

The Short & The Sweet: Posters for Conferences

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Poster Presentation

Collaborators



How to make a good scientific poster

A well-designed and informative poster effectively communicates the key findings of your research

Tailor your poster to the context you'll be presenting in

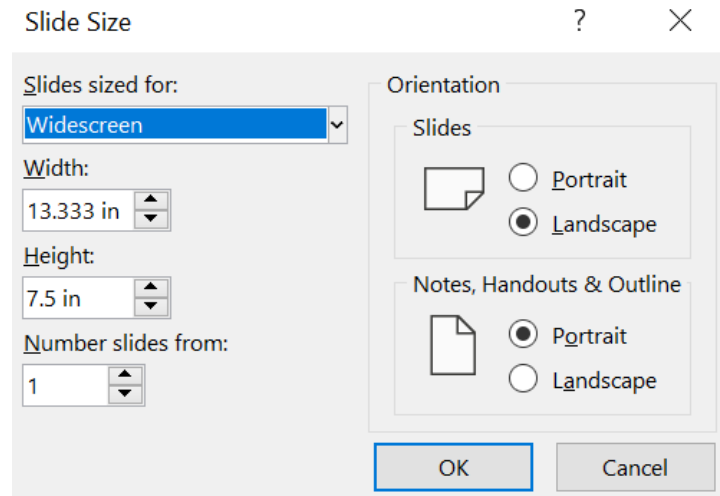
- Size of the space
- Presentation format (in-person, virtual)
- Level of knowledge the audience has of your research topic



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Poster Logistics - Size

- Varies depending on conference/event requirement
- Common sizes:
 - 48" wide by 36" tall (medium sized)
 - 56" wide by 42" tall (large sized)



If using PowerPoint:
Design Tab -> Slide Size -> Customize

Locations (select when submitting poster)

	College Library (Hours)	MERIT Library (Hours)	Steenbock Library (Hours)
Paper types	Satin and Glossy	Glossy	Satin
Paper size	The maximum length of one edge is 43". The other edge can be up to 100 feet.	The maximum length of one edge is 42". The other edge can be up to 100 feet.	The maximum length of one edge is 43". The other edge can be up to 100 feet.
Production hours	Orders submitted after 5 p.m. may be processed the next business day	Orders submitted after 5 p.m. may be processed the next business day	9 a.m. to 4 p.m., Monday through Friday.
Pick up at:	College computer lab on 2nd floor	MERIT service desk (Cardboard tubes available for \$3.10.)	Steenbock main service desk
Questions?	608-263-9889	608-263-4750	608-262-1371

Can print posters @ UW Madison Libraries

Poster Logistics – Software

- Depends on personal preference/tool familiarity
- PowerPoint and Google Slides are commonly used
- Less common
 - Adobe Illustrator, Canva, LaTeX, Mac Pages, InkScape

Recommended Software

There are also many different software programs that can be used to create posters. Below is a list of the software that we recommend for making a research poster. We put the software in order from easiest to use near the top to most difficult near the bottom. We recommend using a software you know well or learning the software well enough to establish an easy workflow, so you can spend less time troubleshooting and spend more time on your poster. Check out our [Software Support page](#) for links to tutorials for all of these programs.



Microsoft PowerPoint: This software is available to UW-Madison students, faculty, and staff via [Office 365](#). It is also installed on all the [computer lab](#) machines. Using OneDrive will allow for collaboration between multiple creators. PowerPoint also works with Excel to easily make charts and graphs. This is the standard software for creating research posters. But, there are limited alignment and design tools. See [troubleshooting](#) below for how to export this file to other formats.



Google Slides: This software is available to UW-Madison students, faculty, and staff via [Google Workspace for Education](#). It is a web-based system, so can transition easily between multiple computers regardless of operating systems. Google Slides are also very good for collaboration, as they allow multiple users to edit at one time. This software is based heavily on PowerPoint, so there are limited alignment and design tools.

Check out [UW Design Lab](#) for more information about Software!

Poster Design – Font

- Consider both **font type** and **font size**
 - Font type should be easy to read
 - For maximum impact choose different fonts
 - Header – serif
 - Body – sans serif

Serif

Sans serif

Ss

Ss

Helvetica / Garamond
Caslon / Univers
Futura / Bodoni
Garamond / **Futura**
Gills Sans / Caslon
Minion / Gill Sans
Myriad / Minion
Caslon / **Franklin Gothic**
Trade Gothic / Clarendon
Franklin Gothic / Baskerville

Poster Design – Font

- Consider both **font type** and **font size**
 - Font size should be readable from a distance
 - Start with 24-36 pt font
 - Adjust to fit space

