Libraries
THE UNIVERSITY OF UTAH

Creating Posters: A University Libraries Guide

If you are required to develop a poster of your research project for a class, senior project or any of the University's research programs for students, then this Guide is for you. The Guide has been developed to assist you with creating a poster using MS Powerpoint.

Print it out!
After your poster has been completed you can print it at the Marriott Library Knowledge Commons. Check your requirements for poster size and use the "poster workbook pp2010" (included on this flash drive) to see how to change the size of your poster.

Archive it!
You can also add the electronic version of your poster to USpace, the University Institutional Repository. Check out the poster wall. Adding your poster to USpace provides you with future access to your poster. You can then insert a link to the poster into resumes and applications for employment, scholarships, grants and/or graduate schools.

Librarians love to help students!
We want to work with you to make your class project an easier and fun experience. You can learn about resources on your topic by looking at our online research guides, http://campusguides.lib.utah.edu/index.php, or by contacting a librarian: http://campusguides.lib.utah.edu/content.php?pid=385331

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Separate Files
Templates for posters in various sizes
        36"X48" landscape
        36"X36"
The Poster Workbook using MS Powerpoint 2010

The Poster: From Top to Bottom

Open up one of the templates and follow along referring to the template from top to bottom. Before you actually start creating the poster collect all the images, logos, etc. you will possibly need and write up the text for the different sections of the poster (described below). Doing this first simplifies the procedure. Once all the elements are added to the poster, then you can rearrange to enhance the total image. Then you will then be able to select colors that will further enrich the overall look of the poster (described further in Graphic Design Tips and Tricks).

Guidelines, Gridlines and Rulers: These were added to each of the templates and how to add them is outlined in The Poster Workbook using MS Powerpoint 2010. The poster is large and the computer image is small in comparison. These tools assist in guiding you around the poster as you add elements and zoom in or out. The guidelines are shapes inserted from the Ribbon, which you can choose to keep or delete depending on the overall design of the poster.

Logos: The University has official logos as do most departments. If your department has a logo it is usually combined with the University's logo and therefore you will not need to add a separate University logo. To obtain a departmental logo ask the professor you are working with or the Administrative Assistant to the department head.

Title: The title should convey the subject of the project and draw people to your poster. The minimum font for the title is 72pt, but make the font as large as you can (shorten the title).

Authors: If you are the only author give your complete name. If there are many authors using initials is ok to save space. Let the audience know who is presenting by underlining the name(s). The font size should be smaller - ½ to 2/3 the size of the font used for the title.

Affiliations: List the department or program in which you conducted the project, followed by the University of Utah. If there are multiple authors and departments, list each department/program once. If there are multiple authors for each department/program, then use superscripts to indicate affiliation. List the University of Utah on a separate line or if space is tight, then leave it out. The logo will indicate the University.

Creative Commons: Your poster is your work, protect it. To let people know that the work is yours, apply for Creative Commons. It only takes a few minutes. With a Creative Commons license, you keep your copyright, but allow people to copy and distribute your work provided they give you credit — and only on the conditions you specify. For additional information on copyrights and Creative Commons contact the Scholarly Communications and Copyright Librarian, Allyson Mower.

Sections of the Poster

Abstract
First of all decide if an abstract is needed. If this poster is for a campus event or displaying at the Capitol, then an abstract is needed. An abstract can be optional when there is a printed program that includes the abstracts of poster presentations.

An abstract is a 250-500 word summary of the entire project. Include one liners from the Introduction, Material and Methods, Results and Discussion, and Conclusions. It may be easier to write the abstract after the poster text has been written. An abstract is a paragraph with no bullet points.

Introduction

The Introduction provides a brief background and places the work in the context of the literature. Write it to interest the viewer in your topic. Posters are graphical representations of your project so text should be limited. Turn your paragraphs into bulleted points and, if you are able, use a picture. Don't forget to include your hypothesis.

Materials and Methods

In this section you will briefly describe how you conducted the research project. Include only the important parts of the materials and methods. You can use references. Because posters are graphical representations of your work, think about using flowcharts and figures to describe your procedures.

Your project may be about developing a procedure or gizmo. If this is the case, then this section will be the main focus of the poster and take up the largest area.

Results/Discussion

The results are the analyzed data from your research. You will present them here in graphical format – graphs, charts, pictures, diagrams, equations, etc. Each figure needs a caption describing the figure, a title, legends for x,y,z-n axes. If the figures tell the entire story then you can add a short discussion of the results. The Presenter will be providing additional detail (see About Poster Sessions for additional information).

This is usually the largest section of your poster, but different disciplines may organize information in their own way. It may be that Results are separate from Discussion and Conclusion, or all three are combined. Some disciplines will have a separate Results and combine the Discussion and Conclusions. Talk with your faculty advisor about the appropriate division of headings for your project.

Conclusions

For the Conclusions section, list the major results and relate it to the literature. You can also discuss any new hypotheses and future work.

References

You will need to list any of the publications you referenced or cited in your poster. The purpose of listing the references is two-fold, to give credit where credit is due and to provide the reader with information on obtaining the publication. Follow the format used by your discipline, but to reduce the amount of poster space for references:

- Do not include the title of the article, but remember to include the title of the journal.
- List only the first author and then follow it with "et al.".

Acknowledgements

Acknowledge both the people contributing to the project and if funded, the agencies funding the research. Do not include any of your coauthors.

Graphic Design Tips and Tricks

Rule of thumb(s)
- For content of a poster: 20% text, 40% graphics and 40% white space
- Dark print on light background. (Highlighting section headings with a solid box and white text can be cool.)
- Picture backgrounds make it difficult to read the text.

