Poster Presentation format
- Poster presenters will be given the opportunity to upload their poster which will be accessible for viewing by all Research Day participants and all faculty members.
- Poster presenters will also be given the opportunity to present in a live/virtual/synchronous session in a virtual "room" with 5-10 other poster presenters.
- Each presenter or group of co-presenters will need to upload their presentation into a designated link, which will be sent via email confirmation at least one week prior to Research Day.

Poster Specifications
- Posters should be created as a 3:4 ratio PowerPoint slide and **saved as a .pdf document.** Since this will be online only, you can create it as any 3x4 ratio, landscape; the default PowerPoint Slide size will work for virtual presentation purposes. (Normally you would resize it to be 36"x48"if you were going to print the poster).
- Then, please resave the pdf as a **"reduced size"** pdf.
- Please create a poster file with a file size maximum of 3 MB.

Effective Poster Presentations Tips Sheet

General Info
- Posters should guide viewers through the basics of the study, freeing the presenter to focus on discussion of essential elements of the work
- Papers vs. Posters: **papers** present all the information, and audience is a person; **posters** present the most important information, the audience is people, and they allow for question-and-answer sessions and the exchange of ideas and information about research
- Always read the Instructions supplied by the event/meeting organizers; also, look at sites and the format for your discipline.

- Preparing a poster will take as much time as you let it; allocate time wisely and don't wait for the last minute since things can always go wrong. However, know when to quit fussing.
- Critical Attributes
    - Clarity (make it easy to understand so it can be grasped in one read)
    - Brevity (readers will tire quickly since they're not sitting so get your point across using as few words as possible without sacrificing clarity)
    - Simplicity (readers with many presentations to view don't want to get bogged down by overly complex ones)
    - Neatness (take care when assembling because looks are important)

Format

- Organization
    - Either 3 or 4 columns.
    - The columns do not need to be the same width.
    - Some prefer to use wider middle columns and narrower outside columns, etc.
    - The title will appear across the top.
    - A brief introduction (3-5 sentences) will appear at the upper left; some disciplines and conferences also ask for an abstract that will go before the introduction.
    - The conclusions or discussion will appear at the lower right. If you are including acknowledgements and references or literature cited, insert them after.
    - Materials, Methods, and Results will fill the remaining space.
    - Using a PowerPoint slide is a good way to design the poster & see the layout
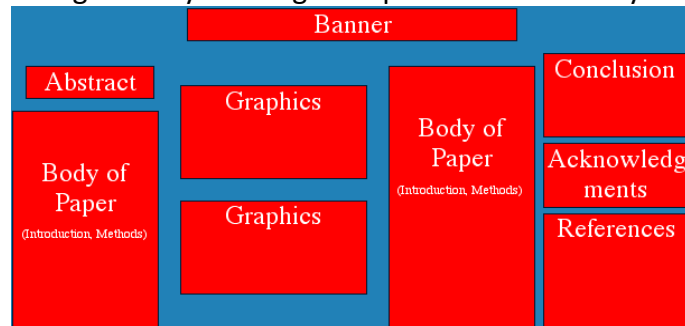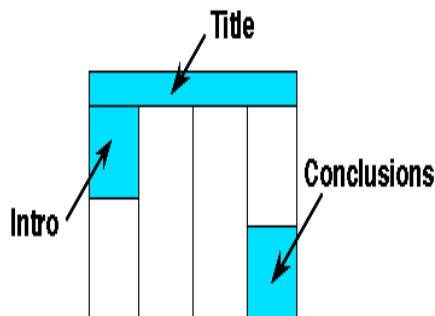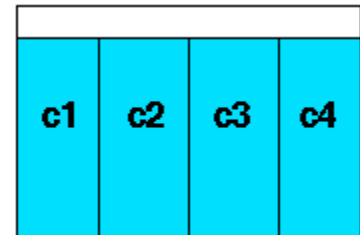
- Color and Background
    - Use a colored background to unify your poster
        - Muted colors or shades of gray are best; use more intense colors as borders or as emphasis
        - 2-3 related background colors will unify the poster
    - Colors can enhance the hues or contrast of photographs
        - Use light background with darker photos and dark background with lighter photos; use a neutral (gray) background to emphasize color in photos and a white background to reduce the impact of colored photos

- o Stick to using these 2-3 colors in a consistent pattern; use contrasting colors for readability and a professional look in the body
  - o Be aware of how the room's lighting will affect the colors
- Sequence and Flow
  - o Determine a logical sequence for the presentation material and organize into sections that people can follow; numbers can help sequence sections.
    - ▪ Readers should be guided from one section to the next
  - o Design the poster to address 1 central question; state it clearly in the poster and use discussion time with individuals to expand or expound on issues surrounding that central theme
    - ▪ Provide an explicit take-home message
    - ▪ Summarize implications and conclusions briefly and in user-friendly language
- Spacing
  - o Remember posters are primarily visual; the text serves to support graphics
    - ▪ A good format is about 20% text, 40% graphics and 40% empty space
    - ▪ When in doubt, rephrase text or delete it. (If necessary, keep chanting the mantra: There is *always* too much text. There is *always* too much text).
  - o Remove all material extraneous to the focal point of the poster
    - ▪ Excessive detail is not necessary; discuss these methods and data individually or in a handout.
  - o Use consistent spacing between each element of your poster and try to align corners along vertical and horizontal lines
- Visuals
  - o Self-explanatory graphics should dominate the poster but artful illustrations, luminous colors or exquisite computer-rendered drawings do not substitute for CONTENT
    - ▪ Use a minimal amount of text to supplement graphics
    - ▪ Use regions of empty space between elements to differentiate and accentuate these elements
    - ▪ Graphics should be easily visible from a minimum distance of 6 feet
  - o Try to find ways to show what was done; also, use schematic diagrams, arrows and other strategies to direct the visual attention
  - o Visual distractions increase fatigue and reduce the probability of viewers giving the poster a thorough read
  - o Remove all non-essential information from graphs and tables
    - ▪ Label data lines in graphs directly, using large type & color. Eliminate legends and keys. Lines in illustrations should be larger than normal. Use contrast and colors for emphasis
    - ▪ Use colors to distinguish different data groups in graphs; avoid using patterns or open bars in histograms
    - ▪ Colored transparency overlays are useful in comparing/contrasting graphic results

- o Use a border about 0.5 inches around each figure; border colors can be used to link related presentations of data
- Text
  - o Use active voice when writing the text (*The data demonstrates*)
  - o Delete redundant references and filler phrases, such as *see Figure* (Since figures will have explanatory captions, there is no need to label with *Figure*).
  - o Use short sentences, simple words, and bullets to illustrate discrete points; avoid using jargon, acronyms or unusual abbreviations
  - o Have the left edges of materials in a column aligned and double-space the text
  - o Body text should be large enough to read easily from 6 feet away
    - ▪ Section headings: 36 point font, Boldface
    - ▪ Supporting text: 20-26 point font, boldface if appropriate
    - ▪ Keep narrative details brief if they must be included; 18 point font
    - ▪ One option is to use a larger size for Conclusion text and a smaller size for Methods; the References section may be smaller, 12-14 point font
  - o Be consistent with fonts; choose 1 and use it throughout; use simple, easy to read fonts like a *sans serif* style (Helvetica, Ariel, etc)
    - ▪ Good font options include Helvetica, Arial, Geneva, Times Roman, Palatino, Century Schoolbook, Courier and Prestige; fonts without embellishments are easiest to read
  - o Use boldface, underlining or color for emphasis; restrained use of large type and/or colored text is the most effective means of emphasizing particular points.

Parts of the Poster

- **NOTE:** Different disciplines have different standards for poster layout, section headers, etc. Below is a basic poster layout, such as for the social sciences. Check with your faculty advisor if you have questions.
- **Title:** contains title of work, authors' names, institutional affiliations, and poster number if applicable.
  - o Make it descriptive and big
    - ▪ Should be readable from 15-20 feet away to lure viewers in
  - o Use first (and last) names for authors; middle initials and titles are seldom necessary but can be used if space permits. City names, or even states, often may be dropped from the institutional affiliations. Use abbreviations where possible.
  - o Use boldface and all-caps for the title itself; use boldface and mixed upper/lowercase for authors' names; use plain text, no boldface, and mixed upper/lowercase for affiliations.
    - ▪ If applicable, use boldface for the poster session number (number assigned by the organizing committee).
  - o Final size of letters in title should be about 1.5-2 inches tall (96 point size, 48 points enlarged by 200% when printed)
    - ▪ What can be smaller: authors' names (72 points or 1-1.5 inches); affiliations (36-48 points or 0.5-0.75 inches)

- ▪ If applicable, poster session number should be printed separately at about 96 point size. Is typically placed in top of title banner in left, right or center.
- **Abstract:** Identifies what is being studied, how you're studying it, and variables; hypothesis, findings
  - o Bare essentials of the introduction, methods, results, and discussion in less than 200 words
  - o First thing reader sees, last thing you write
- **Introduction:** Questions raised and answered by previous research; question asking and why
  - o Background necessary to bring readers up-to-date on topic
  - o Establish research's importance
- **Methods:** Present only the basics
  - o Use brief descriptive terms for procedures
  - o Include as related to your project: Demographics of subjects, Measurement (e.g. repeated vs. independent), Design (e.g. between vs. within), Psychometric tests used in experiment
- **Data and Results:** Use graphic or visual elements (tables, charts, pictures, graphs)
  - o Include descriptive label for each graphic; Below graphic include brief written description of what graphic is and interpretation of its data
  - o Present data collected & results of any analyses performed (no discussion though)
- **Conclusion/Discussion:** Highlight: what found and its importance, parallels & discrepancies with previous research and theory, direction of future research
  - o Be concise and clear
  - o Discuss findings & present what concluded
- **Acknowledgements:** Professionals and research assistants outside the research group that contribute to study; brief; not a requirement
- **References/Literature Cited:** same as in paper
  - o Make sure all citations in text refer to something listed here; also make sure each listing here is cited in poster
  - o Different from a bibliography that contains more references

Other tips
- At the session
  - o Bring a copy of your original paper for reference; prepare handouts that highlight key points of research
  - o Do not wander away from your poster during the session; be available for discussion
  - o Take a roll of double-stick tape to the meeting; generally don't entrust baggage handlers with the poster (unintentional folds, creases, etc)
- Vary the size and spacing of the poster sections to add visual interest but do so in moderation

- General Writing Tips
  - Do not use contractions
  - Use only standard and commonly used abbreviations (such as i.e. and e.g.)
  - Use Spellcheck and Proofread
  - May justify all text for a neater look