Title of Poster Usually Up Top (Recommend 80pt – 115 pt)

Name of Presenter and Institutional Affiliation Usually Below

Northwestern University

Northwestern OFFICE OF UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH

LAYOUT CHOICES

- Typically mixture of brief text with tables, pictures, graphs, or other visual representation
- Posters are often divided into 3-4 columns and read top to bottom, left to right (not required!)
- Most important information usually in center
- Sections often divided with boundaries - boxes, lines, etc are all functional!
- Title sections with meaningful headers

COMMON SECTIONS (PICK/CHOOSE)

- Introduction/Background
- Goal/Hypothesis/Objectives
- Methods/Approach
- Analysis/Results
- Discussion
- Conclusions
- Future work
- References

TYPOGRAPHY CHOICES

- Section headers typically 50-72pt font
- Text within sections should be visible 3-5' away
- Sans-serif fonts (like Arial) are easier to read
- Serif Fonts (Times New Roman) are harder
- Minimize text usage overall

COLOR CHOICES

- Light text on dark background or dark text on light background has greatest contrast
- Avoid red/green color combinations due to potentially colorblind audience members

APPROACH TO MAKING & PRESENTING POSTERS

THERE IS NO "RIGHT" WAY TO FORMAT A POSTER! DESIGN DEPENDS ON YOUR NEEDS & INTENDED AUDIENCE

Step 1
- **START WITH WHAT YOU PLAN TO SAY FIRST**
- Identify 1-2 key take away messages
- You do not have time to share ALL of your project!
- Avoid jargon and define field-specific terms

Step 2
- **DECIDE WHICH SECTIONS TO INCLUDE**
- Reverse engineer – what does your audience need to know to understand your take away message?
- Narrow down which supporting information to share
- Tailor graphics and figures to most pertinent info

Step 3
- **THINK ABOUT EACH SECTION AS A "SLIDE"**
- Should support what you plan to say
- Minimize text, maximize charts & graphs if you can
- Get feedback on poster before you print!
- Practice and time yourself = build confidence

Step 4
- **MANAGE THE PRESENTATION LIKE A SHORT TALK**
- Acknowledge audience & establish their background
- Talk to people, not the poster – guide them through poster
- Big picture overview of each section first
- Follow up with details where they have questions

PRINTING YOUR POSTER

- Set .PPT slide to 36"h x 48"w for best scaling
- Save as PDF prior to printing
- Your department may have printer to use?
- Can always print at Oce Plotter Printer (available at Main and Mudd Libraries)
- Plotter printer costs $2.50/ft thru NUPrint
- Email library@northwestern.edu for Q&A

PRESENTATION LOGISTICS

- Arrive 30 minutes before to set up
- Two poster times: 10-11:30am or 2:30-4pm
- Assigned 3-4 judges (some experts and some non-experts) who will come by
- Give 2-4 min elevator pitch and answer Q's
- Invite friends for Audience Choice Award!

SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS

- If you are in a text-heavy field – get creative!
- Selected quotes, archival images, maps, etc
- Use magazine layouts and infographics for inspiration

"Award winning posters are hanging on the walls of the OUR Office (1801 Hinman) for you to view!"
-Grant Man

REFERENCES OR WORKS CITED

- It is necessary and proper to cite sources used during your project (background, methods, etc)
- Use a citation style most common in your field
- If you have a large number of references, use the only the ones that best fit the poster content

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS