Mus musculus*, not a *Rattus rattus*, that was found in sandwich
- Winery says it was a *Mus Musculus*, not a *Rattus Rattus*, that was found in sandwich
Note: Layout A is far more superior than layout B

- It accommodates multiple visitors to your poster!
Use large type and **boldface** for subject headings

- 40-60 type

Use smaller type for body text

- 20-28

Never use less than 14-pt!

- And if possible, not less than 16-pt or even 18-pt
Use a serif font for body text

- Illustrate
  - *Times New Roman*
  - *Palatino*

- Illustrate
  - *Arial*
  - *Helvetica*
Don’t include very large blocks of text

Use sentence lists whenever possible

Use *italics* and *boldface* instead of underlining

Don’t vary excessively the *types*, *type sizes* and *typefaces*
Introduction

Offer some background information
- Avoid excessive definitions

“Hook” viewers by piquing their interest
- Use photographs, if possible
Methodology

Be brief

Use of explicit subject headings is a plus!
Results

Typically the largest section of the poster

Use of explicit subject headings is a plus!

Illustrate in graphs and tables what you found!
Conclusions

Discuss your results

- Highlight their significance

Use of explicit subject headings is a plus!

You can also address future prospects
Acknowledgements

Your chance to thank the people who have made important contributions to the project
References

List the most relevant journal articles to your work

- Limit yourself to only a few!
Graphics

http://www.ncsu.edu/project/posters/GoodGraphs/
Graphics

- Should be as clear and simple as possible
  - *All* distractions should be removed

- Avoid colored backgrounds for graphs

- Align y-axis labels horizontally, if space permits
Graphics

http://www.ncsu.edu/project/posters/GoodGraphs/
Graphics

Don’t display 2-D data in 3-D

Use clipart *only* if it

- 1. adds *interest* to the display
- 2. *complements* the subject matter

Addition of a thin colored border to a photograph may enhance its visual appeal
Colors

Colors are a two-edged sword

- They attract attention
- They detract from message
Colors

Do use colors in your poster, but with the following caveats

- Avoid garish colors
- Stick to 2-4 colors
- Be mindful of color contrast between background and foreground
- Remember that a few viewers could be color-blind
http://colorvisiontesting.com/
You should consider having a handout for viewers

- It can include
  - Your contact information
  - A miniature copy of the poster
  - Detailed methodology
  - An annotated list of references
  - Relevant websites
Final Touches

Make sure that the poster is devoid of mechanical errors

- Look for
  - spelling mistakes
  - the use of of repeated words
  - grammatical errors you might have make
Final Touches

- Make sure that the poster is legible
- Make sure that the poster has a consistent style
Presenting Your Poster

Dress conservatively
  - Try to choose clothes that do not clash with your poster 😊

No hats!

Wear comfortable shoes

Arrive to the poster session early
Presenting Your Poster

Don’t chew gum/tobacco

Make yourself readily identifiable

Don’t stand too close to your poster

Don’t put your hands in your pocket
Presenting Your Poster

Be able to give a 2-4 minute verbal explanation of your work

When explaining your poster
- Don’t use notes
- Do refer to the figures
- Don’t turn your back to the viewer
Presenting Your Poster

Don’t engage in *prolonged* conversation with a single individual

Try to circulate to view other posters

Stick around for the entire duration!

Have fun!!!
Printing Your Poster

http://www.sgcs.usf.edu/poster_entry.php
- 2ft x 3ft poster printed for free

http://scholarcommons.usf.edu/ur_symposium/2011/
- Office of Undergraduate research
- Link to PDF with poster printing prices
Useful Websites

http://www.ncsu.edu/project/posters/NewSite/index.html
- Arguably, the best resource about poster presentations

http://www.bio.miami.edu/ktosney/file/PosterHome.html
- Offers positive and negative examples of posters

http://www.stanford.edu/group/blocklab/dos%20and%20dons%20of%20poster%20presentation.pdf
- The Do’s and Don’ts of Poster Presentation