



Writing Centre

Academic Posters

An academic poster concisely and efficiently presents your research findings. A well-designed poster will (1) have visual impact, (2) emphasize key points and supporting evidence, and (3) create curiosity, leading to questions and further exploration.

What should it look like?

The Basics:

- A poster is usually 36 inches by 48 inches.
- Landscape orientation will often have three columns, but may have up to four.
- Portrait orientation will usually have two columns.
- Check for any specific requirements set by the conference.

Font:

- Title: 72pt or higher
- Authors/Subheading: 48pt-56pt
- Headings: 36pt
- Body Text: 24pt
- Captions: 18pt
- Do not use more than two different font styles.

Colour:

- Use only two or three different colours.
- Make sure there is a high colour contrast between the background and the text so that your poster is easy to read.
- Avoid bright colours.
- Avoid colour combinations that are difficult to see for anyone with colour-blindness: namely, red-green and blue-yellow.
- Coordinate the colours of your visuals with the colours used in your poster.

Design Tips:

- Avoid large paragraphs. Instead, use bullet points, numbered lists, charts, tables, diagrams, and images.
- A moderate amount of white space can be effective. Select the key information and avoid packing too much into your poster.
- Organize your content in the order that people will read it. Most read from the top of a column to the bottom, starting with the left column and then moving to the right.

What should be in it?

Although there is flexibility with the content of the poster, some important sections to consider include:

- Title (at the top in the middle) and Author (under the title)
- Introduction and abstract/background/aim
- Method and results
- Conclusion
- Bibliography/works cited/recommended resources
- Acknowledgments

Who is your audience?

Your answer to this question is important. When presenting to people in your field, you will use professional terminology, but if your audience is more diverse, then you should avoid terms and concepts that will confuse your audience.

How should you create it?

These software programs are available to TRU students and are relatively easy to use:

- Microsoft Publisher
- Microsoft PowerPoint

For either of these programs, set the page/slide size to the size of the poster.

