PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOP

Poster Preparation and Presentation Workshop: What Works and What Doesn’t

Sept 14, 2010

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Professor and Associate Dean
CONTENTS

• Graduate Research Symposium
• Things to Consider First
• Starting Points
• Poster Formatting
  – Backgrounds
  – Colors
  – Fonts
• Producing Figures, Tables and Graphs
• Text
• Judging
• Presentation Pointers
• Thursday Oct. 14th
• Two Poster Sessions
  – Poster 1: 10:00 – 12:00; check in: 9:30-10:00
  – Poster 2: 2:00 – 4:00; check in: 1:30-5:00
• Keynote Address
  – 12:15-1:00, Dr. Paul Sandberg
• Social
  – 1:00-2:00
• Awards, Friday Oct. 15th
• Should have received an email with assignment.

• Development and printing is student responsibility.

• Six awards in three categories:
  – Advanced Doctoral
  – Beginning Doctoral
  – Master’s
The poster must remain displayed for the entire 2 hr time.

Once the poster is judged, students may view other posters.
4’ wide by 6’ long
THINGS TO CONSIDER FIRST

• Poster should be readable from **5-6 feet** away.
• Poster should be understandable **without** an oral explanation.
• Clarity and simplicity is the key to an effective poster.
• Most visitors will not spend more than 20 minutes viewing the poster.
• Avoid clutter and too much information.
• Schemes and graphics help tell the story.
• Using PowerPoint as platform:
  – Use Page Set-up to set size to 48 x 60
  – Work in and out of % size to layout the design
  – Generate figures from other drawing program
  – Use high resolution figures (import as .tif)
PARTS OF THE POSTER

• Typical Parts of the poster
  – Title and Authors
  – Abstract (optional)
  – Introduction (brief)
  – Schematic (optional)
  – Methodologies
  – Hypothesis or Central Questions/Goals
  – Results
  – Conclusions and Implications
  – References and Acknowledgements
PARTS OF THE POSTER

Title and Authors

Use a descriptive title that tells the reader what the work has accomplished.

Who should be an author?
Anyone who has contributed to the work should be included as an author (including Major Prof.).

Varies by discipline, but best to err on the side of authorship.
PARTS OF THE POSTER

Abstract

It is optional to include the abstract.

If the abstract will be published in a program, there is not need to include this on the poster.
PARTS OF THE POSTER

Schematic (Summary Diagram)

A picture is worth 1000 words.

One of the best presentation tools is a schematic that shows the context of the work that is being presented.

The schematic can be used when explaining the purpose of the poster and showing an attendee where, how, or why the work is important.
Methodologies

The poster should include a section that details the methodologies used to generate and analysis the results.

The section should be concise so that an attendee may review the methods.

It is appropriate to include schemes or pictures in this section if appropriate.
PARTS OF THE POSTER

Hypothesis or Central Questions/Goals

It is essential to prominently describe the central hypothesis, goal, or research question pertinent to your discipline.

The best posters frame each section with additional questions or goals.

Having the goals or questions displayed will also assist in presenting the poster to the attendees.
PARTS OF THE POSTER

Results

The results are the main portion of the poster.

DO NOT cram in every piece of data you have!

Choose the top 3-5 key results that can be presented in a specific sequence and lead to a specific conclusion.
Conclusions and Implications

Use bullet points to concisely list the major conclusions that can be drawn from your results.

Provide 1-2 implications of **WHAT** the results mean in regard to be bigger picture.

What is the **SIGNIFICANCE** of the work?
PARTS OF THE POSTER

References and Acknowledgements

It is appropriate to include a short list of key literature references.

It is also important to acknowledge EVERYONE that provided assistance with the work.

This includes those who provided reagents, funding, analysis etc.
QUESTIONS?
• How Do you Begin the process?

− Use **CENTRAL QUESTIONS** and **HYPOTHESES** to frame the content.
− Clarity and simplicity is the key.
− Highlight 3-5 key results.
− Sketch poster out on paper first.
• Overall Format
• Backgrounds
• Colors and text size
• Fonts and text styles
POSTER FORMATTING

Best to read from top to bottom
And then LEFT TO RIGHT
• Saves time in walking back and forth.
• Does not block the presentation to others.
• Follow standard text formatting styles.
TELL A STORY!
BACKGROUNDS
• Poster Background:
  – It is recommended to use a solid color background:
    • Gray
    • Blues
    • Black
    • Lt. or Dark Green

Since the color can be changed if working in PPT, it is possible to experiment with different background colors
Thematic backgrounds.

Not recommended, even if the transparency is reduced.

Makes for busy looking poster that can be distracting.
Key Note

Posters are usually held in large well areas with strong lighting.
FONT STYLE
AND SIZES
Fonts and Text Styles

Sans Serif Fonts:

Arial & Helvetica & Calibri

These are simple, space nicely and are easy to read when bolded
Fonts and Text Styles

Serif Fonts:

Times

Courier

etc

These types of fonts generally are more difficult to read.
GENERAL FONT RULE

Keep the font **consistent** throughout the poster.