Recommendations

Title: 85 pt

Authors: 56 pt

Sub-headings: 36 pt

Body text: 24 pt

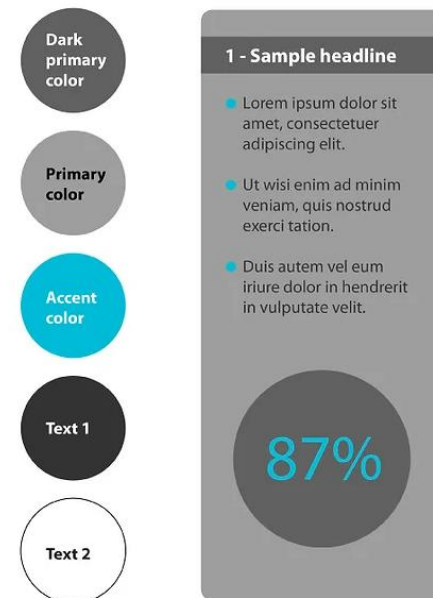
Captions 18 pt

- No more than 2 or 3 font types and/or sizes or it looks too messy!

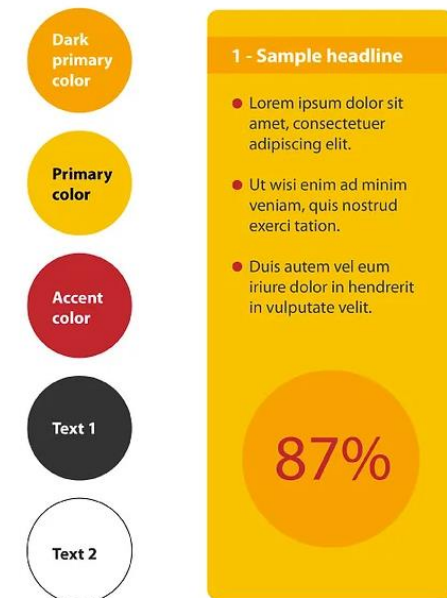
Poster Design – Color scheme

- Use 2-3 colors that are visually appealing and easy to read
- Matches the tone of your topic
 - Research is lighthearted = bright colors
 - Research is serious = dark colors
- Focus colors in non-content areas
 - Box outlines
 - Graphs
 - Charts
- Note: colors may appear differently on your screen than when they are printed

Example 1

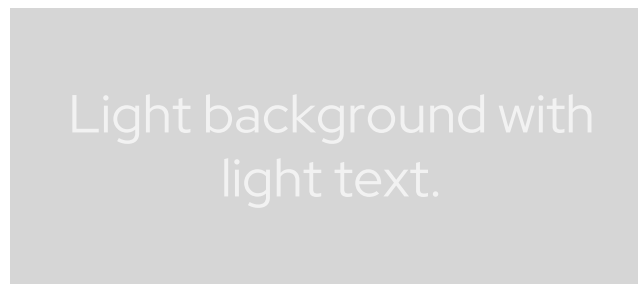
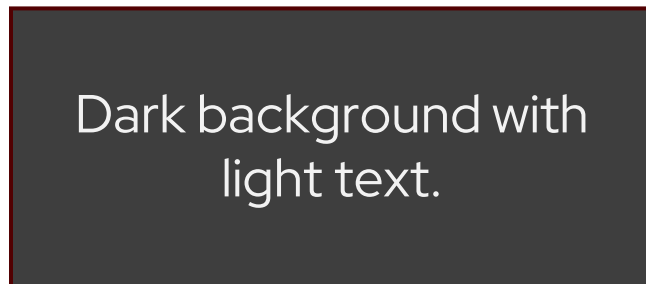


Example 2



Poster Design – Color scheme

- Greater contrast between text and background makes the text easier to read
 - A dark-colored background with light text
 - A light-colored background with dark text
- Keep your background simple!



- Need help picking a color scheme? Use the free tool, [Material Palette](#).

Poster Design – Formatting



- Avoid excessive text
- 20% text, 40% figures, 40% space
- Aim for 300–800 words (the less the better)
- Keep paragraphs to 1–2 sentences
- Text & figures should be legible 5–7ft away

Readability

To be legible 6ft use 30 pt

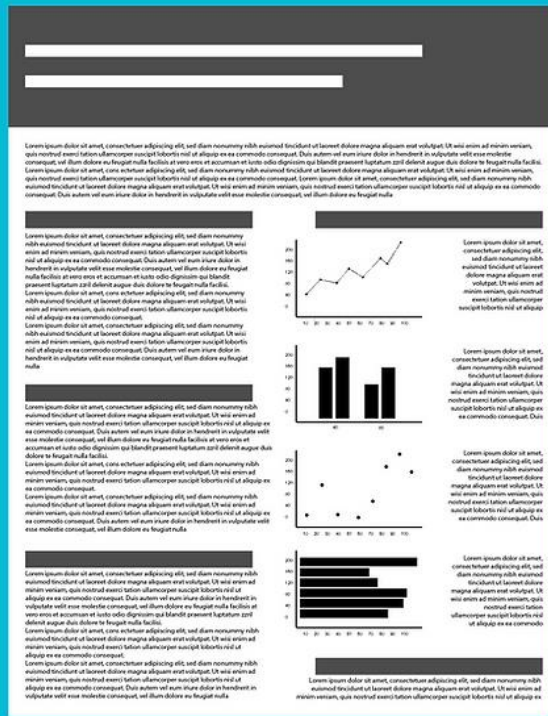
To be legible 10ft use 48 pt

To be legible 12ft use 60 pt

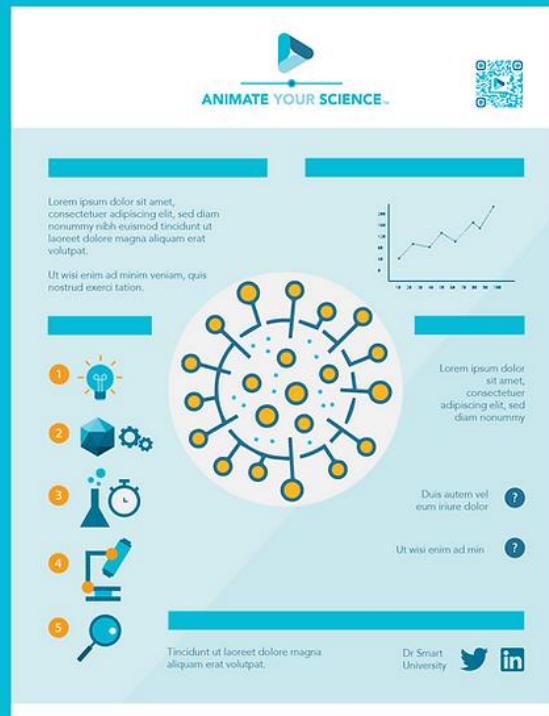
To be legible 14ft use 72 pt

Poster Design - Formatting

I can barely read that!



Ooh, that's pretty!



- Leave space around text and sections
- Use **bold face** or *italics* to emphasize words and phrases
 - Not a different font type
- DO NOT USE UPPERCASE TYPE
- Left-align text

Fully justified text creates large gaps between words, making it difficult to read.

What do I even include on a poster?

Answer these 3 questions:

1. What is the most important/interesting/astounding finding from my research?
2. How can I visually share my research with conference attendees? (i.e., should I use charts, graphs, photos, images?)
3. What kind of information can I convey during my talk that will complement my poster?



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Poster Narrative and Key Messages

- Plan the core content
 - Study purpose
 - Key message
- Identify your main findings and most important conclusions
- Weave the key message into a narrative connecting sections (both visually and verbally)
 - Key messages will need to stand out for someone walking by or scanning your poster

Poster Sections – Title

- Highlight the core message in a catchy way
- Be between 7–10 words
 - Can use a subtitle if you need for more complex research

- Tell people exactly what you found

**Water Temperature Determines Sex of
XYZ Fish Species**

- If you don't have results, ask a question

**Is Cognitive Inflexibility Associated with
Abuse in Parental Relationships?**

- Don't be afraid to be clever or humorous

**Where There's Smoke, There's Fire
*How cigarette consumption affects XYZ***

Poster Sections – Intro & Methods

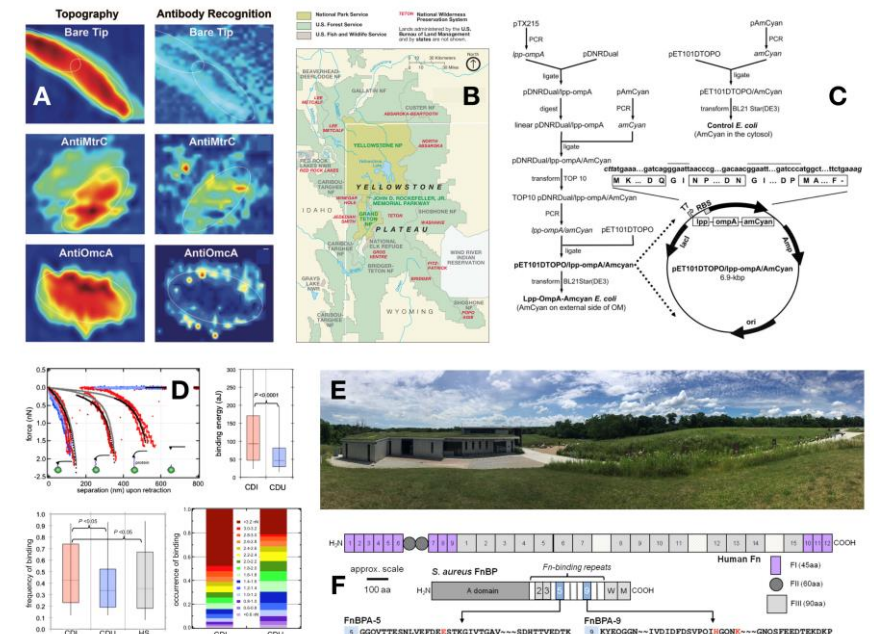
- Introduction – provide background information and a clear research question or hypothesis
 - Introduce only what's necessary to address any knowledge gap
- Methods – should include basic parameters
 - Easiest section to skip or merge with results to save space and tell your story better

