Thoughts and Tips on How to Make a Research/Creative Poster

What are the poster specifications?

- Generally, posters are 3 feet tall x 4 feet wide. Sometimes poster can be 4 feet tall x 6 feet wide (this is very large and less common). The boards that are available at ICRU festivals are set up for landscape, not portrait style, posters.

- If you already have a printed poster from another event, there is no need to print another one, unless you want to. The poster is supposed to be a visual aid, not where visitors will get the bulk of the information. If there are few things that aren’t current or updated, for FURF/SURF/RIC, it usually isn’t a problem.

- Should include your name (with additional authors, mentors, research department area(s), and institution. You should also include the logo for the University of Iowa, the logo for ICRU (if we are funding you), and any other organizations who are contributing significantly to your work/making it possible.

What other kinds of visual presentations can I have?

- We are open to a variety of visual presentations. You can use handheld tablets or other flat visuals that would fit on the poster board. We have even had musicians play some of their creative work.

- We just ask that you have something to put on the board that tells visitors at least a little bit about what you’re doing.

- Check out this “Basics of Poster Design” for poster design ideas.

What about printing?

- Many students ask where to print their posters. Contact your mentor to discuss printing options and costs. ICRU is unable to sponsor funding for printing posters for SURF and FURF.

- UI Printing and Mailing Services can print in house and they will deliver posters to a campus mailing address (usually your research mentor’s office). Everything is submitting online and they accept University IDs, cash, checks, UI requisitions, and “m-numbers” (standing accounts – ask your research mentor) as payment. A basic, color, non-laminate, 3x4ft poster is around $60.

- Design Center in the Department of Internal Medicine at the UIHC is also able to provide poster printing. Copy Works (Coralville) and Zephyr (downtown Iowa City) can also print posters.

- Posters cost by square feet. For example, if a printer charges $6 per square foot, a 3’ x 4’ poster is 12 sq ft = $72.

- Give the printer at least two business days, but call a few weeks before to learn about their timelines.
How do I actually make this poster?

- An easy way to make a poster is to use PowerPoint.

- You MUST scale your slide to the appropriate size, otherwise you risk it not printing correctly.
  - Open a new blank presentation in PowerPoint.
  - Go to the Design tab and select Page Setup or Slide Size (and hit “custom slide size”)
  - Enter the width and height of the page.
  - The slide orientation (portrait or landscape – select landscape) will automatically adjust based on
    the page sizes entered.
  - Click OK.
  - If the rulers are turned on (on the View tab check the Ruler box), you will be able to see that the
    slide is now the size you entered
  - More info

- Your poster is a visual aid – not the primary source of information. You shouldn’t have every piece of
  data you’ve ever collected on the poster. Keep that in mind. You want it to be readable from a
  distance, use appropriate white space, photos, charts/graphs, and words (just not too many words)!

- In general, your font sizes should be about:
  - ~20-24pt – good for captions
  - ~36pt – general text
  - ~48pt – section headers/emphasized sentence
  - ~72pt – title
  - Don’t use anything less than ~20pt – this is too small

- Check out this “Basics of Poster Design” for poster design a good overview and here are a few
  templates.

- You can also look at posters that have been presented at previous ICRU Festivals by looking at our
  FURF, SURF, and RIC photo albums on Facebook.