Dean's Research Award – Poster Presentation Guidelines

PURPOSE

Poster sessions are widely used in the academic community as an alternative to oral presentations. The purpose of the poster is to present a summary of your research in a visually appealing and concise way. Like an oral presentation, the poster should tell the "story" of your research in a logical manner and usually includes headings such as introduction, background, hypothesis, methodology, results, discussion, conclusions, references, and acknowledgements. For the DRA Poster Session, you will be required to create and print a poster and give a 2-3 minute synopsis of your work.

JUDGING CRITERIA

Poster presentations will be judged on the following criteria:

Poster Content

Poster components are appropriate for the project and flow logically (i.e. tell a clear story)
Objectives, rationale, and impact of the work are clear
Experimental methodology and results are clear
Conclusions support the results
Appropriate use of figures and tables
Amount of work completed is appropriate for a DRA project

Visual Impact

Layout, design, and color combinations of the poster are visually appealing
Balance between text and figures
Font is legible
Proper labeling of figures and tables

Oral Presentation

Presentation is a succinct but thorough summary of research (2-3 minutes)
Presenter is enthusiastic and knowledgeable about their project
Presenter can answer questions briefly but thoroughly

CREATING YOUR POSTER – WHERE TO START!

For those that have never made an academic/scientific poster, I encourage you to discuss this with your supervisor and lab group as they will have had experience creating and presenting posters. The majority of posters are made in PowerPoint – it is user-friendly and available on most computers - although there are other programs you can use if you choose (Adobe Illustrator, In Design, Photoshop etc.). This video provides a good overview of how to get started: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1c9Kd_mUFDM.

TEMPLATES

The Faculty of Engineering does not have an academic poster template at this time; however there are several other options:

1. Ask your supervisor – some will already have existing group templates

2. Download University of Alberta poster templates through the Marketing and Communications toolkit:
   https://www.ualberta.ca/toolkit/downloads/templates/posterpresentations).

3. Create your own in PowerPoint or other program.

SIZE & FORMAT

There is no specific format or size requirements for the DRA poster session, however there are some size constraints as a result of the printer and dimensions of the poster board:

If using a landscape orientation, posters must be no larger than 54" x 42".

If using a portrait orientation, posters must be no greater than 48" x 42".

Important: These will be printed on the 42" roll at SUB Print, therefore it is imperative that at least one of the poster dimensions is less than 42". It is also advisable to leave a white or colored margin of at least 1 inch around the poster (text and pictures within an inch of the printer edge tend to be distorted).

HOW TO PRINT YOUR POSTER

The cost of printing the posters will be covered by the Faculty of Engineering, however students will be responsible for getting their posters printed at SUB Print (located in the basement of the Student's Union Building).

To print, students will need to bring a copy of their file (pdf, jpg, ppt are preferred) to SUB with their one card and indicate that they are getting their poster printed as part of the "Engineering Dean's Research Award" (Sub Print will have a list of all DRA students). The staff at SUB Print will have all of the information and requirements for printing your poster (they will be printed on matte bond paper using the 42" roll).

The time it takes to get the poster printed is dependent on how busy SUB Print is. Generally, they can print the posters the same day, however this is not guaranteed, especially as they can be very busy at the end of the term. Make sure that you leave yourself enough time to get your poster printed.

TIPS AND TRICKS

Below are some resources that provide tips and tricks for creating great, eye-catching posters (font, font size, picture resolution, white space, color, charts and graphs etc.).

Articles

How to Create a Research Poster: Poster Basics
https://guides.nyu.edu/posters
Conference presentations: Lead the poster parade
https://www.nature.com/nature/journal/v536/n7614/full/nj7614-115a.html

How to make an academic poster
https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2049080116301303

Videos

Making a better research poster:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AwMFhyH7_5g

Books

Academic & Scientific Poster Presentation: A Modern Comprehensive Guide (Nicholas Rowe) is available electronically through the UAlberta library.