- Present findings in a visually appealing way
 - Use tables and figures
 - Must have legends and titles
 - Captions should be less than 100 words
 - Save in 300 dpi resolution
 - Think **quality** over **quantity**
 - 4-10 figures or tables per poster

Illustrations, images, diagrams, photographs,
graphs, charts, plots, and maps

Birds were captured in July at the Logan Pass Visitor Center using the Brown-Smith flagged net system (Brown-Smith et al, 2012). To minimize stress, all birds were tagged, measured and released within 15 minutes of capture.

Used to communicate large amounts of data in a concise and effective manner



Poster Sections – Discussion & Conclusion

- Discussion – interpret and discuss the implications of your findings
- Conclusion – summarize research and its significance, comment on future research
- Note: conclusion and discussion sections are easily combined to save space

Poster Sections – Other

- Citations & Acknowledgements
 - Font size smaller than other text
- Prompts to **Find Out More**
 - Give interested readers an easy option to dive further into your research (links or QR codes)



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Department of Family Medicine and Community Health
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN - MADISON
SCHOOL OF MEDICINE AND PUBLIC HEALTH

WREN and ICTR: Working together to Advance Translational Science in Primary Care

Sarina Schrager, MD, MS; Elizabeth S. Burnside, MD, MPH; Mary Henningfield, PhD; Lisa Samson, MBA; Allan R. Brasier, MD

Affiliation: University of Wisconsin, School of Medicine and Public Health



WREN
for our health

What is the Wisconsin Research and Education Network (WREN)?

A network of primary care practices across Wisconsin that support practice-based research

- Founded in 1987
- Joined UW's Department of Family Medicine and Community Health
- One of the oldest, most respected practice-based research network (PBRNs).

WREN has collaborated with

- 59 communities
- 35 counties
- 80 clinics
- 37 health systems
- Urban, suburban, and rural clinics
- Federally qualified health centers (FQHCs)




Scan to learn more about WREN

WREN is a member of:

Meta-network Learning and Research Center (Meta-LARC)

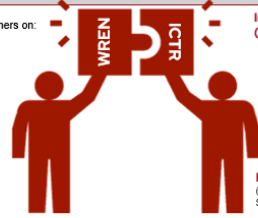
- A network of 7 PBRNs
- 5 in the United States, 2 in Canada






WREN works with academic and clinician researchers on:

- Develop research question
- Operationalize research process
- Recruit and retain participants
- Collect and analyze data
- Engage patients
- Provide practice facilitation and QI
- Disseminate results



Institute for Clinical and Translational Research (ICTR) facilitates these services through programs and links:

- Data Science
- Dissemination & Implementation
- Community Engagement
- Mentorship
- Protocol Development
- Team Science

ICTR is supported by the Clinical and Translational Science Award (CTSA) program, the National Center for Advancing Translational Sciences (NCATS), grant 1UL1TR002373.

WREN PROJECTS emblematic of collaboration

Examples selected from 26 projects 2019-2024



Scan to learn more about WREN Projects



Scan to learn more about ICTR

Project Title	Grant(s)	Impact	ICTR provided resources or training
Understanding Primary Care Teamwork in Context: Implications for Health IT Design	R01	EHR-integrated primary care human factors model	Yes
African Americans (AA) with Diabetes – Culturally Tailored Program via Community Pharmacies	R01	Peer LEADS program for AA tailored self-care	Yes
Shared Decision Making for Cancer Screening	K24, R01	EHR-embedded decision aid and team education	Yes
Shared Decision Making about Vaccinations in Adults Using Telehealth	Industry (Pfizer)	Toolkit for physicians during telehealth visits	Yes

WREN designated as an inaugural NIH Network Research Hub for the Communities Advancing Research Equity (CARE for Health™) Initiative

Communities Advancing Research Equity for Health (CARE for Health™)



Community-based primary care practices

Conduct research addressing issues important to diverse communities, particularly those underrepresented in biomedical research

Reduce burden on providers using innovative data collection methods

Increase adherence to evidence-based care

Improve efficiency of care delivery

The pilot phase of CARE for Health™ will advance the “Collaborative Care for Polysubstance Use in Primary Care Settings” study, testing collaborative treatment interventions in opioid & polysubstance abuse.

