

Information for this page comes from <https://www.whitman.edu/academics/signature-programs/whitman-undergraduate-conference/guidelines-for-presenters/guidelines-for-poster-presenters#overview>

Overview

- Poster size is 42 inches by 54 inches.
- All posters are displayed in a single one-hour session (11 a.m.-noon). All poster presenters are required to be present with their poster during this time.

Make an Appointment

You must make an appointment to print your poster. To request an appointment and learn more about logistics involved in printing please contact Emily Geraghty Ward (emily.ward@rocky.edu)

When emailing to setup an appointment time, please provide the following information:

- State that this is a poster for the RMC Undergraduate Research Symposium
- Full name
- Preferred contact information (e-mail, cell phone, etc.)
- Preferred appointment times (list 2-3)

- Posters are printed on campus at the Writing Center. (Note: Posters will not be mounted on foam core. Supplies to hang the posters will be provided)

STEP 1: DESIGN YOUR POSTER

Software

Please design the poster using Microsoft PowerPoint. The instructions below are written for PowerPoint found on all campus lab computers. This version saves a file with the “.pptx” file extension. Do not switch from PC to Mac, or ppt to pptx; stay with one format the entire time.

Design Templates

If you need help getting started with poster design, you can view a template available here: [Link to template](#)

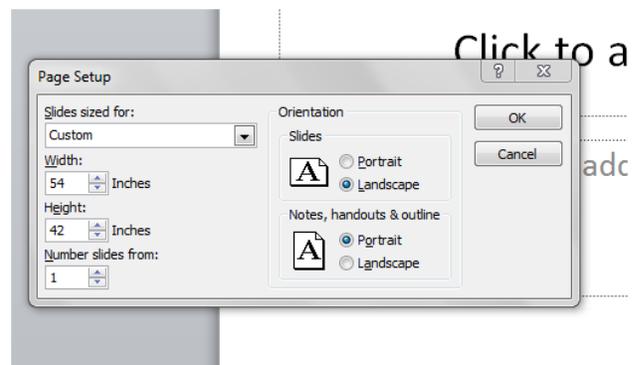
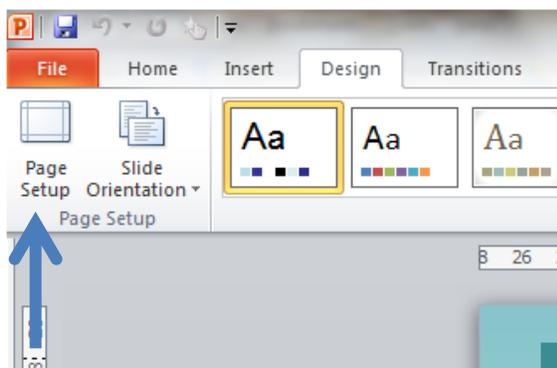
The template can be customized, but it will give you a structure with which to begin. If you are new to posters, a template is highly recommended. Your poster will still be distinctive. You can easily change the color scheme, layout, and fonts within the template. The template is set up so you replace the text and image placeholders with your own information. They use default fonts and layouts that give a pleasant finished product, with or without customizing.

If you start from scratch, any of the tutorials on the following websites are highly recommended. The most important element is size. The maximum size when designing from scratch in PowerPoint is 42" x 54”.

To use a template, click on the image to download it to your computer. It will be a PowerPoint file. Name and save it on your computer.

The file will be a single PowerPoint slide with boxes of text and image placeholders.

RESIZE THE TEMPLATE. In PowerPoint, select the “Design” tab and look for “Page Setup”. Enter the height (42 inches) and width (54 inches) of your poster.



EDIT THE TEMPLATE. Simply replace the text and placeholders with your own text and images. Click on the background to change its color. Read the rest of the tutorial here before you begin.

Poster Design Tutorials

<http://www.makesigns.com/tutorials/scientific-poster-parts.aspx>

<http://www.personal.psu.edu/drs18/postershow/>

http://www.tc.umn.edu/~schne006/tutorials/poster_design/

<http://www.utexas.edu/ugs/our/poster>

Design and Layout

Sections

There are no hard and fast rules for the sections in a poster. Here is a suggested list:

- Title (with authors and affiliations)
- Introduction / Objectives / Aims / Problem / Goal
- Methods
- Data/Results
- Conclusion
- References
- Acknowledgements

Organization

Look at examples. (Search “scientific poster examples” on the Internet.) Note that poster content is always arranged in columns on an invisible grid. Draw a storyboard; sketch out a possible arrangement of the sections, showing boxes for titles, text and graphics.

Put your research objective (the Big Question) in a prominent place. Usually that’s the upper left of a poster, where a reader’s eyes will land first.

Use graphics to convey most information. If you can’t explain your research graphically, you don’t have a poster. Keep text to a minimum. A typical poster contains about 1,000 words, or 250 per section. Let the graphics do the talking. Captions must convey much information. Give graphs titles that explain what the viewer should understand from the graph.

