

How to Create a Research Poster

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VIRGIN ISLANDS **epscor**

Emerging Caribbean Scientists Seminar

June 6, 2024



Creating Academic Posters

Academic Poster

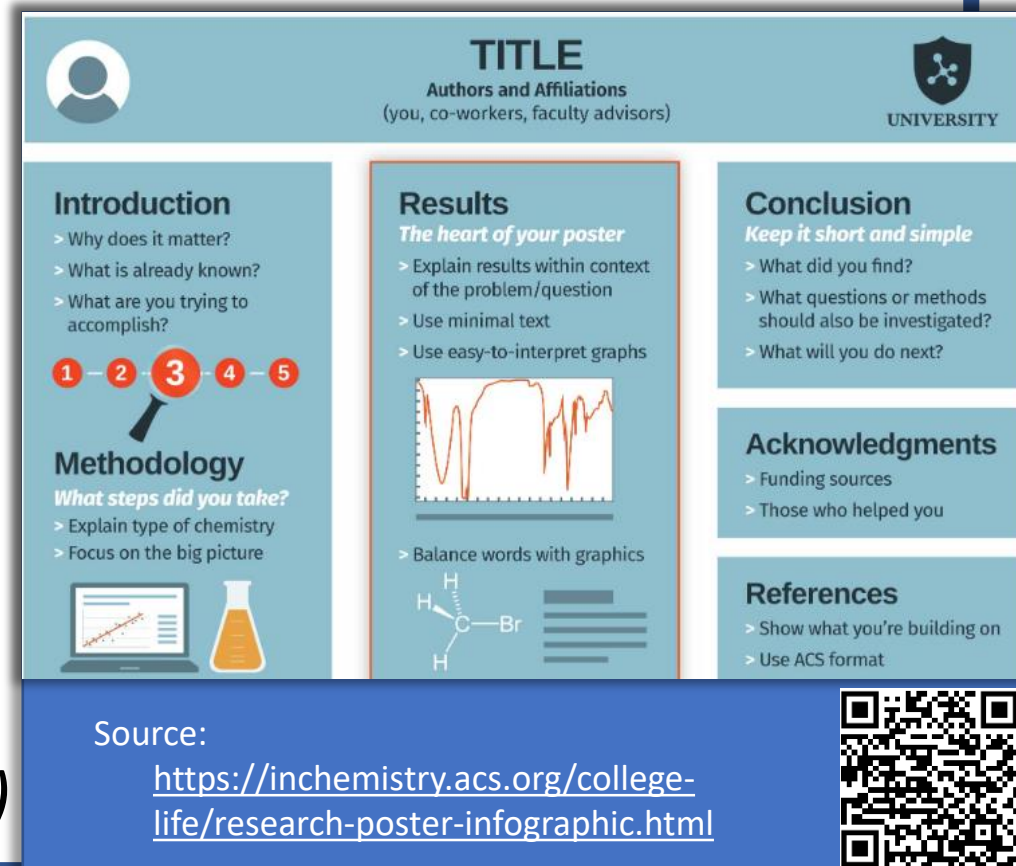
- Large printed sheet with graphics and text
- Visual display summarizing key points / results
- Teaching tool

Posters are used at

- Conferences / symposia
- Department hallways / showcases

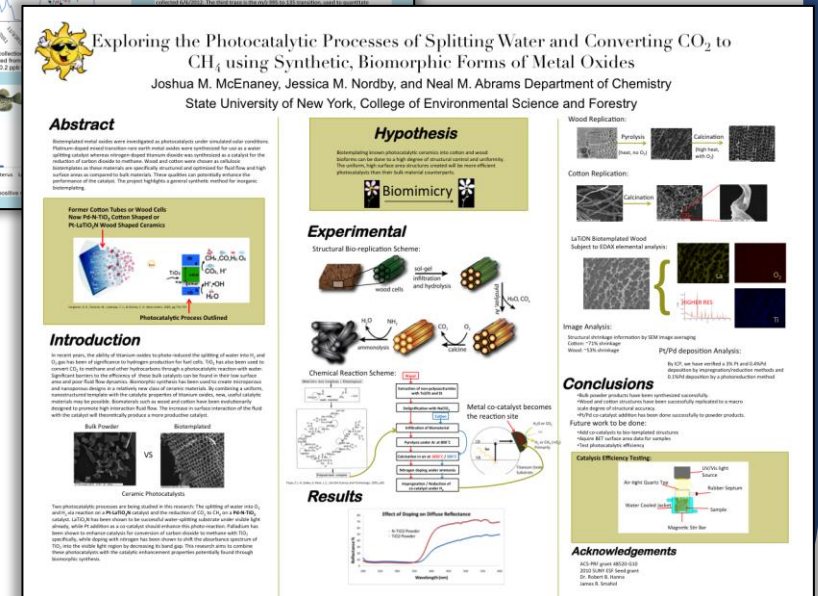
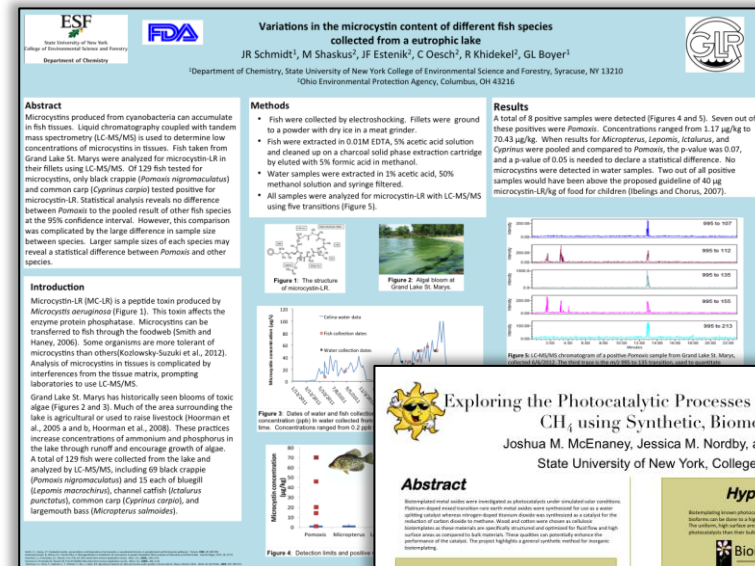
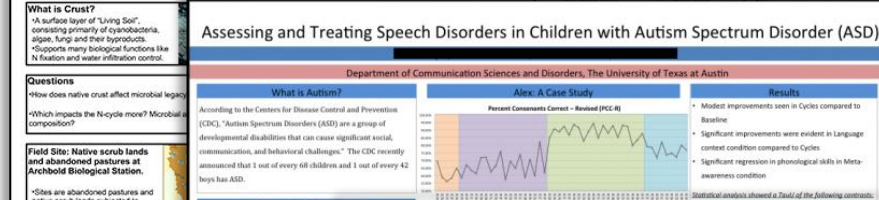
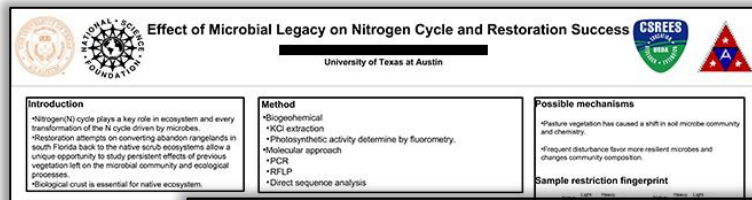
Poster should be

- Accessible (*high-level overview*)
- Succinct (*readable in < 5min*)
- Informative (*clear title & organization*)
- Uncluttered ($\leq 40\%$ text; $\geq 30\%$ pictures)



Creating Academic Posters

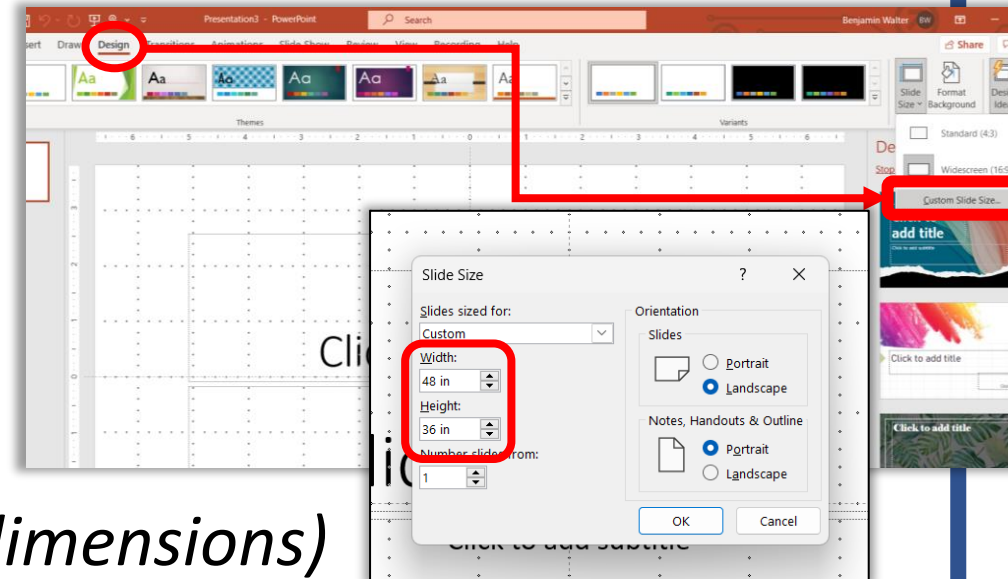
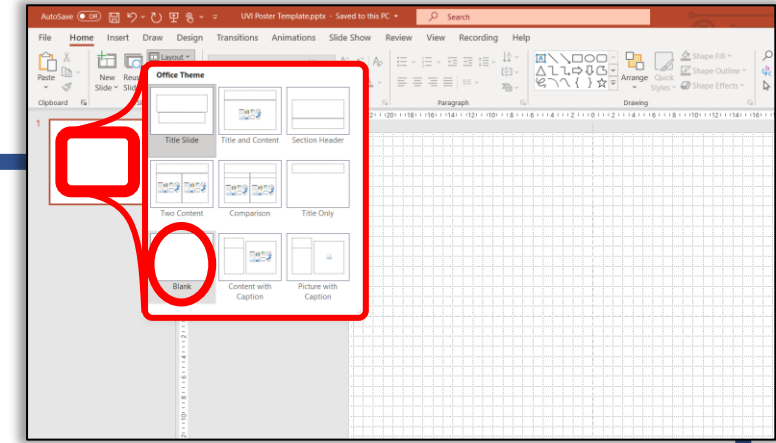
Academic Poster (Examples)



Creating Academic Posters

Initial Setup (*Blank Poster*)

- Open a “New” presentation in PowerPoint
- <right-click> slide and change layout to “Blank”
- In menu ribbon, select:
Design -> Slide Size -> Custom Slide Size
- Enter poster size
Width: **48 in** Height: **36 in**
(some conferences may specify different dimensions)
- *Choice of “Maximize” or “Ensure fit” does not matter*

