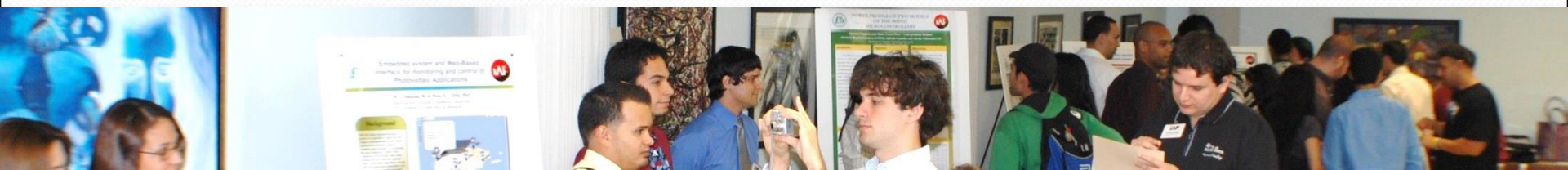
Guidelines for October IAP Poster Session

Dr. Manuel Jiménez

September 20, 2018

Industrial Affiliates Program



Outline

- What is a Poster
- Message and Content
- Planning
- Using Design Elements
  - Text
  - Color
  - Graphs
- Presenting Your Poster
- IAP Template
  - Preparing your poster

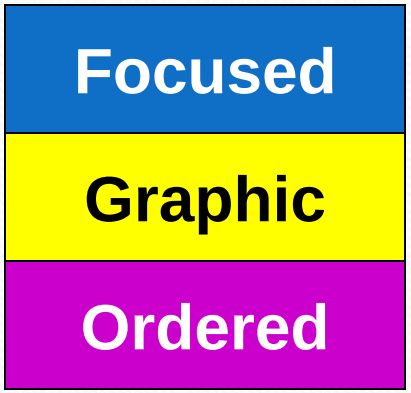
Poster Session

- Provides a forum to show off your work and discuss your research in an informal setting
  - Allows to engage in conversation with colleagues
  - Communicates your work across many people
- Your poster serves as a
  - Source of information
  - Conversation starter
  - Summary and advertisement of your work
- If a poster is not well prepared, it will receive no attention

An Effective Poster

Hess et.Al. [1] list three characteristics of effective posters:

- Focused
  - Focused on a single message
- Graphic
  - Let graphs and images tell the story
  - Use text sparingly
- Ordered
  - Keeps the sequence well-ordered and obvious



Source: [1]

The Poster Message

- Know your message
  - Define your message before you start
  - Convey a clear message
- Support your message with images and short blocks of text
  - If it doesn't reinforce your message, *leave it out*!!
- The message: What is the *one* thing you want your audience to learn?
  - Focus on your message throughout the poster

Who is your Audience?

- Three categories of readers
  - People in your field of specialization
  - People related to your field
  - People in unrelated fields

- Your poster must address them all
  - **Provide Context**: Big picture and problem importance
  - **Use Plain Language**: Make it accessible to everyone
  - **Interpret your Findings**: Meaning and relevance of your results

Poster Content

- Explain why your work is important
  - Background and Motivation
- Describe the Objective of your work
  - What drives your work? (Hypothesis)
  - What does it add to current knowledge?
- Explain your Methods and Plan
  - A cognitive map becomes handy
- Expectations, Preliminary Work, Schedule…
  - What are the most important aspects of your research you want to emphasize?

Planning Your Poster

- Create an outline of the content you plan to present
  - Fill sections with short paragraphs and bulleted or numbered lists
- Do not include lengthy paragraphs in your poster
  - Would you read an all-text poster? (Probably not)
- Use graphical information as much as possible
  - “A picture is worth a thousand words”
  - Do not overwhelm readers with complicated graphs and tables
- Do not overcrowd your poster
  - The 40-20-40 rule:

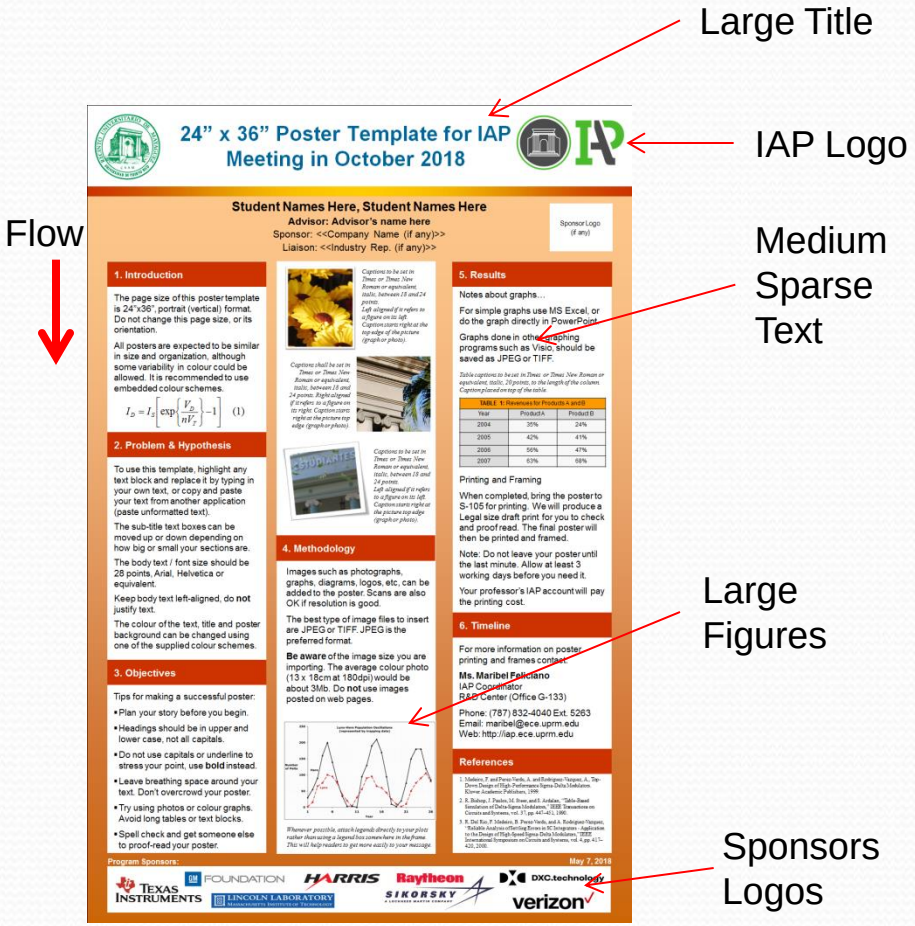
    $P = 40\%G + 20\%T + 40\%E$
- Use space wisely
  - Adhere to poster formats and rules

Overall Design (1/2)

- Divide your content into modular components
  - Each component placed in its own “box”
  - Use columns to organize your flow of ideas
- Maintain the flow of ideas throughout the poster
  - Story telling style
- Keep your messages simple and to the point
  - The fine details are to be given by you in person
- Delete anything that is not essential
  - Reduce the clutter and avoid verbosity

Overall Design (2/2)

- Design your poster in small components
  - Visually group related elements on the board
    - Color
    - Position
    - Lines
- Arrange poster elements to keep a logical visual flow
  - Top to bottom
  - Left to right



Software Tools

- The right software can simplify your poster preparation process tremendously
  - **Power Point**
  - Open Office
  - Latex
  - Corel Draw
  - PageMaker
  - FrameMaker

- Use program features to ease the poster creation

Presenting Text

- Minimize the use of text
- Create a design that can be read quickly
  - Places visual emphasis on the most important parts
  - Use large, easy-to-read fonts
- Text set in a large font
  - 16 pt minimum, 30 to 60 pt preferred
  - Select a larger, bold font for headings (possibly in multiple sizes if you have more than one level of headings)
  - Select a smaller font for details and footnotes that are not essential for understanding
  - Left justify your text
- Don't forget to spell check and proof read your text!

Presenting Graphics

- A picture is worth a thousand words
- Graphics are excellent tools for explaining procedures, describing equipment, or summarizing results
  - Avoid 3D graphs unless is for 3D data
- Use graphs, flow-charts, photographs, and diagrams to illustrate your poster
  - Create visual interest
  - Allow people to gain a quick understanding of your work

Using Color

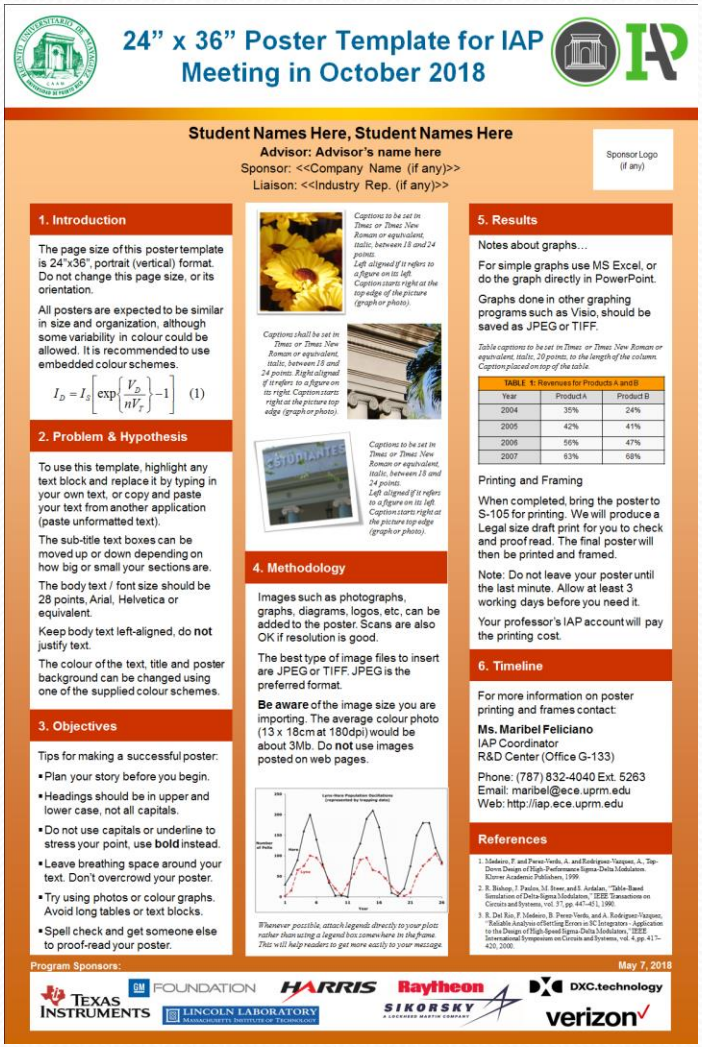
- Color: an excellent tool for brightening up your poster
  - Visually group elements
  - Draw attention to the most important elements
  - Makes graphs &diagrams easier to read & understand
- Use color carefully and with a purpose
  - Use it for communicating information
  - Select a color palette and use them consistently
  - Avoid using more than two or three colors
  - Use light backgrounds with dark text and lines
  - A poster is a scientific instrument, not art

