Advice for Making Posters with PowerPoint

- Create your poster on **ONE** slide in PowerPoint.
- The page size of that slide must be your desired print size. Like 36” x 48”.
- You must do this step before you create your poster. Print quality will be substandard if you design your poster at 8.5 x 11 and then enlarge the print. (Doesn’t work well at all!)
- To prevent cropping when printing, be sure you have a **1-inch** margin around the edges of the poster. Printer doesn’t print to the edge of the paper.

There are templates available on line; just do a search. This is a basic guideline to follow.

Your poster should **read from top left to bottom right**, like reading a page in a book.
- It is important to maintain a good contrast between the background color and the text color. Consider using a light color background and dark text.
- A **gradient color fill in the background**, will print poorly. It will have very thin visible lines that you will not see on your computer monitor. A dark or black background is not good either.
- It is impossible to read and take in large chunks of text on a poster presentation, so the most important thing is to keep your poster simple.
- Use as few words as possible to get your point across or state your objectives, methods, results and conclusions as concisely as possible.
- Make use of tables, graphs, diagrams and pictures to get your message across, but keep these graphics simple.
- Use of color can enhance your message, but don’t go overboard with too many colors or fancy fonts. If you do use color, make sure that your text contrasts sufficiently with your background colors to be legible.
• It is a good idea to take along some handouts. These can be a copy of the poster itself, or produce a single-page summary of your poster.
• The colors that you see on your computer monitor will not reproduce the same on a printed poster, as monitor color settings vary. You can expect that there will be a color shift of 2 or 3 shades.

**Graphics**

• Images copied from the web are low-resolution (72 dpi) images and are not proper quality for inclusion in your poster, but limit image resolution to 150 dpi to ensure their ability to print.
• All graphics should be inserted directly into PowerPoint (NOT linked from another program or copied and pasted). The preferred image format for all inserted images is **JPG** if you do not need a transparent background. For transparency .png or .gif.
• If you have graphs or charts from Excel to include in your poster, simply copy in Excel and paste into PowerPoint. Make sure they have large enough lines and symbology.
• Do not enlarge images after they have been inserted into PowerPoint.
• To adjust an image and retain proportion, hold down the **Shift** key on your keyboard and click and drag with your mouse on one of the corners in order to scale it.

**Text**

• It is best to use a font that is cross-platform to ensure that your poster looks as you have designed it.
• The title should be approximately the entire width of the poster with the main text broken into multiple columns, usually three or four depending on the size of the poster.
• The most common fonts are Times New Roman and Arial. Examples of others include Arial Black, Franklin Gothic Heavy, Tahoma, Trebuchet, Verdana, Garamond, Book Antiqua, or Bookman Old Style, just to name a few.
• You will have to adjust the font size depending on the amount of text in your poster and the style of font you choose. For readability, you should not use a font size any smaller than 18 points.
• For consistency, it would be best to make all the headers the same size and use the same font size throughout the poster for all body text.
• If your text is in a different file (e.g. in a Word document) be sure that it pastes into a text box in PowerPoint so it can be more easily edited. To do this, use the **Paste Special** command and choose **Unformatted Text** so that the text will become a PowerPoint text box. If you just copy and paste, your text will be an imported word processing object, which will not be as easy to edit in PowerPoint.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Font Size</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Title</td>
<td>72-120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subtitle</td>
<td>48-80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section Headers</td>
<td>36-72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Body Text</td>
<td>24-48</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>