WREN and ICTR plan to expand research capacity in Primary Care and advance translational science scholarship... together.



Scan to learn more

Poster Sections

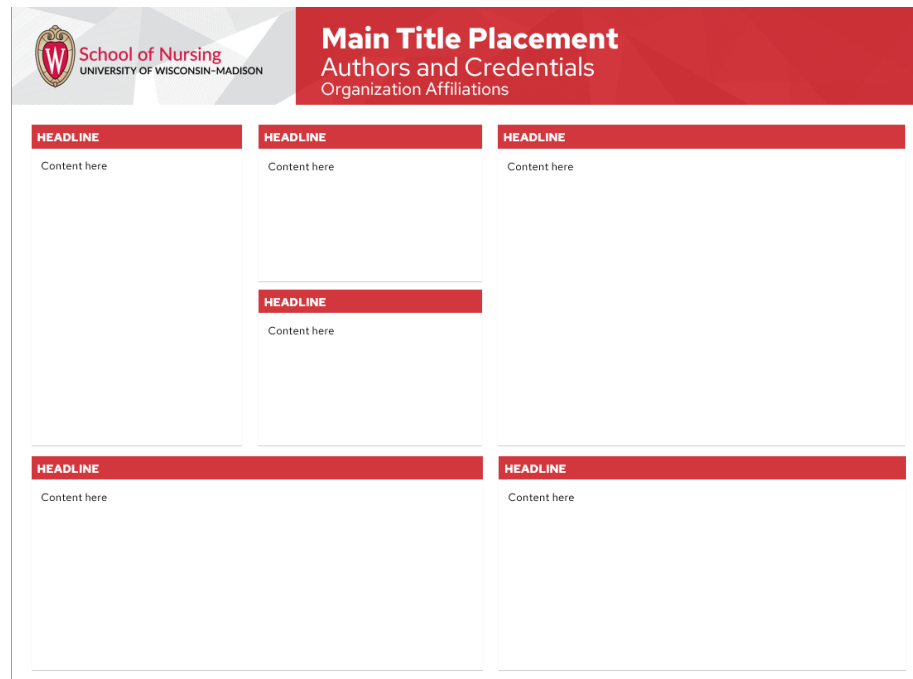
Keep in mind:

- These are common sections included in a poster, NOT required sections.
- Feel free to get creative if it helps you communicate your message better (and in fewer words).
- Wherever possible, think of ways to tell your story through figures and illustrations rather than through text.

Poster Layout & Structure

- Organize content into sections that make logical sense
- Check with your lab, department, or institution for poster templates