Presenting Your Poster

- Go to the poster session ready to talk to a lot of people
  - Opportunities for you to tell other people about your work
  - Opportunities for you to get new ideas that might improve your work
  - If people seem interested in what you are doing, engage them in conversation
    - Job interview – resume seller
  - Think ahead of time about key questions you might get asked

IAP Poster Template

- Introduction
  - Background & Motivation
  - Importance of your work
- Identify the problem
  - What is your hypothesis?
- Objectives
- Methodology
- Preliminary results
- Timeline
- References



Summary Ideas (1/2)

- It takes time to prepare a poster
  - Plan ahead and start early
- A poster is a visual means of communication!
  - Exploit visual effects efficiently
- Follow the instructions for dimensions and structure
- A poster is not a manuscript on a notice board
  - Do not include an abstract
- Less is better than more: Keep it simple
- Do not lose your message in too much text or background
- This is a scientific rather than an artistic exercise
  - Use color sparingly

Summary Ideas (2/2)

- Your poster should be able to be viewed in your absence
  - Make it self-explanatory
- Graphics increase the effectiveness of the poster
  - "A picture is worth 1000 words".
  - Do not overwhelm audience with complicated graphs and tables
- A good formula for the layout is the 40-20-40 rule:
  - 40% graphics + 20% text + 40% empty space
- Attract audience attention by using a large title font size
  - Your poster should be readable at a distance of 1.8 meters or 6 feet!
- Use short sentences and bullets in your text
  - Focus on your message

Contacts

- **Ms. Maribel Feliciano**
  IAP Administrative Assistant
  IRISE CID (CID-201)
  Ph: (787)832-4040 Ext. 5263
  Email: maribel@ece.uprm.edu
  Web: http://iap.ece.uprm.edu

- **Dr. Raul Torres**
  IAP Director
  Electrical & Computer Engr. Dept. (S-705)
  Ph: (787)832-4040 Ext. 5837
  Email: raul_e.torres@ece.uprm.edu

- Poster Template:
  http://ece.uprm.edu/~mjimenez/slides/IAP_poster_template.ppt
- This Presentation:
  http://ece.uprm.edu/~mjimenez/slides/IAP_poster_talk.pdf

Planning & Logistic

- Poster Session
  - Place: Colegio de Ingenieros Mayagüez
  - Date and Time: Thursday Oct. 4 from 10:30 AM to 3:00PM
  - Breakfast & Lunch at Luch Room Colegio de Ingenieros
- Poster Printing
  - Sent to both: victor.asencio@upr.edu & fernando.aria@upr.edu
    - Office at LARSIP, R&D Center Room-221, Ph: 787-832-4040- 5295, 5299
  - **Due on or before Tue. Oct. 2 @ 11:59AM**
  - Pickup at CID-221 on Wed. Oct. 3 from 8:30AM – 4:15PM
- Poster Mounting
  - Oct. 3 from 3:00 – 4:30 PM in Colegio de Ingenieros Mayagüez
  - Poster Mounting Order at IAP web page: http://ece.uprm.edu/iap/
  - Contact & Logistic: Ms. Maribel Feliciano (maribel@ece.uprm.edu)

References

[1] Hess, Tosnei, and Liegel, “Creating Effective Poster Presentatons”, North Carolina State Univ., available at www.ncsu.edu/project/posters, last retrieved Oct. 2012

[2] UPJ Space, “Guidelines for Poster Preparation”, Univ. of Pittsburg, available at www.pitt.edu/~etbell/upj-space/PosterGuide.htm, last retrieved Oc. 2012

[3] School of Chemical Engineering and Advanced Materials, “Poster Presentation of Research Work”, Newcastle University, available at lorien.ncl.ac.uk/ming/dept/Tips/present, last retrieved Oct. 2012

[4] Miller, Johnson, and Weaver, “Expanded guidelines for Giving a Poster Presentation”, American Society of Primatologists, available at www.asp.org/education/howto_onPosters.html, last retrieved Oct. 2012