Text
You want people to be able to read your poster without difficulty. So a few rules apply:
- The "story" should flow from top to bottom and left to right. Think of the people walking by reading the posters. You do not want people to have to back up and cause a traffic jam.
- The poster should be readable from a distance. Font sizes should be:
  - Title font ≥ 72 pts
  - Headings ≥ 48 pts
  - Body text ≥ 18 pts
- Avoid all CAPS and excessive use of different font styles. Powerpoint's WordArt can be problematic.

Colors
While creating your poster keep in mind that the colors you see on the screen may not be exactly what you see when the poster is printed. Calibrating printers can correct for most deviations. To save time (and frustration), be flexible about the colors and remember your audience did not see the electronic version of your poster.

The charts, graphs and images will all have some color. So will the logos. Take these colors into consideration when choosing the colors for your poster design. HINT: use a color that is repeated in your graphics. It can be a shade darker or lighter, if needed. Tools for selecting colors include:
- Color Scheme Designer at http://colorschemedesigner.com/
- Kuler at http://kuler.adobe.com/#themes/rating?time=30

University of Utah Colors

Color	PANTONE	CMYK	HEX	RGB
Red	PMS 187	0,100,79,20	cc0000	204
Black	Process Black	0,0,0,100	000000	0
White	White	0,0,0,0	ffffff	0

Powerpoint uses RGB. Printing involves CYMK and Pantone. HEX numbers are used to define colors on Web pages. You can use Adobe Photoshop to compare codes among the different systems.

Graphics
It's easy to just cut and paste an image from somewhere into your Powerpoint poster, but this does cause problems down the line. Instead of cutting and pasting, save the image to your hard drive (or where ever you are saving images) and then insert the image into your poster. You are creating your poster in a web format, but the final product will be printed on paper by a printer. Printers require higher resolution – or DPI. 300 dpi is the usual figure recommended.

NOTE: A quick and dirty technique to determine if images are ok for printing. Zoom into the image until it is 200%. If the picture still looks great with no blurriness or pixilation then it is ok to print.
NOTE: Check out the USpace posters for ideas and to see what looks good and what does not

About Poster Sessions

Unlike formal verbal presentation, poster sessions provide one-on-one interactions between the audience and presenters. It is a great way to obtain feedback on your project. You are not expected to just stand there and watch people read your poster. Engage your audience in a conversation. "Do you have a question about (insert section of poster being read)?" and "Are you interested in or are you working in (insert topic of project)?" are ways of opening the conversation.

Like a presentation you will need a speech. Create a short talk that involves pointing to the images included in the poster (HINT: the talk is based on the text included in the poster.) Be able to alter your speech for the person you are speaking to. Also, like for a presentation, practice your speech. Remain at the poster for the entire session so that your audience gets the benefit of your knowledge along with the information displayed on the poster.

Even if you are wearing a nametag, introduce yourself and of course relax and smile, it's your work and it's your time to shine.

Checklist for items to bring
- ✓ Push pins, tape, markers, pens
- ✓ Notepad for writing down comments, questions, etc.
- ✓ The poster.

Printing Your Poster

<u>Before Printing</u>

        <u>Poster checklist</u>
- ✓ Poster is of the required size.
- ✓ Font sizes are appropriate.
- ✓ Limited # of fonts used – consistent.
- ✓ Title area – co-authors, affiliation, logos present and correct.
- ✓ 40%, graphics, 40% white space, 20% print rule observed.
- ✓ White or light colored backgrounds used.
- ✓ Compatible colors were used.
- ✓ Charts and graphs have legends and the axes identified.
- ✓ All charts, graphs, and pictures are identified.
- ✓ Spelling, punctuation, grammar have been checked.
- ✓ Do section headers have a consistent format?
- ✓ Do you still need the guide lines?
- ✓ Did you followed printing services guidelines.
- ✓ Are all components of poster present -Intro, M& M, etc. – don't forget references and acknowledgements.
- ✓ Does the poster look attractive, eye catching?
- ✓ Have somebody proof the poster.

Save your Powerpoint poster in the PDF format by:
Go to File → Save As. Under Save As type (2010) or Format (2011), select PDF.

<u>Printing</u>

The Marriott Library now has a HP Designjet T2300, a large format color printer/scanner located at the [Computing & Media Services desk](#) on Level 2. The T2300 prints on semigloss or matte paper, up to 36" wide. To print, bring your file as a PDF on a flash drive. The PDF should be set to the desired dimensions, with at least one side that is less than or equal to 35.6", to account for .2" margins. A 36" wide image can be scaled or cropped at the printer. At the CMS desk, staff will verify the size of your print and give you a slip with its cost. After paying at the Reserve Desk and bringing your receipt back to the CMS desk, your document will be printed.

Printing	$6 per square foot
Scanning	$5 per scan
Copying	Printing cost only
Graphics assistance	$5 per 15 minutes beyond first 15 minutes

A 30% discount will be applied for University of Utah students, staff, and faculty.

NOTE: The Marriott Library does not provide backing or lamination for posters. If either is required see [University Printing Services](#), [Medical Graphics](#) and [FedEx-Kinkos](#).

Submitting Your Poster to USpace

The University has an institutional repository, Uspace where you can store your poster. It is being used by students because it provides a link, which they can insert in resumes and applications for scholarships, grants and graduate schools. Go to http://postertrap.com/uspace/submit.php to upload your poster. The instructions are reproduced below.

Upload Instructions

Fill out the adjacent form below with the information for your poster.

Attach your main poster file first, then any additional media in the slots below. If you have already uploaded your poster, just add the media you would like attached to the poster.

Primary Author Name

Primary Author Email

Poster Title

Keywords

Department

College / School

Poster Purpose (e.g. Conference Name)

Description

Special Instructions

Main Poster File (as PDF or PowerPoint file)   Browse...