Keep all elements of a section close to one another, and place captions close to their graphics. Leave space between sections so that the viewer can make sense of the graphics and their corresponding captions.

Fonts

Your poster will be viewed from a range of 4-15 feet. Titles have to be large enough to be read from 10-15 feet. Captions should be clear at 4 feet. One design guideline that has been shown to be effective is a sans-serif font for titles and headings, and serif fonts for text and captions. Use the same sans-serif font for titles and headings, and use the same serif font for text and captions. Text should be justified (aligned) left. Use italics or bold for emphasis. Do not underline or use all caps.

A suggestion for effective font choices and sizes:

Title = 100 pt bold sans serif font (Ariel)
Section Headings = 48 pt bold sans serif font (Ariel)
Body Text = 28 pt serif font (Times New Roman)
Captions = 24pt serif font (Times New Roman)

Color

Dark text on a light background is easiest to read. If you have a very dark background, use large, bold white text. Be very careful about this option because the text will look much less defined in the printed version than when viewed on a computer. Avoid color-on-color, especially bright hues. Keep backgrounds simple. If you want to use a photo, choose “Watermark” to make it light and unobtrusive. Choose a simple color scheme with only two or three related colors. Change colors on graphs and figures so they complement the background color.

STEP 2: WRITING UP THE SECTIONS

Title

Keep the title poster to fewer than 12 words. Put important words first. Leave out unnecessary words. For example, “Investigation of Threshold Characteristics of Materials Fracture Under Impact Loads Produced by Pulsed Magnetic Fields” can be shortened to “Threshold Fractures Produced by Pulsed Magnetic Fields.” Keep your title formal; be wary of making claims that the data doesn’t support. It is customary in the title section to put a logo from your institution and any other institution where you did work; the conference at which the poster is presented; and any sponsoring agency. Full names of the authors and their affiliated institutions are listed directly below the title.

Objective / Introduction

Give context for your work by stating what’s already known about the topic. Then show how your question fits into that framework and seeks to expand or explain some aspect of it.

Methods Section

Keep the methods section minimal. Consider using a graphic of the steps or making a bulleted list.

Data/Results Section

Organize the data. A table is much better than a list, but use a bulleted list if appropriate. Don’t forget to put units on everything. Results sections typically have very little text.

Conclusions Section

Explicitly state what you found in your research. Note its significance. Focus on the big picture. Directly address the question you proposed in the introduction, using the same terminology and phrasing. Graphs work particularly well here. Recommend how your results might be used, and explain how they’ve added to the knowledge base in your field. Indicate how they answer a vexing problem; evaluate how well the results answered your question; show how they lead to other areas of study; give an idea of what new questions they open up. Never indicate that further study is required unless you have a specific plan for the next step.

References Section

Keep your list of references short (three to five entries). Use small type (16 pt.) if the list must be long. Use whatever style guide your field normally uses for references. (Check with your adviser for a journal as an example.)

Acknowledgments Section

Acknowledge the people who contributed directly to the work. Thank your adviser. Acknowledge any funding you received. If you worked off-campus, acknowledge that group. Keep the section to 50 words.

STEP 3: PRINT YOUR POSTER

Preview of Poster Layout

Use the view-zoom button in PowerPoint to look at specific elements. To see the entire poster, click "Print" to see a copy on 8.5" x 11" paper. The image will be small, but it will give an idea of the overall design and balance of the poster.

How to Print Your Poster

Your poster will be printed on campus on plotter printers which are located in the Writing Center.

Make an Appointment

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Transporting the File

Bring your poster file on a USB flash drive. Save the poster in both ".pptx" and ".pdf" format. You'll take the poster home with you, rolled up with a rubber band . If you have a poster tube, bring it.

Colors

The printed image will not match the exact color seen on your computer screen. Inks and lights do not give the same colors. Purples will be darker, for example, and light letters on a dark background may be harder to read.

STEP 4: POSTER SETUP AND PRESENTATION

Setting Up the Poster in Fraley Lounge

Posters will be displayed in Fraley Lounge for the entire day of the conference (11 a.m.- 4 p.m.)

You may setup your poster beginning at 9 a.m. the day of the conference. Mounting supplies (push-pins/tape) will be provided.

Please be in Fraley by your poster by 10:50 a.m. to greet visitors and present your poster.

Please take your poster with you by the time the conference ends at 4 p.m. Unclaimed posters will not be saved.

At the Conference: Talking to the Audience

- Picture yourself in front of your poster. Someone walks up and says, “So, tell me about your research.” What do you say?
- Practice your “elevator pitch,” a concise, focused, one-minute summary of your work and why it’s important.
- Also practice an expanded (five-minute) response that includes: the Big Question, the data you sought, the results you found, the conclusions you drew.