Tips for Creating an Effective Poster

- A poster is a way to *visually* communicate your study to many people, and it should be adjusted based on your audience (e.g., general public, researchers in your field, HS students, etc.).
- You should consider your poster as a prop to use while you present your project to someone or a group of people. There should be plenty of information present, but don't use too much text (bullet points are your friends).
- Make sure that your poster is neat and is free of grammatical errors and typos. Prior to printing the final large poster, print out a smaller version of the poster and read it out loud. Correct the changes. Have a friend and your research mentor look it over to help find and correct errors.

General Tips for Poster Design

Organize your poster into blocks
- People will read your poster from left to right and from top to bottom. Sometimes complete blocks that are vertical columns work best and at other times a variety of wider blocks work best.

A good poster has lots of informative pictures, graphs, and figures (a picture is worth 1,000 words).
- Blank space can be used to highlight section breaks.
- Don't include a figure or a picture just to take up space. It should add to the person's understanding of the poster and help as you present your poster
- Make sure to label figures/pictures.

Figures and various graphics should dominate the poster
- Text should be used to augment the figures. Remember that it is a poster and not a paper.
- Show your audience your main points using pictures and brief sections of text (i.e., bullet points).
- Highlight your exciting or main points/conclusions by using bold text or larger font sizes.
- Use informative figure titles: "Temperature versus movement" is not as effective as "Crabs move slower when it is cold."
- Experimental methods might be better presented as a flowchart rather than described in text.
- Place figure/graphic captions directly below the figure/graphic.
- If you have bar graphs, color in all the columns. **Make sure all your axis labels are large enough to read from a distance!**
- A bulleted list of "Conclusions" works well in a poster.

Citation of Sources
- You should cite works in the narrative of your poster and make sure you have a section called "Literature Cited"where you use proper citation for your discipline.

Specific Tips for Constructing your Poster

1. Use Microsoft PowerPoint to generate your poster (template and examples on URSCO website).

2. Make the slides **landscape** with width of 48 inches and height 36 inches.

3. You are creating one giant slide for your poster. Here are particulars to using PowerPoint in this way:
   a. You need to type in all your text using the text box feature of PowerPoint. Your title will be created in one text box. Author, institutional affiliation and contact information will be created in one text box. The subtitle INTRODUCTION will be a text box. The actual text of the introduction will be another text box. Each title for a figure will be a text box, etc.
   b. Keep the poster background white otherwise text will not be as visible.
   c. You will have to zoom in/out as you work on your poster so that you can see the general layout and read the text when your are typing.
   d. You can cut and paste figures from Excel but don't be afraid to adjust the formatting when you do this. Make sure to use large fonts for axes and labels (at least 24) so that someone can read them from 3-6 feet away.
   e. You can cut/paste pictures with .jpeg extensions with no problems, but beware of pixilation. A picture might look great on the web or on your screen but once you put it on the poster and enlargen it to the appropriate size, it might look bad.
   f. Figures/pictures should be at least 5" x 7" in size.
   g. Here are *general recommendations* for **font sizes** for different parts of the poster
      i. Title: 60-75
      ii. Authors, Institution, Contact Information: 45-60
      iii. Subtitles (Introduction, Materials, and Methods, etc.): 36 bold
      iv. Main Text: 32. No smaller than 24 (depending on the font)
      v. Reference or Literature Cited can be smaller, usually 24, but no smaller than 18
   h. Make sure the author and presenter are clearly listed on the poster. Presenters are typically underlined in the author list. A picture of the presenter and/or research group is a very effective addition. People should be able to read your poster from 3-6 feet away.
      i. Capitals and lower-case words are easier to read THAN ALL CAPITALS
      ii. The font is important. Open round letters are easier to read than condensed letters

4. Make sure to include on your poster:
   a. Your name, your department, any co-author(s)/co-presenter(s), and your faculty mentor(s)'s name and department if different
   b. Current UNCG logo (can be downloaded at http://ure.uncg.edu/brandguide/?brandcat=university-logos)
   c. Acknowledgement of any financial support you have received for your work

5. Save your poster as a PowerPoint file. Your file name should include your last name and keyword/s from the poster title (e.g., Reilly_PeerModeling).

6. An undergraduate student may request one poster per project for free.