Office of Undergraduate Research Conference Poster Creation Tips

Download a blank UWM Poster Template (44" x 36") from our website: uwm.edu/our/poster-creation

Planning:
- Talk to your research mentor about your poster topic *BEFORE* you begin and throughout your creation process
- Create small preliminary sketches of the layout of your poster (11" x 8.5")
- Collect/create relevant images for your poster

PowerPoint Basics:
- UWM Logo: Must remain visible and unobstructed in the top left corner of your poster
- Arrange Tool: use the drop-down options in this tool to align, group, and adjust the layering of objects on your poster
- Text Boxes: create bordered, non-bordered, transparent or color-filled text boxes that reflect your posters design theme
  - Create a text box using the Shapes tool: Shapes can be converted into a text box by clicking right-clicking the shape and selecting "Edit Text" from the menu
- Ruler, Gridlines & Guides: Excellent aides for the alignment and placement of objects in your poster
- Charts & SmartArt: Create charts and diagrams to visually communicate information

Poster Format:
- Layout: Create a Design that Draws an Audience:
  - Poster should read from top-left to bottom-right and include:
    - Project Title
    - Your Name(s)
    - Your Research Mentor's Name(s)
    - School, College and/or Department
  - Maintain a 1 inch margin around the edges of the poster
  - Use colors to create a visual hierarchy within your design
  - Avoid clutter! Negative or white spaces create visual rest areas throughout your work

- Text Sizes & Types
  - Use fonts that are easy to read like **Helvetica** and **Arial**
  - Project Title: 100 - 150 pts. (readable from 5-10 feet away)
  - Content Areas: 24 - 36 pts. (readable from 2-5 feet away)
  - Textbox headings: help to guide your viewer through your poster
  - Serif & Sans Serif Fonts: Serif Fonts (like **Times New Roman**) are great in data & heavy text areas, and
  - Sans Serif Fonts (like **Arial**) are great for titles and headings
  - Avoiding hard to read decorative and scripted font styles like ALGERIAN and *Edwardian Script*
  - **Make it READABLE!** Use bulleted and numbered lists to make your poster easy to understand

Colors:

- Use colors that are "easy on the eyes", neutral colors work best
- Use high contrasting foreground and background colors, e.g. white text on black background
- Avoid distracting background and font colors (hot pink background with green text---OUCH!)

DON'T DO THIS TO YOUR VIEWERS!!

Images:

- **Whenever possible, create and use your own images!**
- Complex images should be at least 300 ppi
  - Scan images at 300 ppi
- Web images often have low resolutions (72 ppi). **AVOID** if the image appears fuzzy or distorted on screen
- Image Clarity: when in doubt, zoom in on the image at 100%. If it looks distorted or fuzzy on your screen, it will print that way!
- To preserve image proportions while resizing, hold down the "SHIFT" key while dragging a corner point
- Caption images to increase poster readability and viewer comprehension
- Cite all images attained from outside sources

UWM EdTech Funding & Poster Printing:

- Students may receive one free poster print, per year, through UWM EdTech funding
- When ready to submit for printing, save poster as a .pdf file
- Submit your poster to Tamara Long at talong@uwm.edu if you would like the OUR to coordinate the printing of your poster

General Tips:

- Make your poster is visually appealing with colors, graphics and overall organization
- Limit your text! Visually express ideas whenever possible!
- You have a short period of time to grab a viewer's attention, so make sure your information is to the point!
- Feel free to bring additional take-away materials for your audience like business cards and informative handouts

Have Fun Creating!