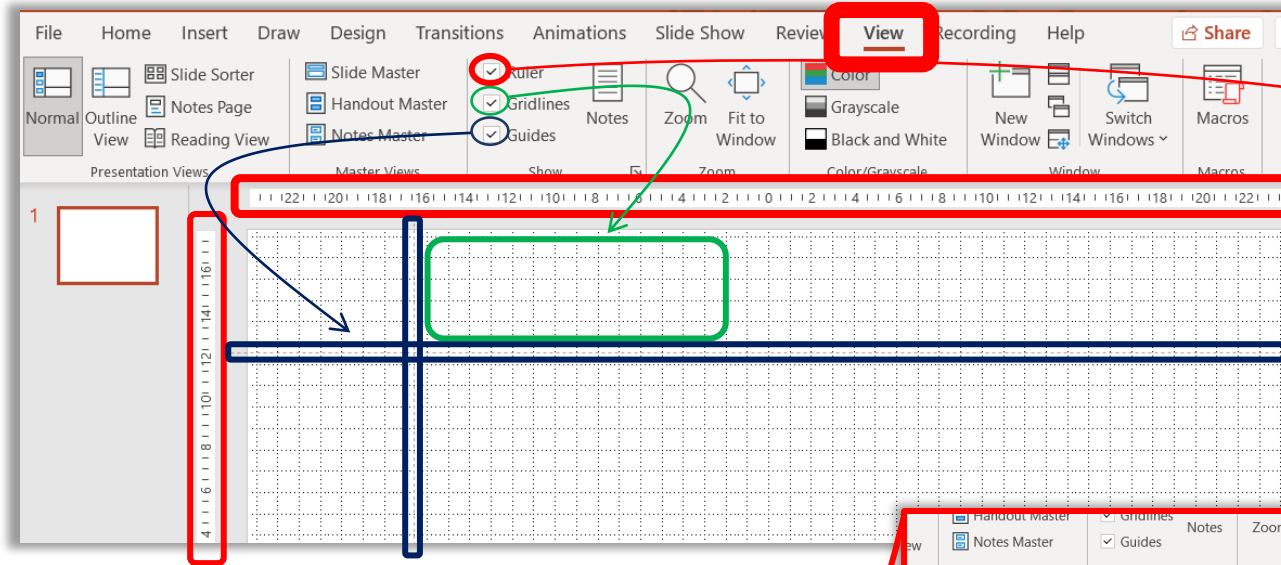


Creating Academic Posters

Useful Extras for Alignment

- Ruler / Gridlines / Guides

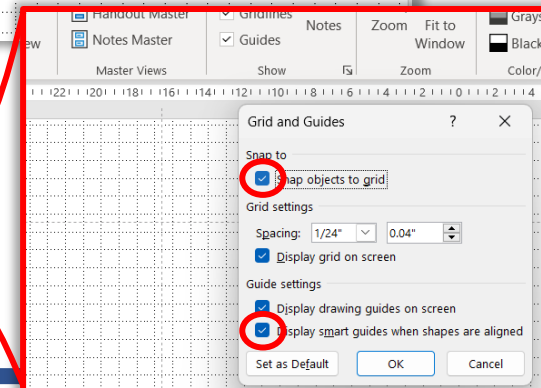
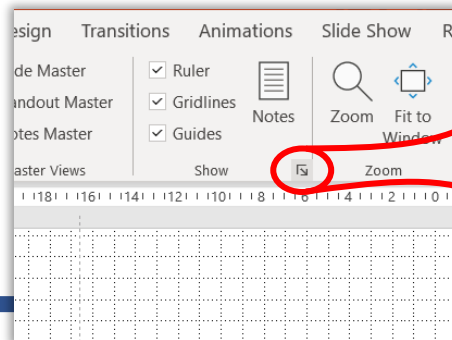
Ribbon bar: View -> Ruler / Gridlines / Guides (checkboxes)



Note: 0 is at center.
Numbers show distance
from center.

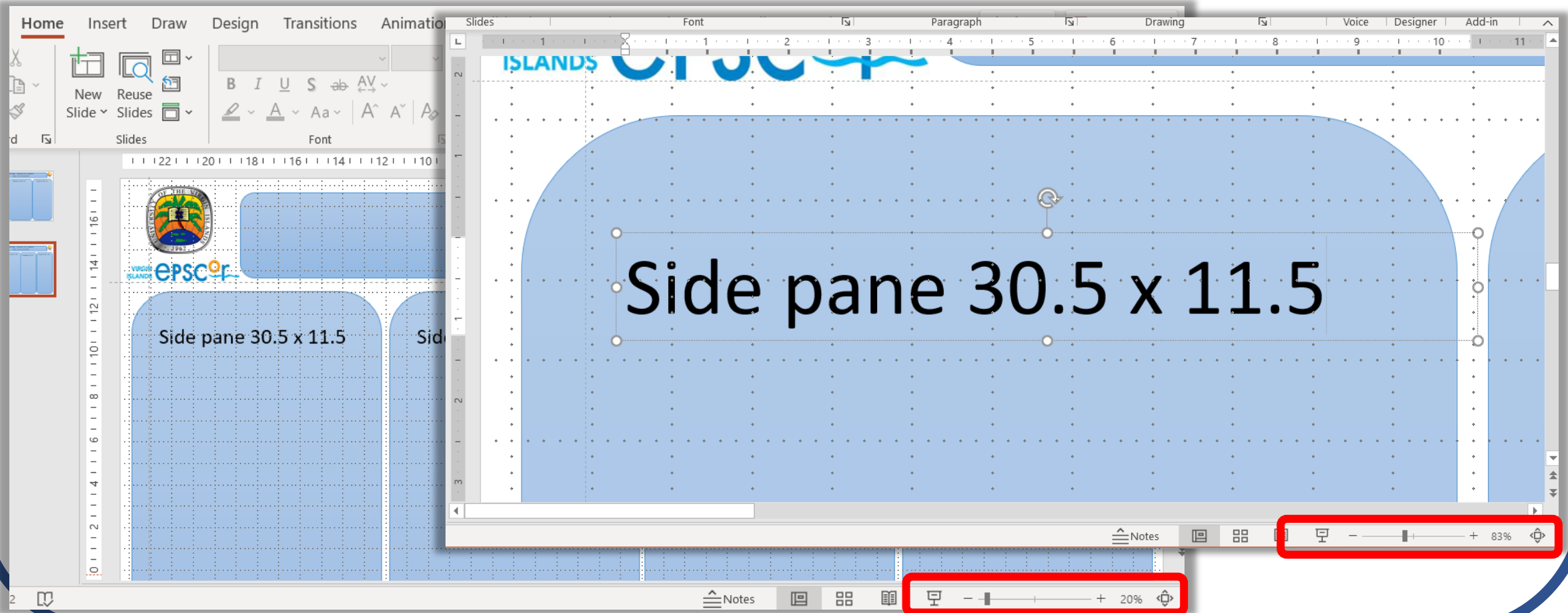
Slide these guides
to mark positions!