**Arial** is font of choice.

*Arial font is the best font to use when making figures and it can be stretched without impacting the ability to read it.*
Poster Title: 72pt bold
Author Line: 48pt bold
Section Titles: 48 pt bold
Section Text: 18-24pt

The “6 Foot Rule”
QUESTIONS?
FIGURES
GENERAL RULES FOR FIGURES AND DATA

All figures and data should be of high resolution.

It is best to use a graphics program that will allow high quality figures to be produced and saved as .jpg and .tif format.

The poster will be printed in large format 4’ x 6’.
GENERAL RULES FOR FIGURES AND DATA

• Simply.

• Break up complex figures into smaller sections.

• Use arrows and color to highlight key areas of a figure or diagram.

• All data should be presented in a similar format for continuity.
WHAT’S THE PROBLEM?

Figure 1 | Environmental enrichment reinstates learning in CK-p25 Tg mice after neurodegeneration. a, Experimental design (n = 8 per group). The
TO COMPLEX? (JPEG)
### IDENTIFY KEY PARTS

#### EMSA of AHR•A1 and AHR•A2 Interactions

**Table:**

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**Diagram:**

- AHR•ARNT•XRE
- AHR•ARNT2•XRE
- FREE
.jpg AND .tif CAN BE ENLARGED

**Figure 1**

- **ARNT** - C
- **ARNT2** - T
- **V5 stain**

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**usp3555.png**

- **ARNT** - C
- **ARNT2** - T
- **V5 stain**

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**usp3556.png**

- **ARNT** - C
- **ARNT2** - T
- **V5 stain**

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**usp3557.png**

- **ARNT** - C
- **ARNT2** - T
- **V5 stain**

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**usp3558.png**

- **ARNT** - C
- **ARNT2** - T
- **V5 stain**

---
FIGURE LEGENDS

• Each figure should have a descriptive title and legend.

• The legend should be placed below the figure.

• 18pt font is recommended.

• Text should be brief.

• Methods should be summarized in a separate section.
GRAPHS AND CHARTS
GRAPHS AND CHARTS

• What style of graph is the best to use?
  
  Line graph, histogram, pie?

• Label all axes.

• Assure that the trend line is clearly visible.

• Be sure that you can explain everything about how the graph was prepared.

• Embed figures into the graphs
PRIVATE/INDUSTRY

FACULTY POSITIONS

POST DOCTORAL/RESEARCH POSITIONS

ADJUNCT/VISITING FACULTY

EDUCATION/K-12

EDUCATION/HIGHER

UNEMPLOYED

PURSUING FURTHER STUDY

UNACCOUNTED
Label and explain...
EC$_{50}$ = 80nM vs 650nM
COLOR OR BW?

Will B/W show a better contrast?

Best to use primary colors that are easily distinguished.
Always cite the work that is from other sources.

- 18 pt font, bottom of figure

From: Moore et al. 2006 JBC 230:57
PICTURES
• Pay attention to resolution and size.
• Assure that picture will not be blurry when printed in full size.
TABLES
• Lines or no lines?

• Center the text.

• Highlight the key data in the table so that it can be easily observed.

• Simplify.

• Methods should be summarized in a separate section.
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</table>
XRE core flanking base pairs at positions 6 and 8 differ in non-functional mouse and zebrafish XREs.

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• Use Keywords and bullet points

• Have a title on every piece of data

• Use questions to frame distinct sections

• Use figure legends
PRESENTATION POINTERS
PRESENTATION POINTERS

• Know the level of the audience
  – When in doubt set the bar lower

• Keep everything simple

• Avoid the use of jargon

• Break up the poster into sections
  – Provide a defined question or hypothesis for each
  – TELL A STORY!
• Practice the presentation!!!!!!

• Be able to explain the entire poster in 10 minutes
PRESENTATION POINTERS

• Speak slowly, clearly and LOUD!!!!

• Make eye contact and do not read your poster with you back to the audience. Move down the poster following the sequence from left to right.

• No “Umm”, “Like”, “OK”, “You know”, “Again”

• Everyone gets nervous before they speak
• Show enthusiasm and excitement for your work!!!!

• Be aware that no one should know the data better than you do!!

• If you don’t know, SAY YOU DON’T KNOW. NEVER EVER TRY AND BS SOMEONE

• Relax and have fun!
JUDGING
JUDGING

• Faculty and postdoctoral scholars.

• 1-2 reviewers per poster.

• 10 minutes per poster.

• Suggested 5 min summary to allow time for questions.

• Judges will make nominations for the awards.

• No written critiques will be be provided.
FINAL QUESTIONS?