

APPENDIX G

Oral Poster Presentation Assignment

Task Overview

As part of our Research Showcase, students will design an oral poster presentation about their research project that includes a poster and a 2-3 minute oral “pitch” they will deliver to people walking around during the Showcase (i.e., other students, faculty, staff, administrators, and so on).

Objectives

- To adapt your research to a different rhetorical situation (audience, purpose, context, media, genre) and synthesize your research findings into a cohesive presentation.
- To gain experience presenting scholarly material to a professional audience.
- To develop and hone writing, editing, and design skills.
- To learn how to modulate information to various audiences.
- To encourage the scholarly exchange of ideas in a setting used in professional conferences and meetings.

Background

Poster presentations are often used at professional conferences and meetings as a way for scholars to share information and showcase their research. Unlike a slide show or verbal presentation, a poster session allows the audience to study another researcher’s project in greater depth, often discussing it with the presenter one on one. It also provides an engaging, interactive alternative to oral readings of papers. Collectively, your poster presentations will help to educate Baylor students, faculty, staff, and administrators about research in writing studies.

Preparing an Oral Poster Presentation

There are three aspects to consider when preparing for the oral poster presentation: (1) poster content, (2) poster layout, design, and logistics, and (3) the oral poster presentation.

1. Poster Content

To spark conversation about your project, your poster must include:

- Your project title
- Your name and university
- All parts of the IMRaD format, including introduction/background, research question, methods, results, and significance – to you, to the field, or to other specific groups

Your poster also might include:

- Pictures, graphs, images, or digital content from the DALN
- An explanation of your interest in the question
- A statement of how the work relates to your major/interests/goals
- Next steps or ideas for future research
- Acknowledgements of people, organizations, or groups that helped you

An effective poster should:

- Tell a story
- Meet the goals and purposes you have
- Initiate discussion
- Command attention
- Stand alone
- Convey the amount of work put into the project

2. Poster Design, Layout, and Logistics

For the showcase, design a tri-fold poster. Think of the poster as three panels but also as a single unit (the same way you might think of the inside of a brochure). Posters are most effective when they mix visuals

and text, include plenty of white space, and guide the reader through the material with a logical organization. Here are some tips for planning your poster:

- a. Brainstorm what content you want to include in your presentation: What could be presented visually? In writing? Orally?
- b. Sketch out your poster on a regular piece of paper. You don't need to include all the text and visuals; instead, draw and label blocks to represent chunks of information. Experiment with different orientations for your poster. You'll fine-tune the visual design later.
- c. When you have a general layout you like, start working on the detailed content. Draft your text and create your visuals. Give yourself time to revise and edit.
- d. Test the visual layout of your content. Spread out your text chunks and visuals on the floor. Can you read the text from a standing position or does it need to be larger? Ask a friend or roommate if the organization makes sense to them. Have them talk through how they read the materials. Ask them what questions they have, and try to answer their questions.

How to Prepare your Poster Presentation

- Choose a clear organizational method.
- Clearly identify and label each section. Provide a concise summary of the most important points or findings. Don't try to explain everything.
- Determine what information, pictures, graphs, and so on you will use to illustrate your points.
- Lay out your poster to capture and keep the audience's interest.
- Prepare an outline including your major points. Make notecards if necessary.

Guidelines to Enhance Poster and Poster Session Experience

- Type or print words and/or images on the poster; do not draw them by hand.
- Make your poster visually appealing by being simple, yet bold; leaving plenty of white space between sections and images; enlarging tables, graphs, or photos to show pertinent details clearly; and using color to add emphasis and clarity, but choosing colors carefully.
- Place the title prominently on the poster.
- Make text and captions large enough to read at a distance (while walking by and from a distance).
- Display self-explanatory materials, freeing you for discussion.
- Have several different people review your poster prior to printing.
- Leave enough time for printing and affixing materials to your poster.
- Consider how your poster will be displayed at the event. Does the poster stand up on its own? Will you need an easel? How will you transport the poster?

3. Oral Presentation

Prepare a 2-3 minute oral "pitch" to present to people who visit your poster. This pitch should include descriptions of "What" and "So what?": what did you do/learn and why is it important? This pitch should be well-rehearsed and should be able to be modulated depending on who stops by your poster. For someone with little or no knowledge on the subject, you might need to include background information or use lay terms rather than technical terms, but for an expert in the field, you would need to modulate this talk to perhaps include less background information and to make use of technical terms to demonstrate your knowledge of the field. Remember that you did the research and you are the expert in your own project. Be confident, dress sharply, act professionally, and enjoy the poster session experience!

Here are some tips you should incorporate into your presentation:

- Memorize your pitch but be able to modulate it on a basic level to different audiences.
 - Filter terminology for a discipline-specific audience (someone not familiar with your discipline/topic).
 - For field-specific audience, give less background, elaborate on details; major implications, next steps, what you learned, etc.
- Summarize the most salient parts of each section of the poster.

- Maximize understanding and memorability.
- Facilitate discussion with your audience; ask questions; engage them.
- Don't read the poster to the visitor.
- Don't nervously fidget (this includes fiddling with your hair, playing with your keys or loose change, adjusting your jewelry, or clicking a laser pointer).
- Anticipate questions and answer them effectively.
- Use your body as part of presentation tool: eye contact, gesturing, nodding, etc.

Submission Information

1. **Poster:** Please take photos of your finished poster and submit it to Canvas.
2. **Pitch:** Submit your script to Canvas.
3. **Presentation:** Please have someone take a photo of you standing in front of your poster during the Research Showcase. Post picture to Canvas.

Evaluation

See attached rubric for the evaluation criteria.

Resources for Poster Presentations

Consult the following sites for help in planning/organizing your poster.

- **“Writing Guides: Poster Sessions,”** Colorado State University:
<http://writing.colostate.edu/guides/speaking/poster/>
- **“Creating Effective Poster Presentations,”** North Carolina State University:
<http://www.ncsu.edu/project/posters/index.html>
- **“The Basics of Poster Design,”** Washington NASA Space Grant Consortium:
http://www.waspacegrant.org/for_students/student_internships/wsgc_internships/posterdesign.html
- **“Designing Effective Posters,”** Jeff Radel:
http://www.kumc.edu/SAH/OTEd/jradel/Poster_Presentations/PstrStart.html
- **“Poster Presentations,”** Gary Ritchison, Eastern Kentucky University:
<http://people.eku.edu/ritchisong/posterpres.html>
- **“Poster-Making 101,”** Brian Pfohl, <http://abacus.bates.edu/~bpfohl/posters/>
- **Poster Presentation Templates:**
 - http://www.posterpresentations.com/html/free_poster_templates.html
 - <http://undergraduateresearch.buffalostate.edu/poster-templates>

About the CCCC UR Poster Sessions

Since its inception at the 2012 CCCC, the Undergraduate Researcher Poster Session has served to showcase the field's premier undergraduate researchers and their projects. In addition, the Undergraduate Researcher Poster Session aims to accomplish the following goals:

- to encourage undergraduate participation in the annual convention by providing a site for scholarly exchange;
- to encourage undergraduate participation in the profession from students contemplating further education and careers in rhetoric and composition and related fields;
- to encourage undergraduate participation in CCCC, thereby cultivating the next generation of members and potential leaders of the organization;
- to extend the organization's diversity across various demographic categories.