- Snap to Grid & Smart Guides



Useful Extras for Editing

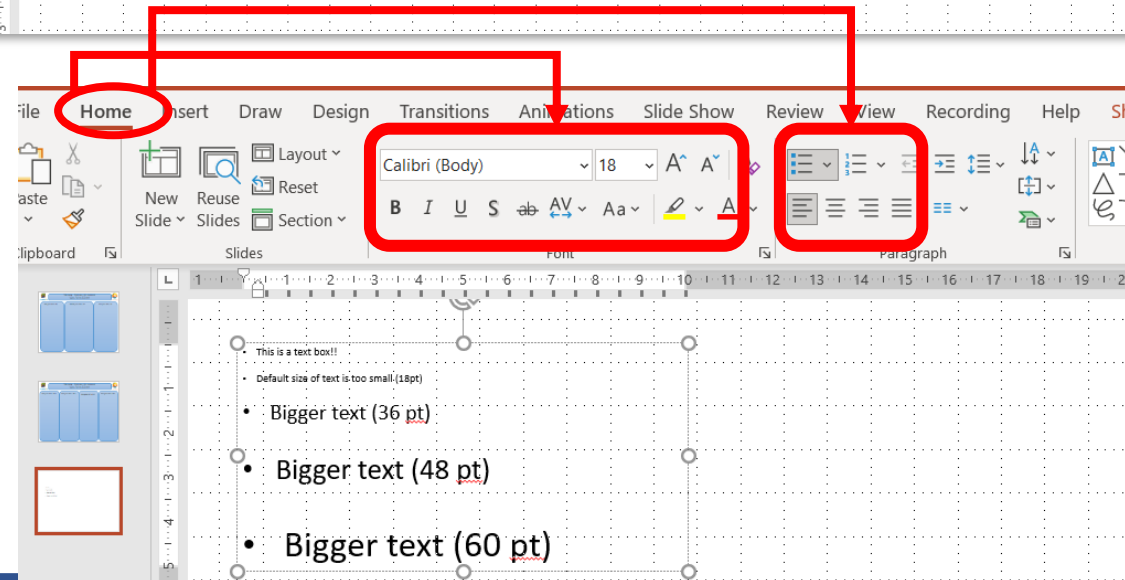
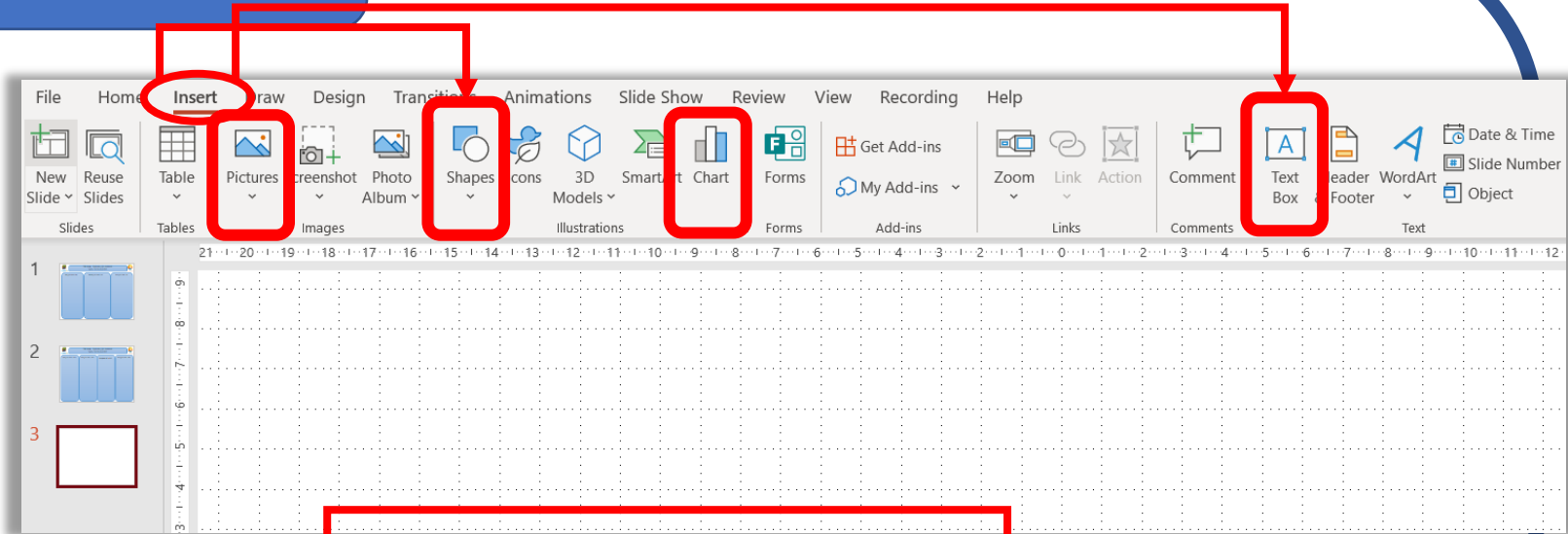
- Quick Zoom! *(To zoom at a location, select text box or item first.)*



Creating Academic Posters

Primary Editing Tools

- Insert -> Text Box
Shapes
- Insert -> Pictures
Chart
- Home -> Bullet List
- Home -> Font / Size
(use sizes 24-100)

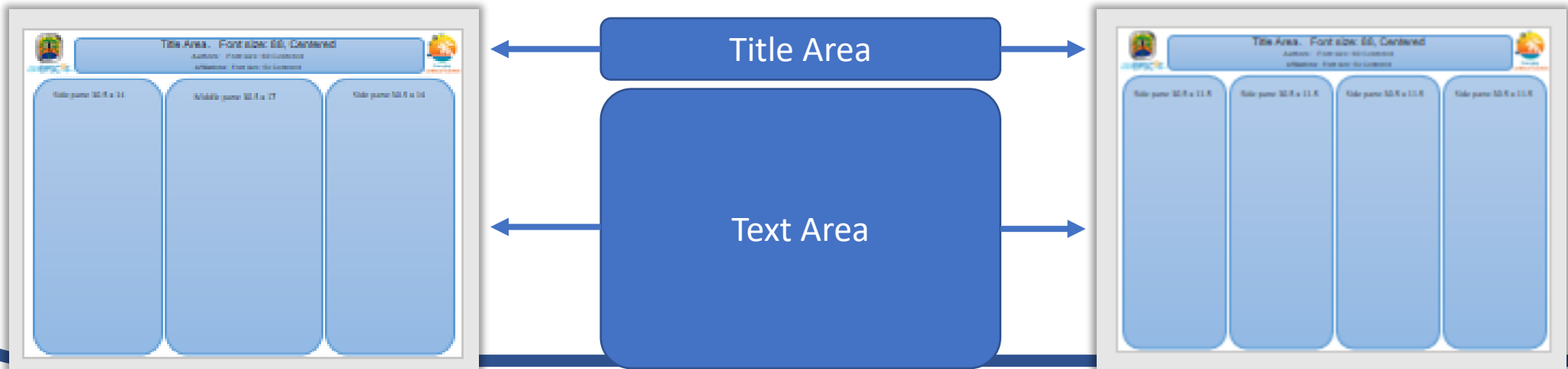


Creating Academic Posters

Initial Setup (*Dividing Space*)

