

Eighteenth Annual Psychological Science Poster Session
Instruction Booklet

Poster Session: Thursday, April 22, 2010, 1:00-4:00 p.m.
Deadline for Entering: Thursday, April 8, 2010

Introduction

A poster session is a presentation of recent research projects in a way that allows the audience and presenter to talk with one another and exchange ideas. During the session, the audience moves through the poster displays, stopping to talk with those presenters whose posters are of interest to them. Ideally, a well-constructed poster will be self-explanatory and will free you from answering obvious questions so that you are available to supplement and discuss particular points of interest. Successful posters are those which can achieve both coverage and clarity.

The purpose of this booklet is to help presenters prepare and present their research posters with confidence. The information contained here should be considered guidelines rather than rules and regulations.

Who can present a poster? The poster session is for undergraduate and graduate students who have completed or partially completed independent study projects, collaborative work with a professor and/or other students, Honors theses, Masters theses, or projects for a class. The project can involve behavioral research of any kind. It doesn't have to be finished; you can present preliminary data or predicted results.

When will it take place? Thursday, April 22 from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m. You can present a poster even if you can't attend for the entire three hours.

Where? North Quad's main hallway, on the east side of the building.

Deadline for entering: We need to know the title of each poster and the author(s) by Thursday, April 8 so that this information can be included in the official program and so that certificates and name tags can be printed. Use the form at the back of this booklet to enter or e mail Dr. Kerri Pickel at kpickel@bsu.edu

Poster boards: We recommend that you use either a sturdy tri-fold poster board that sits on a tabletop or the thinner, flat type that you hang on a wall or bulletin board. You can buy poster boards at a bookstore or at stores like Target, Meijer, and Wal-Mart.

Getting more help: There are tips about how to construct a poster in this booklet, and you can also ask your faculty supervisor for advice. For information about the Poster Session itself, contact Dr. Pickel.

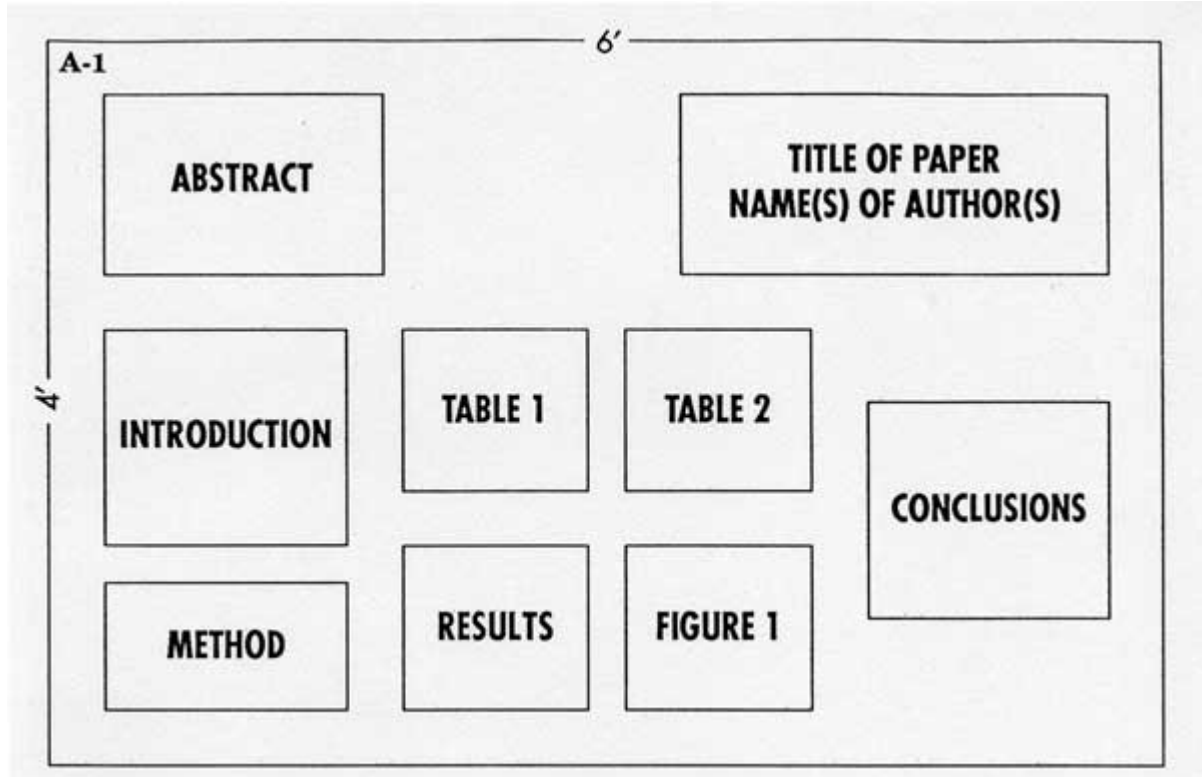
Benefits of Presenting

Why should you present a poster? There are many benefits both for presenters and for the audience. Some are listed below.

1. You will gain experience with the final step in the research process: communicating your results and conclusions to others.
2. You can get feedback and ideas for new research, and you might meet people with similar interests with whom you could collaborate.
3. It's a resume builder. Graduate school admissions committees and potential employers like to see that students have presented their work at a departmental conference (Keith-Spiegel, 1991). All presenters will receive certificates to document their participation.
4. By displaying your work, you help fellow students learn about social science research and about how to get involved with research.
5. Poster sessions eliminate all the anxiety that accompanies oral presentations, and they build communication skills.
6. You get recognition for your work from your classmates and professors.
7. It's an excellent learning experience.
8. It's fun!

