Workshop: Creating and presenting a poster at the Undergraduate Student Symposium

Christopher Blanar
and Weylin Sternglantz

Alvin Sherman Library, Room #2053
March 20, 2018
noon - 1:00 pm
# The symposium at a glance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>April 5</td>
<td>By 9:00 am</td>
<td>Set up your posters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Judges preview posters that day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>* Alvin Sherman Library atrium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 6</td>
<td>1:00pm-1:45pm</td>
<td>Welcome ceremony, keynote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>* Don Taft UC Performance Theatre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1:45pm-3:15pm</td>
<td>Poster presentations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>* Alvin Sherman Library atrium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1:45pm-4:00pm</td>
<td>Undergraduate Film Festival</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>* Alvin Sherman Library</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2:45pm-4:00pm</td>
<td>Oral presentations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>* Alvin Sherman Library</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4:30pm</td>
<td>Awards Ceremony*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>* Don Taft UC Performance Theatre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>* All participating students are expected to attend</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>By 5:30 pm</td>
<td>Take down posters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>* Alvin Sherman Library atrium</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A poster serves many purposes

- Conversation starter
- Communication tool / source of information
- Summary of your work
- Advertising for your research activities

Design your poster with these purposes in mind!
An effective poster...

...focuses on a single key message

...uses graphics and visual elements to tell its story

...is well-organized, with a clear, easy-to-follow sequence
Poster guidelines

Note the orientation: poster easels work best in landscape format.
Building your poster

Build your poster backwards

1. **Identify your key message. Express that message in a single sentence.** (consider making this your title, too)
2. **Collect the graphical elements (graphs, pictures, tables, charts) that summarize the data that support that message.**
3. **Write a clear, concise summary of your results, referencing the graphical elements.**
4. **Write only those methods that allowed you to produce the results.**
5. **Write brief introduction providing background information and framing research question.**
6. **Briefly discuss results, and clearly reiterate your key message as a conclusion.**
7. **Thank those who helped you (acknowledge labmates, resource people, funding sources).**
Visual elements on your poster

Simple background is best if you have a substantial number of images/ graphs/ tables to show. An eye-popping background image is almost always distracting—it is usually only appropriate if you do not have images.
POSTER TEXT HERE

THIS IS POSTER TEXT

THIS IS MORE POSTER TEXT

POSTER TEXT HERE

THIS IS POSTER TEXT

THIS IS MORE POSTER TEXT
Low resolution images may look great on a computer screen, but become horribly pixelated and blocky when enlarged and printed. Only use high-resolution images, and avoid compressed formats such as jpg.
Using someone else’s images without their permission is a copyright infraction. Proprietary images often have watermarks, but not always.

Safest way to proceed is to use Google image search to find images licensed for noncommercial uses… or make your own.
Hello, my name is Chris Blanar and I am a parasitologist. I use parasite community structure to answer questions in aquatic ecology.

DO left-justify your text

Use 1-2 fonts maximum. Sans-serif fonts (Arial, Helvetica) are best for titles, while serif fonts (Times New Roman) are best for text body. Never use script or comic fonts if you want to be taken seriously.

Your poster needs to be legible from 4-6 feet away
  - Titles and headings 36-54 point
  - Text 24-36 point
  - Captions and data labels on charts and graphs 18-20 point

DO NOT fully justify your text
NSU branding: the logo

As a poster presenter you represent NSU, so display the logo proudly. However, as an ambassador, you are expected to display that logo properly, following the guidelines at:
http://www.nova.edu/brand/identity/logo.html

DO NOT USE OLD / INAPPROPRIATE LOGOS

EXAMPLES OF ACCEPTABLE LOGOS

NSU requires that the logo be displayed (once) on your poster!
Laying out the poster (STEM)

- STEM posters use IMRaD format:
  - Title, your name(s), faculty advisor(s), NSU logo
  - Abstract **
  - Introduction/Specific Aims/Objectives
  - Materials and/or Method(s) **
  - Results
  - Discussion/Conclusions/Future directions
  - References or Literature Cited **
  - Acknowledgments/Funding/Contacts**

- Figures/Tables/Images should occupy central spaces, dominating the poster visually

** These elements are less essential in posters and should never dominate. In some cases they can be omitted, or added to a handout to accompany the poster.
The visual appeal of your poster is the first thing people will notice. The second is the title. The average viewer will take less than five seconds to decide whether to actually read the poster, so make the title a grabber.
Possible Layouts

Horizontal Symmetry

Horizontal & Vertical Symmetry

Diagonal Symmetry

Asymmetry
(text-heavy on left, image-heavy on right)

Images are from: [http://www.ncsu.edu/project/posters/NewSite/CreatePosterLayout.html](http://www.ncsu.edu/project/posters/NewSite/CreatePosterLayout.html)
Laying out the poster (all Non-STEM)

Non-STEM disciplines such as business, law, or the humanities rarely use the standard IMRaD format. They more commonly assume one of three formats:

• Thematic: Poster divided into 2-3 sections, each dealing with different themes / subthemes
• Narrative: Poster tells a story about a specific event
• Questions and Answers: Poster divided into sections, each covering a small number (2-3) of clearly articulated questions

As with STEM posters, the emphasis should always be on graphical / visual elements.
Possible layouts

Your fascinating poster title
name, address

Literature cited
Acknowledgements
Further information
Annoying logos, etc.
The Festival of St. John the Baptist in Renaissance Florence

Elizabeth Tobey, [PhD, Art History & Archaeology, University of Maryland (2005)]

Introduction
San Giovanni Battista, or Saint John the Baptist, was adopted by the city of Florence, Italy as its patron saint in the thirteenth century. Each year on the saint’s day (June 24), festivities & processions are held in St. John’s honor.
- Festival once included horse race (palio)
- Prize for race was a silk palio banner
- Florence is a renowned center for textiles

Race to the Finish
The finish of the St. John palio race (right) in Florence’s Piazza San Pier Maggiore. Jockeys pilot their horses (barberi) towards the cart bearing the prize palio banner.

The Palio Cart
The palio banner was transported on a special horse-drawn cart or carro (left). The banner’s luxury fur lining (fodera) is visible draped across the cart’s edge.

The palio banner
The palio banner was displayed on a cart bearing city officials at the finish (left). The first horse and rider to reach the palio was declared the victor.
- Made from gold or red brocade silk and velvet fabric
- Linen with a thousand fur pelts
- Embroidered
- Expensive to produce

On the money
St. John the Baptist, a Christian saint, was celebrated by Florence from the 13th c. onwards during a period of economic growth and prosperity. St. John appears on the city’s currency, the florin, or gold coin.

The Festival as a Display of Wealth
During the late Middle Ages, Florence emerged as a major economic power in Europe in banking as well as production of luxury silk woven textiles. Originating as a religious procession to the Baptistery on the saint’s day, the festival of St. John the Baptist became an opulent annual spectacle in which the whole city participated.
- City of Florence spent lavish amounts annually on the palio banner
- Officials, guilds, and confraternities constructed floats for the procession
- Culminating event—traditional horse race with winner receiving palio
- In 1563, Grand Duke Cosimo I de’ Medici added a Roman-style chariot race in Piazza Santa Maria Novella

Woven gold
Silk fabric (left) was often interwoven with gold thread.
- In 1478, 220 gold florins spent on the palio (twice the cost of an altarpiece!)
- Banners recycled to make clothing and altar cloths
- Gold thread embroidery on luxury fabrics (right) sometimes commissioned from mura at area convents

Presenting tributes to the Baptistery
This 15th-century painting (above) shows citizens presenting palio (tribute banners) to the 11th-century Baptistery of San Giovanni (far left). The main palio banner (awarded to the winner of the horse race) is depicted in front of the façade of the duomo (cathedral of Santa Maria del Fiore) (left).

Conclusions
- Festival of St. John the Baptist was not only a religious observance but also a display of civic wealth
- High expenditures recorded for festival art (palio banners, floats, and costumes)
- Italian society valued festival art as much as painting, sculpture, architecture

Acknowledgments
Poster template adapted from Colin Parrington Reg. Poster presentation design.
Images downloaded from Artstor (https://artstor.org) through the University of Maryland Libraries’ ResearchPort unless otherwise noted.

Further information
Created by Elizabeth Tobey (etobey@umd.edu) in January 2015 as an example of poster design for the Maryland Center for Undergraduate Research (MCUR) at the University of Maryland (www.mcur.umd.edu). The content is based upon Tobey’s doctoral dissertation, “The Affluo in Italian Renaissance Art, Thought, and Culture” (University of Maryland, 2005).
Poster guidelines

Proofread your posters at 100% size to confirm that the spacing of the elements is consistent and that the images will print out properly at full resolution.

Posters can be printed at the Large Format Printing Office (Student Affairs Building rm 102B).

Printing request forms should be submitted by Wednesday March 28th at latest.

Printing request forms can be found at http://www.nova.edu/asm/posterprinting.html
Setting up your poster

- Poster boards and easels will be provided.
- Notify the Dean’s Office if you need other resources for your poster.
- The Dean’s Office will notify you of your poster and easel number.
Presenting your poster

- Stand next to your poster and look engaging
- Be prepared to answer questions
- Consider having a single-page printout of your poster, with your contact info, as an oversized business card
Helpful resources

Poster templates can be found here:

Great examples / counterexamples at this blog:
http://colinpurrington.com/tips/poster-design

For more tips:
Better Posters blog: a fantastic resource
http://betterposters.blogspot.com/
Information is Beautiful: illustrating difficult concepts with images
http://informationisbeautiful.net
Questions?

If you think of other questions later, please contact us:
Dr. Christopher Blanar (cblanar@nova.edu)
Dr. Weylin Sternglanz (sterngla@nova.edu)