Posters are usually divided into two parts:

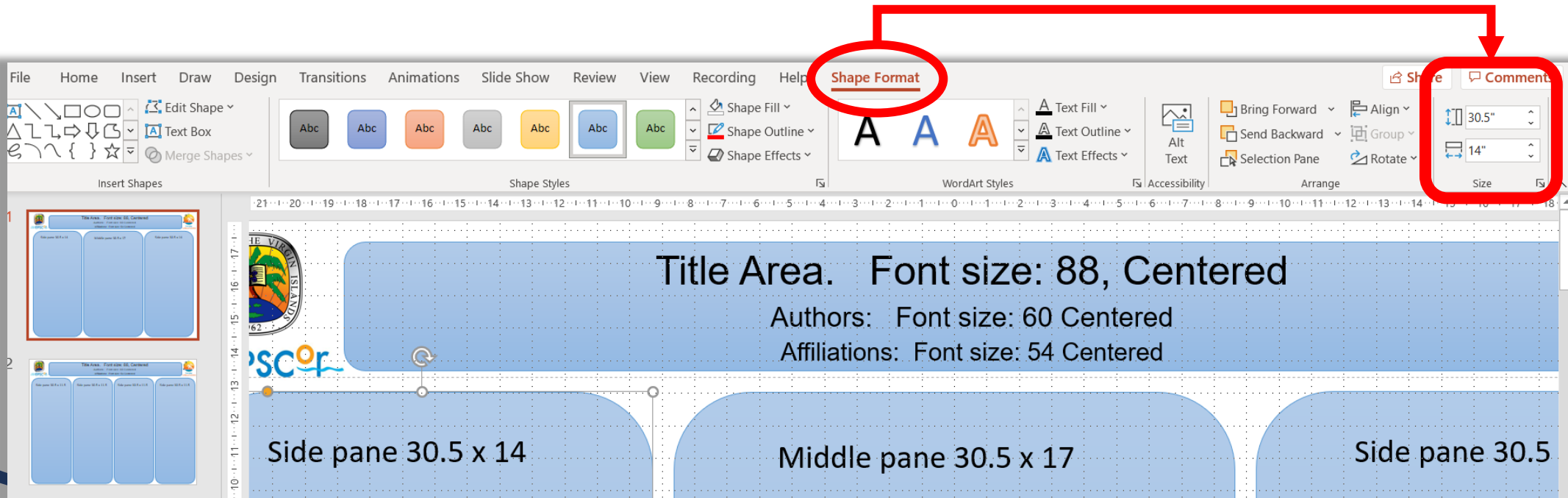
- **Title area** along the top of the poster
Poster Title, Author, Affiliation, Logos
- **Text area** filling the main poster
Divided into **three** or **four** columns



Creating Academic Posters

Initial Setup (*Dividing Space*)

- Before filling in the poster, mark the areas for different parts
(You may delete markings or set invisible when poster is done)
- Use Shape Format -> Size to make areas with matching sizes



Creating Academic Posters

Initial Setup (*Dividing Space*)

Title area \approx top 5 inches of poster

Text area in remainder (leave margins of at least 1 inch around text!)

For three column setup, usually the middle column is wider

For example,

Column 1 \approx 14 inches

Column 2 \approx 16 inches

Column 3 \approx 14 inches

Set column size using
Shape Format -> Size

Creating Academic Posters

Filling in Poster

Title area

- Title
 - 5-10 words long
 - \approx 88 – 100 pt font
 - States basic result
 - Use sentence capitalization
- Authors
 - \approx 66 – 80 pt font
 - Separate authors by tabs
- Affiliations
 - \approx 54 – 66 pt font
 - Group authors / affiliation with superscript

