Effective Poster Presentations Workshop

Hosted by the KSU Student Affiliates of the American Chemical Society www.kentsaacs.com

Sponsored by the Akron Section of the American Chemical Society
Why bother presenting a poster on your research?

- Get feedback and assistance on your research
- Preparing a poster will stimulate you to think more about your research
- Maximize exposure of your research to others in the field
- Meet scientists with related interests
- Strengthen your resume
  Be more competitive for jobs, graduate school and entry into professional schools such as medical school

- OPPORTUNITY TO NETWORK, NETWORK, NETWORK!
  - Meet possible future collaborators, reviewers of papers, reviewers of applications or proposals, future boss, etc.
What you should know before you start:

- Who is your audience?
- What is the main message you wish to convey
- What are the dimensions of the poster boards?
- Is IP associated with your poster?
  - IP must be protected as a poster presentation counts as a disclosure of information
- Any data which is not published is vulnerable…
- Use a poster template (available on KSU SAACS website)
  
  www.kentsaacs.com

- Print your poster well in advance (mistakes can happen)
Sections Typically Found on a Poster

- Title and Affiliations
- Introduction
- Objectives
- Methods/Experimental
- Results
- Summary/Conclusions
- Future Work
- Acknowledgment (includes funding source)

- Each section should be easily located on the poster
- Recognize the diversity of your audience
  - Some visitors to your poster may only want to know the reason why you did the research and obtain a succinct summary of results
  - Others may be more interested in experimental methods
  - Others may want to review the entire poster contents
Title and Affiliations

- Keep it a reasonable length
- It must be informative, but can also be provocative and/or fun!
- Emphasize an important finding to draw people to your poster
- Who will be the co-authors on your poster?
  
  (talk to your research supervisor!)
- Avoid all capital letters, so title is easy to read
- No period punctuation in titles
- Include an appropriate photo of yourself so people can easily identify you

Appropriate

?!
Content: **Be selective!**

- **Choose your content** carefully! Especially important when you have a lot of data
- **Tell a logical story** - make sure poster flows when read from top to bottom
- **Emphasize the big picture**
  - Consider excluding less important results and details
Introduction

- Why is your research so important and so interesting?
- What are the key concepts required so someone outside your area can understand your research including its purpose and importance?
- Typically only one paragraph (maximum two)
  - Major amount of text causes sections to appear very dense and can be a deterrent for audience to read
- Use reasonably large and easy to read font

Objectives/Aims

- A short, succinct 1-2 sentence statement of the goal(s) of your research
Experimental Section

- Be brief!
- Consider incorporating diagrams/pictures/schematics ("a picture is worth a thousand words..."")
Results

- Subheadings can help readers stay focused
- Make sure there is especially good flow in this section
- Tables, figures, schemes work well
- Keep captions to tables, figures, schemes brief
- Sparing use of sentences between tables, figures, etc. is useful to create a logical flow and highlight key results
Summary/Conclusions

- What is/are the take-home messages?
- No more than 5 key *bulleted* points – two to three is ideal

Future Work

- A short statement here can be beneficial to all
  (may get useful tips from poster visitors as to what to do next)
Visual Aspects

- Careful choice of font and background colors
  - High contrast: light/dark or dark/light

Visual Aspects

- Not all colors will be appropriate!

![Color Circles]

Bad background color choice

- Use of two colors for font works well
  - For example one color for headings, another for main text; another for table and figure captions

- Use a complimentary color scheme
  http://colorschemedesigner.com/

- Posters are meant to be *visually communicative*
Other Things To Avoid!

- Grammar and spelling errors (get someone to proofread)
- Overload of information - the "too much stuff" problem
  - Visitors typically want to spend ~5 minutes at your poster
- Don't use long, descriptive sentences
- A title that is too long, or has font that is too small or too big
- Using fonts that are impossible to read
- Too many fonts, colors or textures
- Forgetting references and acknowledgements
- Overuse of jargon, acronyms and abbreviations (define abbreviations upfront as necessary)
- USING CAPITAL LETTERS ONLY
The Big Day: Getting the most out of a poster session

- Prepare in *advance* how you can best explain the research in your poster
  Consider practicing with another student
- Always *offer to explain* your poster to visitors
- Be proactive - if traffic to your poster is thin, ask someone who may be intending to pass if you could explain your poster to them
- Consider having business cards or something equivalent available to give to your poster’s visitors
- **Dress to impress!** Wear something professional which makes you feel good about yourself. When you feel good, you perform better

1st KSU SAACS Honors Week Poster Session, April 2013
Learn to make positive & negative criticism productive

- There is usually some truth to the negative feedback

Immediately after the event:

- Jot down useful tips and comments from poster visitors
- Ask your research supervisor if you can display your poster in the corridor outside your lab for more publicity
Upcoming Poster Sessions at KSU:

KSU and Stark State College
SAACS 2nd Annual Honors Week Poster Session
April 8th 5:30 - 8 pm

5:30 pm Chemistry demo event by KSU and Stark State students, WMH 110

6:15 - 8 pm Poster Session, Main Library
Food and drinks, cash awards for best undergraduate and graduate posters.

Registration: www.kentsaacs.com under the events tab
Registration deadline: March 30th
Undergraduate Symposium on Research, Scholarship and Creative Activity, Wednesday April 2, 2014

Cash awards

Registration:
www.kent.edu/undergradstudies/ugresearch

Deadline for Abstract submission: Monday March 3

Graduate Research Symposium, Friday April 11th (am)

Poster and oral presentations from graduate and undergraduate students of all disciplines. Monetary awards will be given out to best of each presentation for each category – awarded at the luncheon at 12:30 pm

Registration:
www.kent.edu/graduatestudies/gss/researchsymposium

Registration Deadline: Tomorrow by midnight!
Please score each of the following criteria using the 1 (poor) – 5 (outstanding) scale:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Score</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction and Background: Was adequate background given to understand the research question/hypothesis; were the goals and objectives of research project clearly communicated?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Results: Was a clear and concise presentation of the results given, including effective use of figures, schemes and tables when appropriate?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Conclusions: Were the conclusions appropriate?</td>
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<td>Visual aspects: Was the poster content laid out well, attractive to look at, and easy to read?</td>
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<td>Interaction with judge: did the student demonstrate a good understanding of the research; did the student effectively answer questions?</td>
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<td>TOTAL SCORE (out of 25):</td>
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Comments: