Research Poster Tips

Goal of a Research Poster:
A Research Poster should be an overview of your research. Concentrate on the unique and exciting aspects of your findings. Your poster should serve as a starting point for discussion of your research.

General guidelines:
• Use key words and phrases
• Use Bullet Points generously to highlight main points
• Be concise – Avoid the over-use of sentences and paragraphs. Your poster is not the place to reprint your entire research paper.

Arrange your Research Poster in columns so that participants read down each column, moving from left to right without backtracking. Two or three columns under the title area is the preferred format. Organize information in a series of units (“chunks”) that fit on paper 46”x42” or smaller.

Preparation:
• Collect all necessary charts, photos, and text before starting
• If you are new to poster layout, it may take more time than you expect. Budget adequate time to complete the poster so you won’t be rushed at the end.

Layout:
• Allow for 1” border around poster edges
• Allow for suitable margins between columns and chunks

Mandatory UW-Stout Standards:
• UW-Stout “Shield and Bars” logo, (included on all templates)
• “University of Wisconsin-Stout” (without quotation marks) included in title

Font suggestions:
• Use no more than three fonts
• Maintain consistent use of type styles, and sizes
• One font for titles (bold) and one font for text works well

Select easily read fonts:
• Avoid script and Old English type styles
• Sans Serif fonts, such as Arial, Franklin Gothic Book, Calibri, Verdana, and Tahoma are preferred.

Size fonts for readability:
• Minimum size for headings should be 48 points
• Minimum size for the text body should be 32 points
• Shorten titles rather than reducing them in size
• Capitalize titles using same conventions used for books
Choose backgrounds carefully:
• Light backgrounds with dark type generally work best
• Backgrounds which are “busy” can be a distraction

Charts and Graphs:
• Complex data tables are difficult to grasp quickly
• Simple charts and graphs show data in an easily understood format

Photographs:
• Crop photos to eliminate unnecessary distractions from your photo.
• Get copyright permission in advance to use copyrighted photos.
• Find public domain or Creative Commons photos
• Check out http://freelearningobjects.wikispaces.com
• Cite/give credit for photos you use

Compressing Photos:
Please compress your photos. The photo compression utility within PowerPoint reduces file size and allows for more efficient printing of your research posters.

First, click the photo you want to compress. If you have multiple photos, select them by holding down the shift key and selecting each photo. The Picture Tools tab appears after you click on a photo.

Select the Picture Tools Tab

Next, click on Compress Pictures button

In the Compress Pictures dialog box, click the Options button.

In the Target Outputs section, check the Print radio button and click the OK button. Then, click the OK button in the Compress Pictures dialog box.
Proofreading and Revision:
Spelling & grammatical errors detract from the information you present. Asking several people, including an instructor, to proofread your poster is strongly encouraged.

Revise your poster to use the clearest language possible. If a proofreader does not understand something, give serious consideration to making suggested changes. Explaining concepts in layman’s terms is often helpful to those who may not be familiar with your research.

If you need to contact Learning Technology Services (LTS) in regard to having your poster printed, send an email to researchposters@uwstout.edu.