Creating Academic Posters

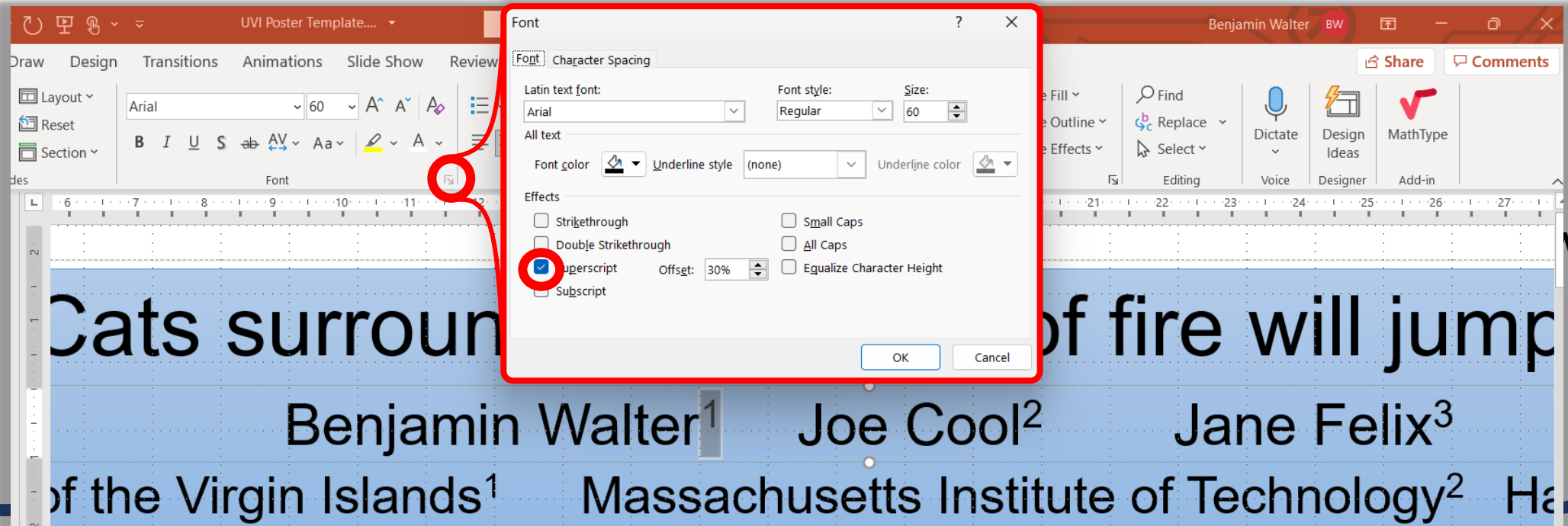
Filling in Poster

Title area

To get superscripts:

- use Font menu
- or key combination <ctrl> <shift> +

- Authors
 - \approx 66 – 80 pt font
 - Separate authors by tabs



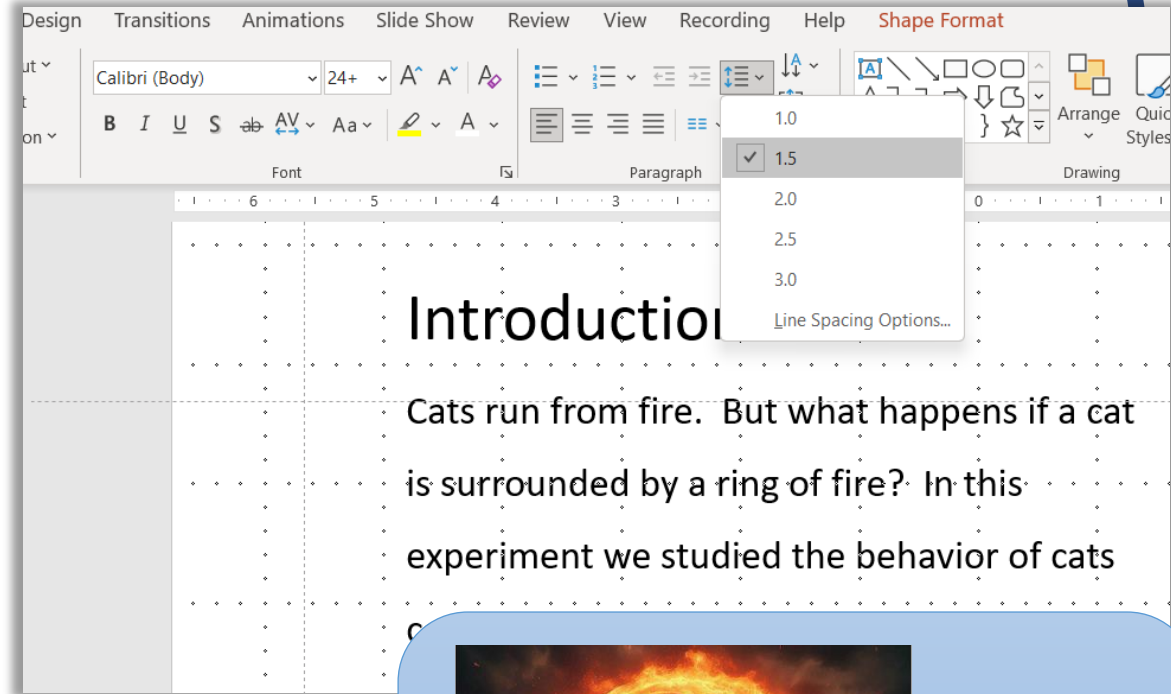
with

Creating Academic Posters

Filling in Poster

Text area

- 3-4 columns with boxes of text
 - Target word count ≤ 500
 - Headings $\approx 36 - 60$ pt font
 - Text $\approx 24 - 30$ pt font
 - Spacing should be 1.5 or 2
 - Use pictures / graphs whenever possible
- Pictures should be 300 dpi (not screenshots)



Creating Academic Posters

Filling in Poster

Text area

- 3-4 columns with boxes of text
- Target word count 300 – 800
- Headings \approx 36 – 60 pt font
- Text \approx 24 – 30 pt font
- Spacing should be 1.5 or 2
- Use pictures / graphs whenever possible

Pictures should be 300 dpi (not screenshots)

Text boxes for:

- Introduction
- Methods

Column 1

- Results

Column 2

- Conclusion
- Acknowledgements
- References

Column 3

Creating Academic Posters

Filling in Poster

Text area

- **Introduction** – “Why did I do this?”
- **Methods** – “How / what did I do?”
- **Results** – “What happened?”
- **Conclusion** – “Why did this happen?”
- **Acknowledgements** – “Who helped me?”
- **References** – “Where can you learn more?”
 - Include [QR codes](#) for links online

Main section!

Lots of graphs / tables / pictures in this part!

