GENERAL POSTER GUIDELINES

The Basics:
- Plan Ahead! Prepare your content in advance using appropriate software.
- Assembling the poster in layout application is the "EASY" part.
- Consult conference guidelines, for dimensions and formats. 36" limit!
- Sketch a rough layout or design. Think visually!
- Content on poster should serve as talking points. Prompt interaction.
- Keep everything together! **Make a FOLDER on your workstation of choice and place ALL poster-related files inside.**
- Save often and back it up!

Setting Poster Size
- Smith College Science Center currently only supplies 36" rolls. 3-feet is constraining factor.
- In whatever layout software you are using change your document to **Landscape** orientation and set **Width** and **Height** to 48 and 36 inches respectively. Change these settings as needed. Consult conference guidelines.

  The above example would yield: a landscape, 48" wide x 36" high, OR 3x4-foot wide poster on our 36" paper rolls with about a 1" margin all around.

Pre-made templates available at: http://www.science.smith.edu/posters/resources/

Text Wrangling
- Try to keep text to a minimum.
- Use an image or graph to illustrate your point. "Image is worth a thousand words!"
- Text on a poster should mainly be there to describe or label what the images or data are demonstrating.
- Assemble/compile text in Word and/or other text editor (e.g., LaTeX)
- Select and copy text from source (e.g., Word).
- Copy text & Paste into layout program.
- Insert directly into Text Boxes. Arrange and resize text boxes as needed.
- Text boxes are the DEFAULT in Keynote and PowerPoint.

Fonts Types
- Which font to use? Recommend any san serif font (e.g., Helvetica, Arial).
- San serif fonts easier to read.
- Select the typeface that will be most used before adding any text.
- Be kind to your audience. DO NOT mix-and-match font types or sizes. Be consistent!
- Remember: You shouldn't have too much text anyway.

Font Sizes
- What font size is best?
- The average viewing distance is 4-6ft
- Be nice to your audience. Especially over 40 patrons. Prevent eye-strain and squinting.

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- Again - don't have too much text!
- Recommended Sizes:
    - Titles: 90-130 pt.
    - Sub-titles: 50-72 pt.
    - Body text: 36-48 pt.
    - Explanatory text; Figure captions: 24-36 pt.
- Your milage will vary depending on poster size!
- Select the typeface that will be most used before adding any text.

Bitmap Images
- Try to start with as high a resolution as you can.
- Edit image as needed in Photoshop or other image editing software. From the menubar go to Image/Image Size to adjust the size and resolution (pixels per inch) of your photo. See poster website for full explanation of dpi vs ppi.
- Save the image into your poster project folder (the same folder as your poster file). .psd, .tiff, and .jpg work nicely
- Insert, place or drag and drop your images into you poster.
- *TRY NOT CUT AND PASTE!*
- TRY NOT DRAW OR PLACE ANYTHING on your images once positioned in your poster.

Charts, Graphs, Excel Tables, ChemDraw, Igor, SPSS output, genetic data, etc...
- TRY NOT CUT AND PASTE!
- To place and edit the output from any program in your poster, you must create a PDF or postscript file by choosing File as the Destination in the Print Dialog Box.
- Depends on software and OS!!
- Select **Save as** File from the options list in the Print Dialog Box, and choose PDF, Postscript, or EPS Mac Standard Preview as the Format. Again depends on OS.
- Include all fonts if asked.
- Filter your graphics through Adobe Illustrator: While in Illustrator, choose File > Open and select the .pdf or .eps file you just created. This should open up in a new Illustrator window. Edit your graph, table, etc. as needed in this window. Then select all, group it, copy it, and paste it into the poster file.
- Alternatively, if your graph is perfect and it needs no editing you can directly insert it into your poster.
- Tip: Excel graphs default font is Geneva; change to Helvetica. Screen font vs. print font issue.
- Finally, it may be okay just CUT and PASTE?? Possible if you only have a couple of "simple" graphs.

Color Schemes & Color Usage
- Old dogma: No colored backgrounds! Ink is pricy!
- New dogma: If you must & advisor agrees to pay: 2-4x cost
- Please use color wisely
- Please NO background photos
- Use Color to also:
    - Help display information

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- Separate sections
- Highlight important points
- A good color scheme compliments the information, but does NOT distract or drowned out the information.

Proofing and test printing
- Before printing final version it is highly recommend to first print a test copy on a color laser printer (11x17; tabloid). To do this first save your poster document. Next return to the menu bar and under File > Print:
  - Click Page setup, then Continue, change Paper Size: to Tabloid; click OK
  - In Options section set Scaling to: **Fit to Page**.
  - Click Print
  - No need to save changes if asked
- Proof read your entire poster!
- Alternatively you can project your poster full screen at a computer lectern for proofing.

Final Version
- Need to fill out Printing Request Form (download from website)
- When all seems ready to print save or export your poster as a PDF file. Consult poster webpage (http://www.science.smith.edu/posters/layout/) to ensure poster size equals page size.
- Deliver final PDF file to departmental poster printing liaison.
  For your general poster printing information see:

  http://www.science.smith.edu/posters/printing/
  http://www.science.smith.edu/posters/liaisons/

Presenting your Poster
- Prepare a 1-2 minute elevator pitch summarizing your research.
- Less is more! Keep it simple.
- Practice or review your summary with your Advisor.

- Dress nice. Smile.
- Say: "Please let me know if you have any questions." -OR- "Let me know about your questions."
- Give your 1-2 minute elevator pitch summarizing your research. (depends on venue)
- Anticipate questions but do not say or volunteer anything else unless asked.