“Classic” Poster Template

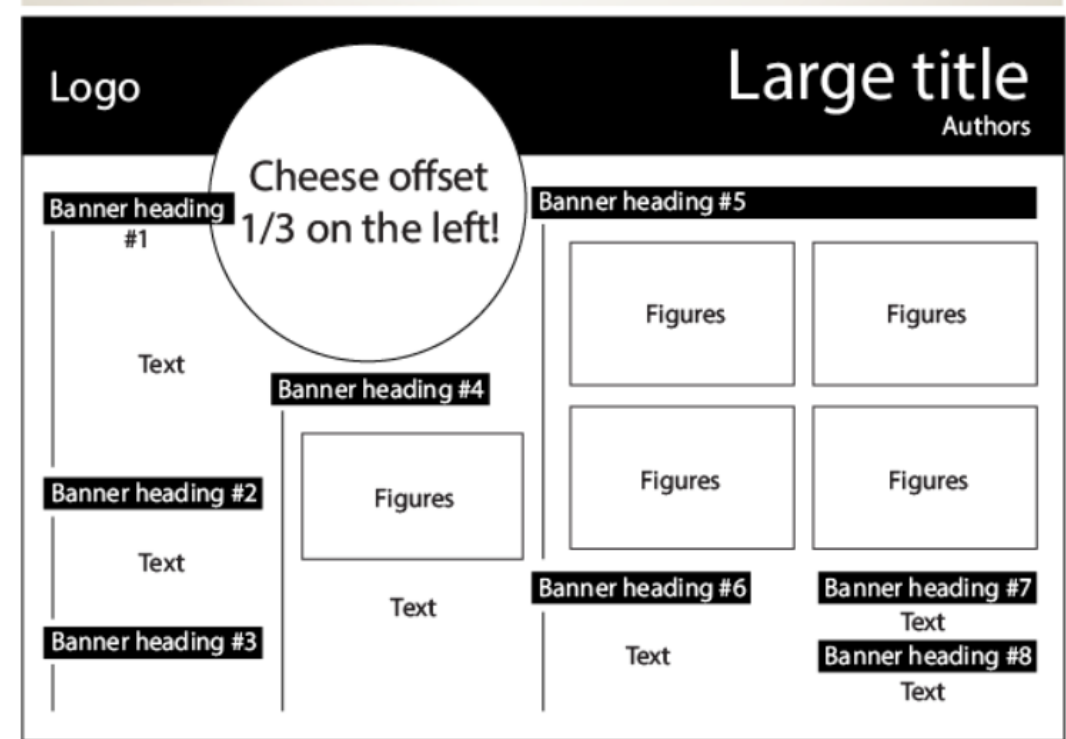
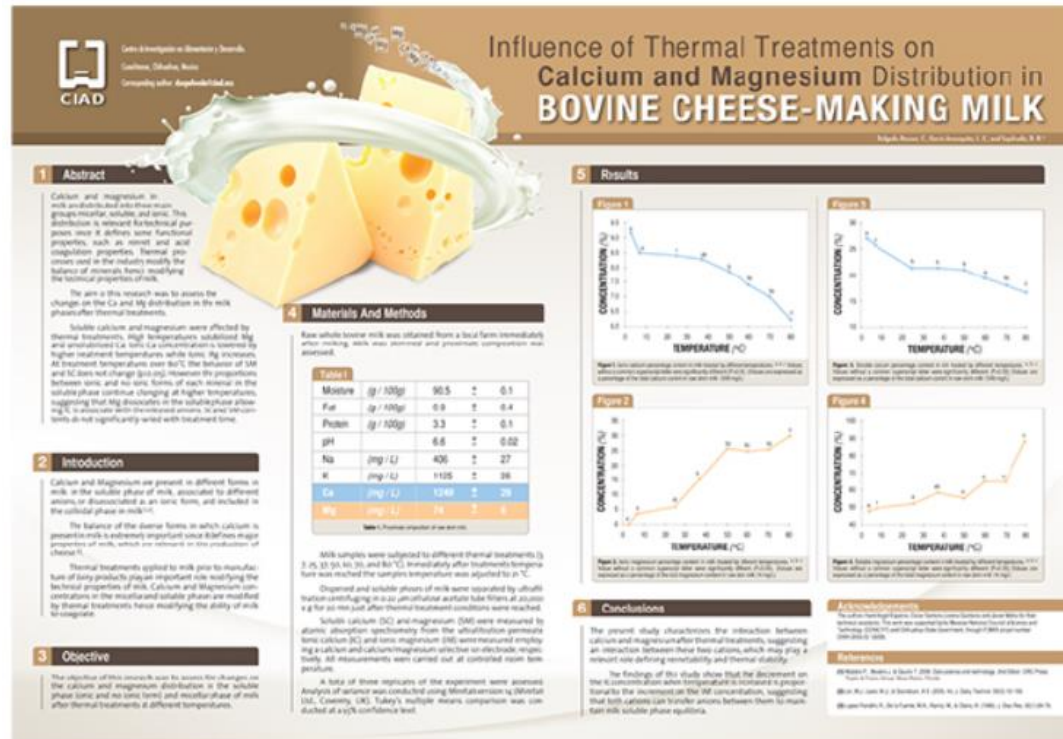


“Better” Poster Template



Poster Layout & Structure

- Don't be afraid to completely switch things up in a way that suits your research