Creating Academic Posters

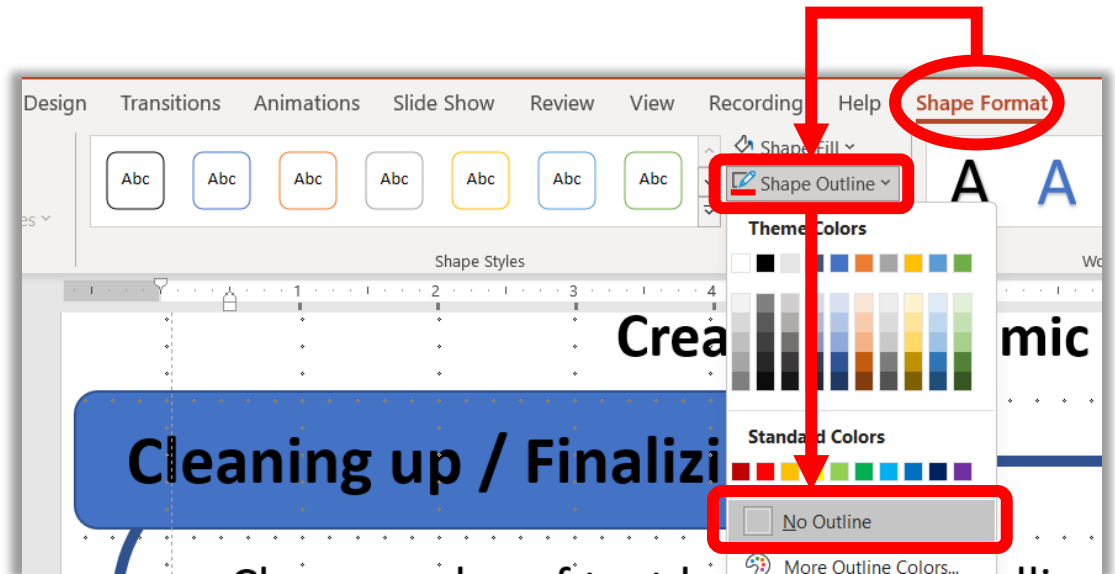
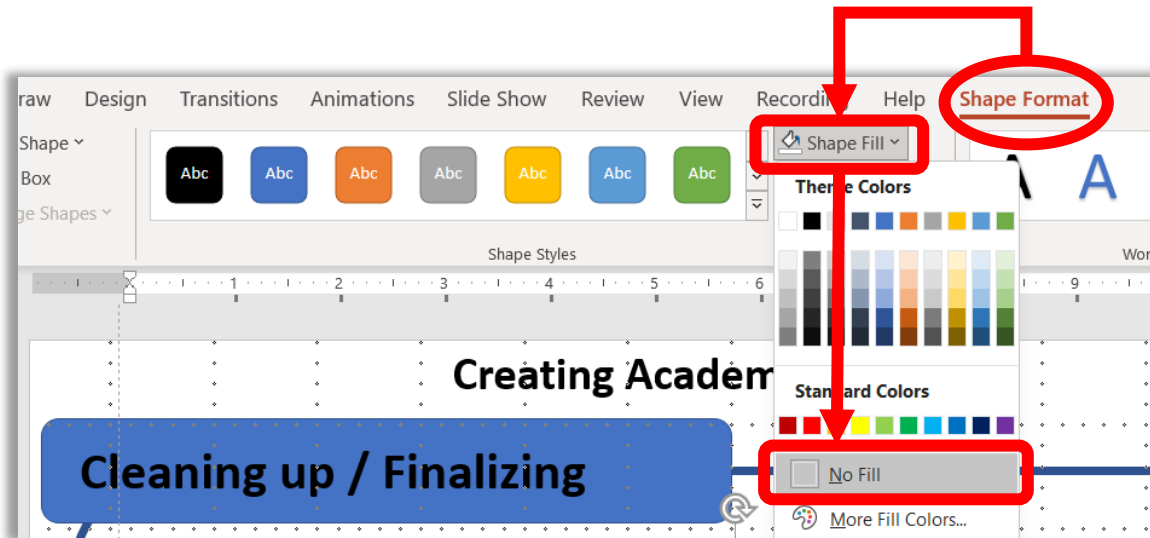
Style Notes

- Copying via clipboard (i.e. <ctrl>-c <ctrl>-v) may give low quality images
→ Using Insert->Picture is safer!
- Copying via clipboard for Excel graphs / tables is fine
- Copying via clipboard for text from Word is fine
- Target approximately 40% text, 30% images, 30% whitespace
→ Remove / simplify as much text as possible!
→ Use bulleted lists as much as possible!
- NEVER USE ALL CAPS!
- Use easy to read (sans serif) fonts
Arial MS Sans Serif Calibri

Creating Academic Posters

Cleaning up / Finalizing

- Change color of text box / make formatting guide boxes invisible
 - Use Shape Format -> Shape Fill and Shape Format -> Shape Outline
 - Set to “no fill” and “no outline” to make invisible



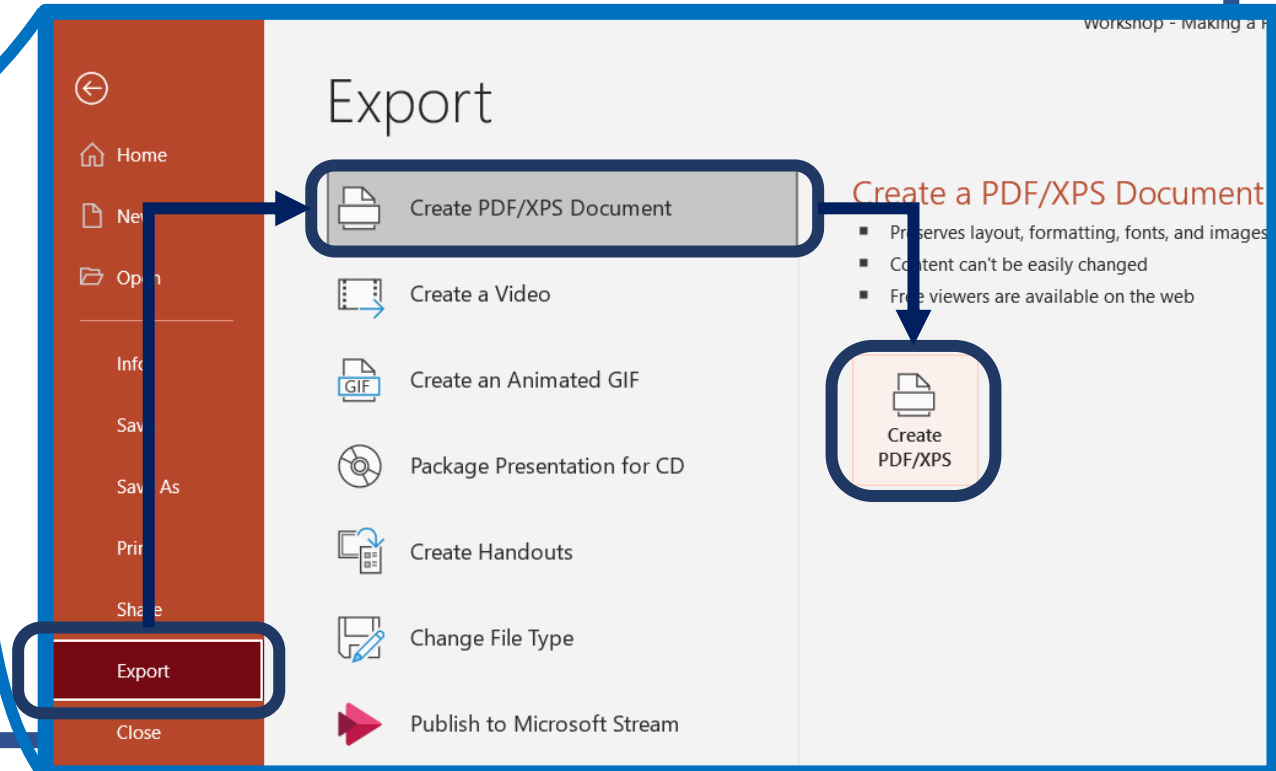
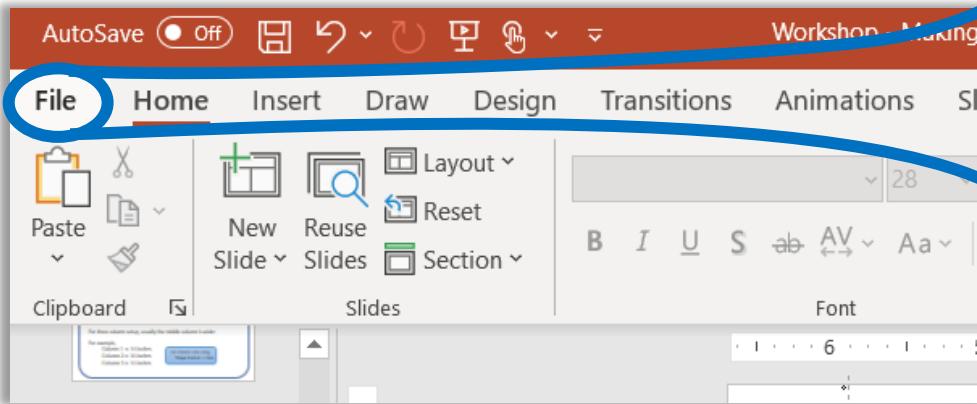
- Restrict to color palette of 2-4 colors
Monochrome, Analogous, or Complementary



