



UNIVERSITY OF
SOUTHERN MAINE

Thinking Matters Symposium

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.



Banner: A Descriptive Title

Your Name & Affiliation, Your Co-author's Names & Affiliations, Your Mentor's Name & Affiliation

Fig. 6. Descriptive Caption

Abstract
(can be updated from what you submitted)



Fig. 1. Descriptive Caption

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



Fig. 2 . Descriptive Caption

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

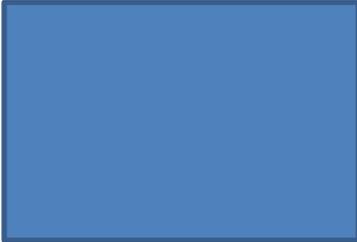


Fig. 3. Descriptive Caption

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

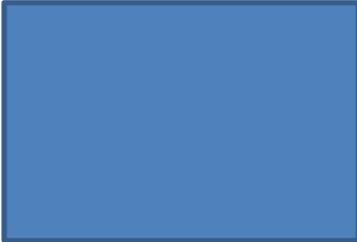


Fig. 4. Descriptive Caption

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



Fig. 5. Descriptive Caption

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

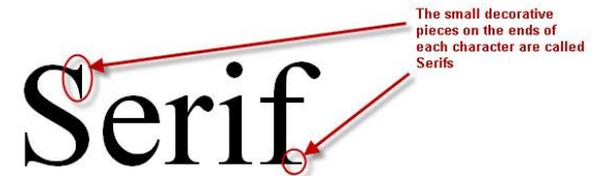
backgrounds

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

The small decorative pieces on the ends of each character are called Serifs

San Serif

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 you 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.