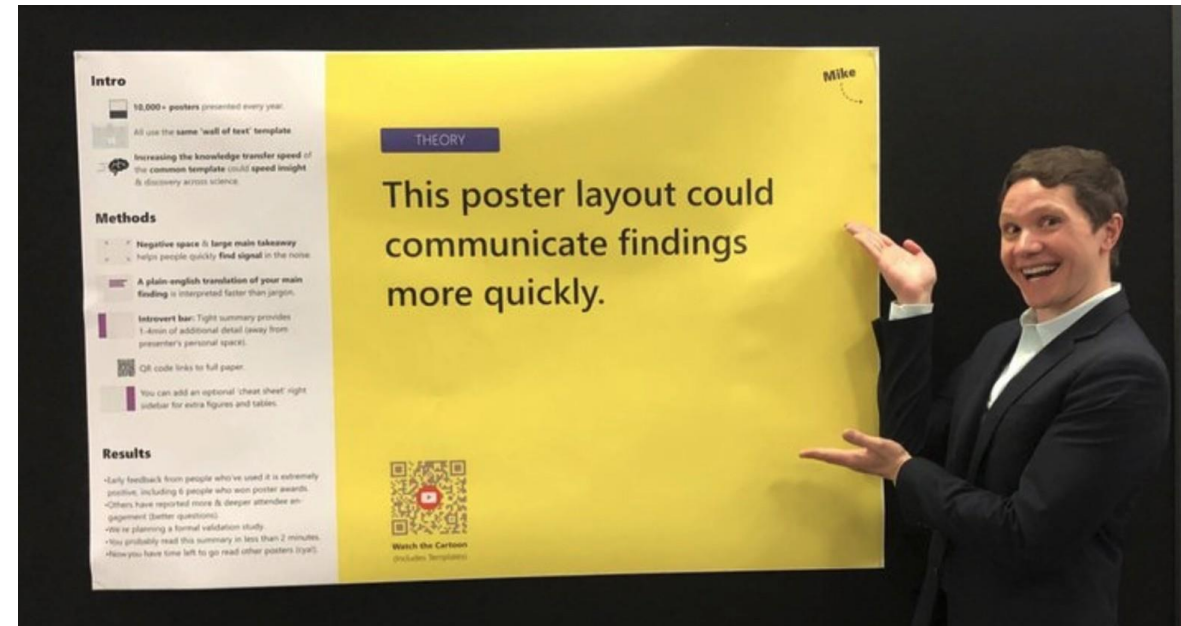


Dr Juan Miguel Balbin & Dr Tullio Rossi

Don't be afraid to get creative

- Think about design elements or images that are relevant to your research that can make your poster stand out from the crowd
- This can include:
 - Objects or physical things attached to the poster to add dimension/interest
 - Supplemental handouts

A twitter-famous example of Mike Morrisons' take on the best conference poster layout. You can find his design strategies on Youtube: *Mike Morrison better poster*



Get a 2nd opinion

- Have a 2nd (or 3rd) set of eyes review it for accuracy, completeness, and visual appeal before printing
- Ask someone with limited knowledge of your research topic to help assess the accessibility of your wording and design choices



Presenting your poster



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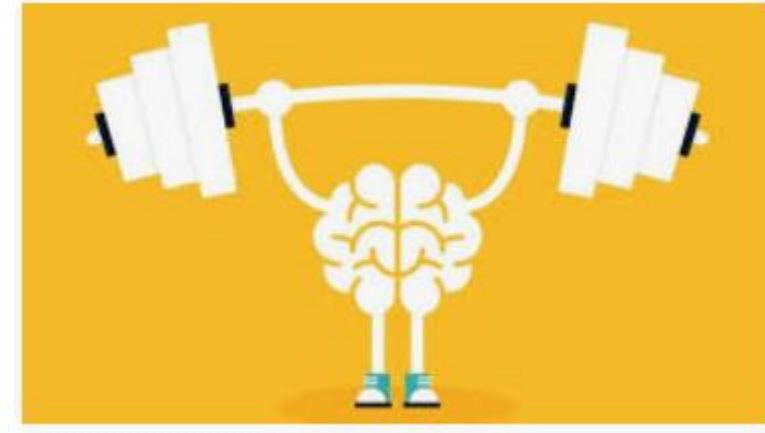
Proactive Planning

- Look at other posters around your building
- Attend poster presentation prior to your conference
- Decide what you like
- Consider what theme will work for your project
- Develop a timeline for poster development and feedback



Imminent Planning

- Practice
- Prepare different versions
- Mental/Emotional Preparation
- Copies of your Poster



