Posters at CCCC 2015, Tampa

Setting Up

You can set up your poster in the Action Hub (Convention Center, Ballroom B) on Wednesday afternoon or Thursday morning. Your poster will be available for viewing throughout the convention. Do not forget to carry business cards and a stack of handouts that summarize your presentation. You might want to collect contact information so you can mail or e-mail the full paper (or the outline) to those interested, so think about having an information sheet on hand for that purpose.

Digital Posters: If you proposed a digital poster, I’m still working on just what sort of technology is needed – I think there are 5 or 6 of you, and you might write me and Chalice with your thoughts. You can skip the section about printed posters and go right to the bottom.

Print Posters: The poster display area will have 4’x8’ boards to which you can tack or attach your printed poster. Please design a poster that fits comfortably in that space, preferably no larger than 36” x 72”. Do not mount your poster on foam board.

We will provide either bulletin boards or regular boards (I am still working on the details) upon which to hang your poster. The image to the right is one possible configuration (probably without the table) for the poster area. If we have cork boards, we’ll aim to provide you with push pins; if we use other types of boards, we’ll try to provide some sort of clips. As a backup, you might bring some clips and push pins, just in case. We have planned the arrangement of posters, so please locate your designated board and hang your poster there, and only there.

Please note that you are responsible for transporting your poster to Tampa. You can roll it up and bring it in a tube or you can print it when you arrive. There is a UPS store in the conference hotel, and there are many printing services within a block or two of the Marriott Waterside: (http://www.visittampabay.com/meeting-planners/book-meeting-convention/suppliers/copying-printing/)

Your Poster Session

Your poster will be on display throughout the conference, but you’ll be expected to stand with your poster and interact with an audience only during your assigned session slot. (You are welcome, of course, to stand near your poster any other time you like, as well.) Please arrive a few minutes before your session is to begin and stay for the duration of that time slot. Just because the first wave of viewers leaves doesn’t mean there won’t be others later in the time slot.

As you design your poster, also practice different versions of your poster talk: the 30-second summary, the 60-second summary plus a quick explanation of the major headings, and the 3-minute explanation of the poster. You can organize the talk around what you imagine will be the viewers’ probable questions. When you practice your talk, practice gesturing toward the poster areas (or slides) without losing eye contact with the audience until you are comfortable with the fact that the poster behind you or at your side is not organized left to right as it would be in your mind’s eye.

Allow viewers to take a few seconds to look at diagrams or figures and talk them through the visual. Don’t say, “These are the results of the student surveys” and assume that everyone knows what the figure means.
**Content Guidelines**

As a general suggestion, I encourage you to think of an appealing display that will raise attendees' curiosity and encourage them to ask more about your work. Ultimately, the form of your poster will depend on the information you want to convey and your goals in presenting the information, but your display should always have two fundamental characteristics: clarity of display and clarity of argument.

As a rule, use only one style, one conventional font, and a light background. Materials should be readable at a distance of 5 to 10 feet. I urge you to use at least 48 point font for titles and 36 point for body text and tables. Use images to support your argument and draw the audience in. Text should be under 800 words. Remember that your audience should be able to absorb your main arguments in a few minutes. Be prepared to give a brief oral introduction to the project and answer questions.

Many web sites give practical advice on poster design. We think you will find these sites particularly useful:

- [Colorado State University](https://www.colorado.edu/)
- [American Anthropological Association](https://www.aaanet.org/) (AAA). Although AAA-specific, there are some very good general suggestions.
- [Colin Purrington's blog](https://www.colinpurrington.com/) on designing effective conference posters.
- “[Creating Effective Poster Presentations](https://www.americananthro.org/education/)” by George Hess, Kathryn Tosney, and Leon Liegel
- “[The Basics of Poster Design](https://www.nasa.gov//sidebar/posters.html)” by the Washington NASA Space Grant Consortium
- [Free Poster Templates](https://posterpresentations.com/) in pdf, courtesy of PosterPresentations.com

To spark conversation about your project, your poster should include:

- Your project title
- Your name and school
- Your research question
- Information about how you attempted to answer your question (methods)
- Your results
- The significance of those results – to you, to the field, or to other specific groups

**Design Strategies**

Posters are most effective when they mix visuals and text, include plenty of white space, and guide the reader through the material with a logical organization. Here are some tips for planning your poster:

1. **Brainstorm what content you want to include in your presentation**: What could be presented visually? What could you tell visitors (rather than showing them on the poster)? What needs to be in text?
2. **Sketch out your poster on a regular piece of paper**: You don’t need to include all the text and visuals; instead, draw and label blocks to represent chunks of information. Experiment with different orientations for your poster. You’ll fine-tune the visual design later.
3. **When you have a general layout you like, start working on the detailed content**: Draft your text and create your visuals. Give yourself time to revise and edit.
4. **Test the visual layout of your content**: Spread out your text chunks and visuals on the floor. Can you read the text from a standing position or does it need to be larger? Ask a colleague if the organization makes sense to them. Have them talk through how they read the materials and what questions they have. If the questions are things you could answer in conversation, great! If the questions reflect confusion about your project, you might need to revise.