Creating Academic Posters

Cleaning up / Finalizing

- When your poster is done, **export to PDF** for printing / transporting.
pptx files are NOT stable!
fonts and spacing may change when viewed on another computer!
- Select File -> Export -> Create PDF



Creating Academic Posters

Links



Sample UVI Poster Templates

<https://bit.ly/3VvvFMX>

PDF of These Slides

<https://bit.ly/4cawKin>



Sample Templates from ACS

<https://bit.ly/3VbG8vp>

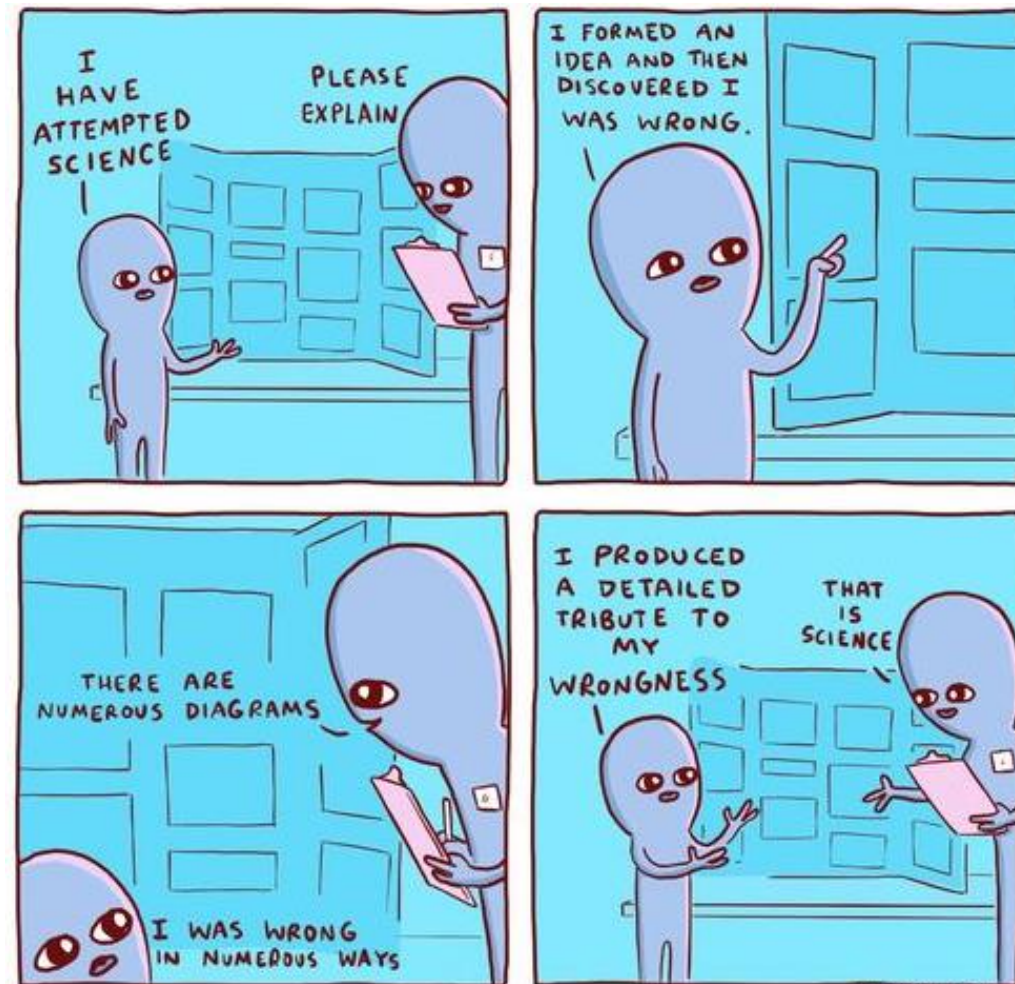
U.Cincinnati Poster Creation Guide

<https://bit.ly/3KxHps0>



QR Code Generator:

<https://www.qr-code-generator.com>



[Nathan W Pyle](#)

[Strange Planet](#)