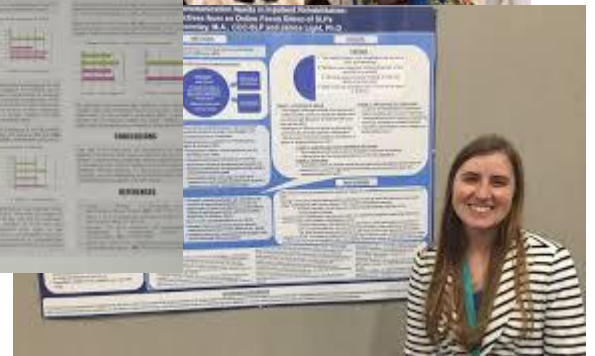
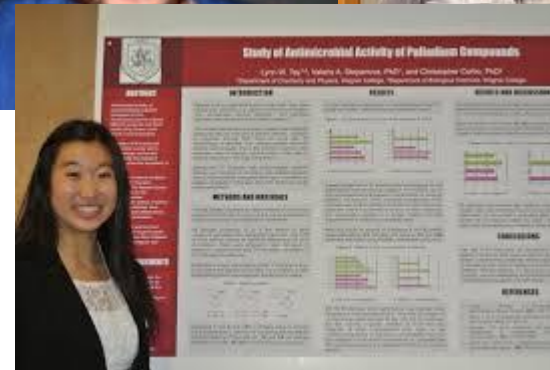
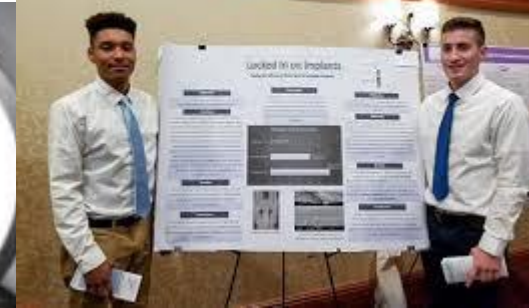
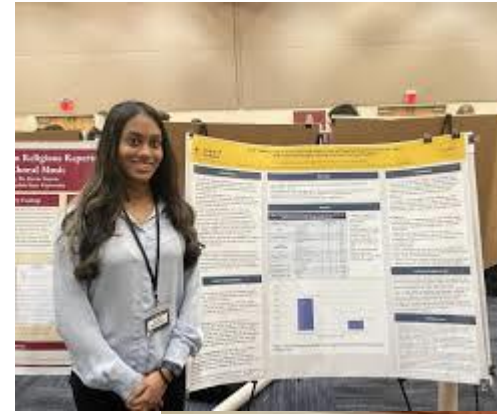
Onsite Preparation

- Physical Preparation
 - Clothes, food
- Mental Preparation
- Time Preparation



Onsite Preparation

- Physical Preparation
 - Clothes, food
- Mental Preparation
- Time Preparation



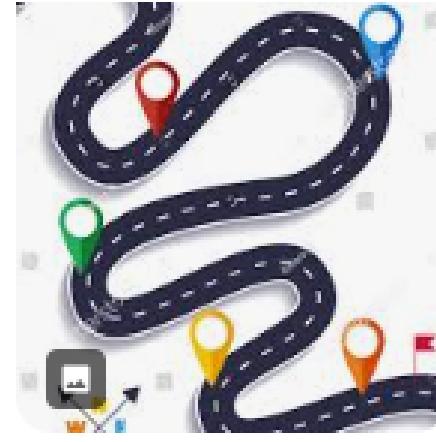
Onsite Preparation

- Physical Preparation
 - Clothes, food
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- Time Preparation



Onsite Preparation

- Physical Preparation
 - Clothes, food
- Mental Preparation
- Time Preparation



Prepare for the Future



... (PING) THE CAPTAIN
HAS TURNED OFF THE
SEAT BELT SIGN...

SO... ARE YOU
TRAVELLING FOR
BUSINESS OR
FOR FUN?

ME?
WELL...

I'M GOING TO A
RESEARCH CON-
FERENCE SO...
IT'S... UH... SORT
OF... UM...

NONE OF THE
ABOVE?

IT'S NOT FOR
FUN, THAT'S
FOR SURE.

JORGE CHAM © 2004

www.phdcomics.com

Any Questions?



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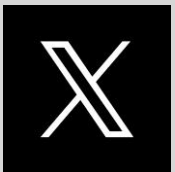
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Thank you





Brand and Visual Identity

UW-Madison's official brand guide

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[Tools & Templates](#)

[Inspiration](#)

<https://brand.wisc.edu/>

Tools & Templates

SEARCH

Search by keyword



FILTER BY

Channel

- ☐ Email
- ☐ Print
- ☐ Social media
- ☐ Web/digital

Resource type

- ☐ Avatars
- ☐ Color palettes
- ☐ Fact sheets
- ☐ Fonts
- ☐ Holiday and note cards
- ☐ Icons and graphic elements
- ☐ Logos
- ☐ Photo
- ☐ Promotional item designs
- ☐ Signage
- ☐ Templates and themes
- ☐ Video
- ☐ Videoconferencing backgrounds

97 resources matched. Showing page 1 of 7.



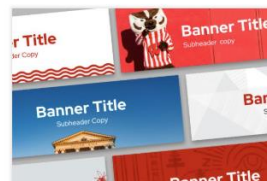
Brand Style Guide



UW Institutional Logos for Print



Departmental Logo Generator



Email Banner Templates



UW Photo Library



Editorial Calendar



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NAME	POSTER TITLE	LAB	Quality of Science (50%) 1= Outstanding; 10=Very poor	Visual Presentation (25%) 1= Outstanding; 10=Very poor	Verbal Presentation (25%) 1= Outstanding; 10=Very poor	Total Score



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