Creating Posters using Powerpoint
https://www.usm.maine.edu/research/thinkingmatters

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Basic components checklist

Reads left to right, generally.
- your name and co-authors names with department affiliation
- List faculty mentors with dept affiliation
- Figures (photos, graphs, maps, drawings) with captions
- USM Logo (and/or other funders or institutions)
  - See Thinking Matters resources
- Abstract (optional)
- Introduction/Background
- Methods
- Results
- Discussion/Conclusion/Next steps
- References
- Acknowledgements
- Tables (use sparingly)
Before you begin, set your poster dimensions

• Powerpoint 2007
  – Go to **Design** tab and select **Page Setup** (left side)
  – Under “Slides sized for”, select “Custom”
  – Set:
    • Width = 48 inches (4 ft)
    • Height = 36 inches (3 ft)
  – Keep your poster in **landscape orientation**

• Older versions of Powerpoint: go to **Page Setup** under the File menu.
A very simple poster layout (see next slide)

• A basic layout for a science poster. You could use less text!
• Abstracts are not required if you need more space.
• Blue square are spaces for figures (graphs, photos, maps) or tables (use tables sparingly if at all).
• Always remember to include a descriptive caption for your figures and tables, and cite them (refer to them) in your text.
• Rearrange the text and figure boxes as needed.
## Abstract
(can be updated from what you submitted)

## Introduction or Background
Tell the reader what they need to know to put your study in context.

## Hypothesis/Question/Objective
Highlight using bullets, bolded font, etc.

## Methods
• This is a good section to use bullets rather than paragraphs.

## Results
Make sure you refer to figures in your text (Figure 1). Give only general patterns, highlighting what your figures show.

## Discussion/Conclusions/Next Steps
• How does your work compare with published literature?
• What is the significance of your findings?
• Make sure you have answered the Hypothesis/Questions/Objective you outlined earlier.

## References
These can be in smaller font, for those who are interested.

## Acknowledgements
Remember to thank your classmates, mentors other professors who contributed or supported your work. Mention any grants or fellowship that supported your work. This can also be in a smaller font.
If you’d like to start with a similar template

Contact Lourdes Alvarez via email lalvarez@usm.maine.edu and she will send you a copy.
Layout

• Feature figures! (photos, graphs, maps, drawings)
• Put the most important sections in the center of the poster, or up high where it will draw the viewer’s eye
• You can block out text sections, or just use the text boxes to line up your text, then remove the lines.
• Keep materials at least 0.5 inches from edge of poster
backgrounds

Don’t use flashlight-style or photos as background

– there is a risk of pixilation when printed
– photos distract the reader
fonts

• Shy people should be able to stand 8 ft away and still be able to read your poster...

• Use “sans serif” fonts for readability
  – Arial, Calibri, comic sans, trebuchet, tahoma

• Sizes- start with:
  – Text  30 point
  – Title Banner 90 point
Figures (maps, graphs, drawings, photos)

• Should be featured in your layout!
• Write axes labels, numbers, etc in large fonts (20+)
• Caption should contain enough information to interpret the figure without referring to the text.
• Each figure (or table) should be numbered and cited in the text:

Text (in the results section) might read: “Webworms were most abundant in cherry trees (Figure 3).”

And the caption would read: “Figure 3. Webworm abundance. Bars are the mean number of webworms found in each tree type.”
Formatting of figures & photos

• If your poster is very large you may want to compress the photos to print

• To avoid ghosting images, use image formats such as:
  * .tif
  * high quality jpeg *.jpg
  * .png

• Especially true if graphs or linework from other packages are exported as images vs. some vector format like .ps, .eps, or .svg.

• ALWAYS check your final product (a pdf of your poster) to make sure your figures look good at 100%
When you are ready to print...

• Print as a PDF file.
  – You may be able to select Adobe pdf as a printer in the print dialog box.
  – You can use a free program like PDF Creator (http://www.pdfforge.org/pdfcreator)
Proofing

• **Open the PDF file and look at it at 100%** to make sure the poster looks like you want. If it does not, go back, change, and print to PDF again.

• **Check formatting of photos & figures**

• **Check dimensions of PDF (under File > Document Properties)** 48" x 36" in landscape mode.
  
  • Sometimes, depending on the computer type and software versions, the pdf creation reduces the file dimensions to 11" x 8.5"
Printing

• Submit the PDF file on the Thinking Matters website by published deadline. Don’t wait until the last minute! Only online submissions are printed for free.
• https://www.usm.maine.edu/research/thinkingmatters

• You can have your poster printed off-campus but you’ll have to pay ($60 - $100). If you decide to have your poster printed off campus, please let us know so we aren’t looking for your poster (& we can advise a good shop)

• You can print a good black and white draft for $5 at Staples.