Guidelines for Poster Presentations

Posters are visual presentations of information. They are designed to catch someone’s eye and elicit discussion between the presenter and the reader. They should be a balance of large-print text and pictures and be organized in a logical manner. You should be able to take a “reader” through your poster in 5 minutes or less and touch on everything in your poster. It requires effort to not just write a paper and print it out on a piece of posterboard, but to make a PRESENTATION that is both scientifically and visually interesting.

Minimum Requirements:

- Must present on assigned day
- Must answer ALL questions on the assignment on the poster
- Must have a title and your name at the TOP of the poster
- Must include a list of references
- Must not exceed 4 feet by 4 feet in size

Suggestions on How to Get a Good Grade on Your Poster:

You will be graded on three things on your poster:

1. minimum requirements (listed above)
2. organization
3. visual interest factor/content; and
4. ability to communicate the information in your poster to either a TA or instructor.

Be visually oriented

- Everyone prefers to look at pretty pictures rather than stand around reading something. Anything you can represent in pictures or figures should be included in your poster. Make sure every figure or picture has a legend describing what the picture is about.

- Use color if possible, even if it’s just color posterboard. It makes it more visually interesting.

Don’t write a paper and then print it out and tack it on posterboard!! This does not make a good poster, and you will not get a good grade on the presentation if you do this. You will be graded not only on the content and answering the assigned questions, but you will also be graded on how easily your poster is to read, your use of pictures and figures, and your ability to discuss/explain the poster to others.

Be creative! Poster presentations are one of the few ways you can put your creative and artistic talents and energies to work in science. Make it as interesting as possible, while meeting all the requirements of the presentation. Remember,
this counts for 18% of your final grade in the course. So don’t take the assignment lightly or wait until the last minute to do it.

During your assigned presentation session, you will stay with your poster and answer questions from T.A.s or instructors about your topic as well as fellow students. During poster sessions you are required to attend (but not present), you will have to visit at least three of your classmates’ posters and answer questions about their poster. This also gives you an opportunity to see how other students present information and decide what you will or will not do on your own poster.

There are lots of posters hanging on the walls in Marsh Life Sciences as well as other buildings on campus. Take a half hour one day and go look around at the posters to get a feel for how posters are put together and different formats you can use. Often these posters present experimental data – just think of each question you have to answer on the assignment as a piece of data to include in your poster.

If you have questions, please ask your TA or Dr. Seiler or Dr. Van Houten. We are here to help you and will be evaluating your posters!