Sample Poster Layout

This figure shows a sample layout for a poster. Posters can vary in size and may have either a landscape or portrait orientation. Consider this example to be a guideline; the placement of the intro, method, and other components is actually flexible. You can find this layout and additional samples at Psi Chi's web site: <http://psichi.org/conventions/samples.asp>. Feel free to be creative in constructing the poster that best represents your research.



How to Make a Poster

Content

The most important part of your poster is the content. Before planning your poster design, decide on the content you wish to present. You should construct the poster to include the title, the author(s), and a concise description of the research. Students often make the mistake of attempting to present an entire thesis or article on a poster. Don't try this approach! At a poster session, people do not want to read a lengthy report. However, you might consider making available complete copies of your complete report for those who are interested.

Given that you have limited space, you must decide what aspects of your research are most important to present. Make sure your poster includes a clear and brief statement of your research problem, a brief description of your method, and a summary of the most consequential or interesting results you obtained, along with your conclusion. You may want to include a sample of an instrument or stimulus used in your research. It is best to create an outline of the content you want to present. Then fill in each section of the outline with short paragraphs and bulleted or numbered lists. Do not include lengthy paragraphs on your poster.

Presenting Text

You should design a poster that can be read quickly and easily. The first step for achieving this goal is to select one or two easy-to-read fonts. Your main text should be set in a large font (24 to 36 pt minimum). Select a larger, bold font for headings. Select a smaller font for details and footnotes that are not essential to understanding your research but may be of interest to some readers.

Your text should be presented so that the reader can get a quick overview. If applicable, present text as bulleted or numbered lists. Use a bold font or an alternate color to emphasize the most important bits of text. Place details in a smaller font below the main points or in separate boxes off to the side.

Finally, don't forget to spell check and proof read your text!

Presenting Graphics

As the old saying goes, a picture is worth a thousand words. Graphics can be excellent tools for explaining procedures, describing equipment, or summarizing results. Use graphs, flow charts, photographs, or diagrams to illustrate your poster. Not only will they add visual interest, but they will allow people to gain a quick understanding of your work without reading lengthy paragraphs of text. Don't hesitate to cut and paste graphics onto your poster if you don't have access to graphics software.

Using Color

Color is a great way of brightening up your poster, visually grouping elements, and drawing attention to the most important elements. It can also make graphs and diagrams easier to read and understand. However, color should be used carefully and with purpose. It should not be randomly applied just for the sake of having color. Unless you're experienced with using color, select a palette of one to four colors and use them consistently throughout your poster.

You may want to select a dark color such as black or deep blue for your main text. Choose a bright color such as red or magenta to highlight important text. You might also want to use a contrasting color for headings and bullets. You can make entire elements stand out or

identify them as part of a group by filling them with a light-colored background or surrounding them with a brightly colored border. You might use color as a way of visually distinguishing each section of your poster (e.g., problem, method, results) or to indicate the importance of each item. If you don't have access to a color printer, you can always use colored markers on your poster.

Coverage

While constructing your poster, ask yourself a few questions, such as:

1. Have you provided the most important information?
2. Can someone walk away understanding your major findings after a quick examination of your material?
3. Will a more careful reader learn enough to ask informed questions?
4. Is the sequence of information evident? Indicate the ordering of your material with numbers, letters, or arrows when necessary.
5. Is the content being communicated clearly? Keep it simple! Place only your major points in the poster. Be selective.

Presenting Your Poster

You do not need to attend for the entire three hours of the session. Please come to the main hallway after 12:45 but before 1:00 to put your poster on display. If you will be unavailable at that time, drop off your poster earlier in the day in the PSYSC department office (NQ 104) with a note in Dr. Pickel's mailbox (or send e mail) and an assistant will put your poster on display for you. For posters that hang (instead of sitting on a table), tacks will be provided.

Go to the poster session ready to talk to people. Not only is this a good opportunity for you to tell people about your research, but also you can get new ideas that might improve your work. Think ahead of time about some of the questions you might be asked. A frequent question is how your research compares to other studies on the same topic.

While you're at the poster session, check out other presenters' research. You might learn something interesting, and you'll have fun!

Poster Session Entry Form

Complete the form below and deliver it to Dr. Pickel's mailbox in the Dept. of Psychological Science (NQ104), by **April 8, 2010**. Xerox this page if you have more than one poster to submit. You can send e mail instead if you wish (kpickel@bsu.edu), but please include all information requested below. You must meet the deadline in order to be included in the official program and to have a certificate and name tag printed for you.

Please note: Your title and name will be printed in the official program exactly as you submit them, so please print legibly and check carefully for spelling errors!

-----cut here and turn in bottom part of form-----

Title of poster: _____

Author(s): _____

Note: Order of authorship matters! We will print the order exactly as you specify. Consult your co-authors and faculty advisor to determine order and to decide whether the advisor should be considered an author. See also "What type of research is this?" below.

Which kind of poster will you use? (check one)

- flat poster that hangs on the wall
- tri-fold poster that sits on a table
- I don't know yet

What type of research is this? (check one)

- undergraduate Honors thesis (faculty advisor is not an author)
- independent project e.g., PSYSC 498, PSYSC 698 or RES 697 (may have faculty author)
- collaboration between student(s) and professor (professor is listed as an author)
- project completed for a class; please specify which class (faculty advisor is not an author)
- Master's thesis (faculty advisor is not an author)
- other (please explain):

Contact info for at least one author (e mail address): _____
