Creating Your Research Poster:

1. Create your poster on a PowerPoint slide formatted (36”x48”) see link for templates that you can use and examples [http://ovpred.ua.edu/urca/conference-resources/](http://ovpred.ua.edu/urca/conference-resources/)

2. Decide what you will include on your poster. It may be helpful to write up a narrative of the information you need to include on the poster (see below for more guidance on each section). Your poster is a visual representation of your work and should not be bogged down by too many words. Your poster should have approximately 800 words and include graphs, tables, or pictures.

   a. You will want to include the following sections: Purpose & Background (presented together in your Introduction section), Methods, Results, Conclusion.

   b. Works in progress should include: Purpose, Research Problem, Background, Methods.

   c. Be sure to properly cite your resources used and have a reference section on your poster.

3. Once you have completed your poster and proof read it thoroughly, it is ready to be printed. You may send your proof-read completed poster to Barbara Wright in CHHS and she will print your poster ONCE (hence the emphasis on making sure your poster is free from errors), please send her the PowerPoint slide or a PDF version of the completed poster no later than Wednesday, October 25th. She can be contacted at bwright@ua.edu

Sections of Your Poster

**Introduction:** In this section state the overall goal and aim of the work. This may be different from the specific research question or hypothesis being addressed in the poster. Provide a brief background to put the goal/aim of the work in context. Include citations. Clearly state the question or hypothesis that has been addressed by the data presented in the Results Section. Aim for a maximum of 125 words.

**Materials and Methods:** Present a brief overview of the methods used. Do not include the detail that you would for the Material and Methods section of a manuscript. Whenever
possible, use diagrams to summarize the experimental methods. Ideally the Material and Methods should not exceed 150 words.

Results: This section summarizes the most important data from your study. When possible, use graphs, charts, or figures rather than text to present the results. Spend time designing your graphics. Each graph, chart, or figure should be clearly labeled with a “headline” title that conveys the main point. Graphs, charts, and figures should include labels that indicate exactly where to look to see the result(s). Avoid legends and remove unneeded gridlines, unneeded labels, etc. from graphs and charts. Follow Edward Tufte’s rule of eliminating chart junk and maximizing the % of ink that shows the data. However, do not eliminate the positive and negative controls. An ideal word count for this section is approximately 250 words.

Conclusions: Summarize the data presented and the significance of the data. You can also include a statement on future directions. This can be done in the form of a bulleted list. Try to limit this section to 150 words.

Literature Cited/References: Follow a standard format. Limit the number of citations to approximately 5.

Acknowledgements: Acknowledge funding source(s) and those who have helped with the study.

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Tips for making your poster on PowerPoint

excerpted from: [https://undergraduateresearch.as.ua.edu/presenting-your-work/making-posters/](https://undergraduateresearch.as.ua.edu/presenting-your-work/making-posters/)

Text

- The title should be approximately the entire width of the poster with the main text broken into multiple columns, usually three or four depending on the size of the poster. You may also want to use section headings within the columns at the start of each section. (The available template is designed in this fashion.)
- Sans-serif fonts are the best for posters, particularly for the title, subtitle, and headers.
- The most common fonts are Times New Roman and Arial. Other fonts include Arial Black, Franklin Gothic Heavy, Tahoma, Trebuchet, Verdana, Garamond, Book Antiqua, or Bookman Old Style, just to name a few. This is not an exhaustive list, just a few examples.
- You will have to adjust the font size depending on the amount of text in your poster and the style of font you choose. For readability, you should not use a font size any smaller than 18 points.
- For consistency, it would be best to make all the headers the same size and use the same font size throughout the poster for all body text.
• If your text is in a different file (e.g. in a Word document) be sure that it pastes into a text box in PowerPoint so it can be more easily edited. To do this, use the Paste Special command and choose Unformatted Text so that the text will become a PowerPoint text box. If you just copy and paste, your text will be an imported word processing object, which will not be as easy to edit in PowerPoint.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Font Size</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Title</td>
<td>72-120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subtitle</td>
<td>48-80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section Headers</td>
<td>36-72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Body Text</td>
<td>24-48</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Things to keep in mind:

- One common mistake is to include too much text and/or figures and to provide too much detail. Remember that the poster is not a manuscript mounted on a wall. The ideal length for the text of a poster is approximately 800 words (Introduction through Acknowledgments).

- It is important to maximize white space and not overcrowd the poster.

- It is equally important to arrange the sections of the poster so that the order in which the reader is logical (top left to bottom right).

References and more resources:


Faulkes, Z. *Better Posters*. [http://betterposters.blogspot.com/](http://betterposters.blogspot.com/) (a highly informative blog, emphasizes design principles and effective presentation of scientific data)

Purrington, C.B. *Advice on designing scientific posters*. [http://colinpurrington.com/tips/academic/posterdesign](http://colinpurrington.com/tips/academic/posterdesign) (an excellent source of information on designing scientific presentations)


If you have any further questions or concerns about making your poster, please feel free to contact: Katie Kouchi ([kkouchi@crimson.ua.edu](mailto:kkouchi@crimson.ua.edu)) or Dr. Louanne Friend ([mlfriend@ua.edu](mailto:mlfriend@ua.edu))