Elements of Poster Design

August 6, 2015
Steps to a Successful Poster Presentation

● Assess purpose & needs
● **Outline** content | **browse** examples | **sketch** design
● Create poster
● Practice presentation
● Present @ STAR Scholars Summer Showcase
Assess Purpose & Needs

Poster Presentations:

- are less formal than oral presentations
- are meant to communicate information visually
- are meant for a standing and moving audience

Posters are about content and form.
## Effective Posters

| Focused       | One single message  
|               | Emphasize significance |
| Graphic       | Graphs and images tell the story  
|               | Fewer than 800 words |
| Ordered       | Obvious sequence  
|               | Simple flow paths with cues |

Organization

visual grammar

column structure

white space

reader gravity

visual unity
| Title         | Attention-grabbing  
|              | Short - 5 words or fewer |
| Fonts        | Big  
|              | 2-3 styles (headings, body text)  
|              | Serif v. san serif |
| Body         | Double-spaced  
|              | Left-justified |
### Font Sizes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Element</th>
<th>Size</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Title</td>
<td>150+ (points)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Headings</td>
<td>32+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subheadings</td>
<td>20+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Body text</td>
<td>16-18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Colors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Few colors</th>
<th>Not too bright</th>
<th>Contrast</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Consistency
Charts & graphic elements should tell a coherent story about your data.

- Remove junk
- Add values
- Descriptive titles
- Aggregate data
Charts

“How Much Do Teachers Make?”

Primary school teacher starting salary with minimum training

Source: Education at a Glance 2009: OECD Indicators
Images & Graphics

- Should balance out text elements
- Should be high-resolution
- Should be outlined in a thin border (grey, black)
The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly
Your STAR Poster must:

- Be sized to 39” x 29”
- Include the STAR Scholars Program logo
- Include your name as author and your faculty mentor’s name as mentor/advisor
- Be sent to OUR in PDF format (NOT PowerPoint)
Flexibility with Template

The poster template is a guide.

Be creative with:

- **Fonts & Colors**: Change the aesthetic of your poster but be wary of too much variation in color and font choice.
- **Structure**: Include those sections that make sense for your work and that best communicate your message.
- **Layout**: Three-column is most common but doesn’t always work for all topics.
Presenting

- Introduce yourself & your work
- **Elevator pitch**: Practice a 30-second explanation of your work
- Conversational, rather than formal presentation
- Dress professionally
- Make eye contact & smile
Resources

- **Guide to Creating Research Posters** (University of Texas - Austin)
- **Speaking Guidelines for Science & Engineering Students: Scientific Posters** (Penn State University)
- **Guide to Designing & Printing a Research Poster** (Dartmouth)
- **Designing Conference Posters** (Colin Purrington)