

### SWC 3: Designing an Effective Poster Presentation

During your academic and professional career, you may find the need to present your research and ideas through a poster presentation. You must carefully design your poster in order to present your ideas clearly. To have an effective poster presentation, you will need to consider the following elements.

- **Balancing Negative and Positive Space**

Negative space, or white space, is usually defined as the space between pictures and columns. Positive space is the opposite, the filled in space on the poster. Finding a balance between these will help your ideas stand out to your viewer.

- **Positioning and Arranging Information**

To help catch the attention of your audience, you will want to place your **title**, your **name**, and your **thesis**, or the main question or argument discussed in your presentation, at the top of the poster. After that, you have the opportunity to be creative with how you present your information and use images or color.

Regarding the amount of information you put on the poster, consider “**chunking**,” or breaking up text, so that it is easier to read the most important information in your presentation. A few different ways you can do this is by using smaller paragraphs or bullet points.

- **Inserting Images**

Images and other tables or figures can also be instrumental in making your poster effective. For images, you want to consider what is most important to your discussion. For example, an image could be a chart that shows outcomes from an experiment or an image of a book cover. You will also want to consider the placement and size of the image.

- **Incorporating Color**

When thinking about color, keep in mind what will be easiest for your audience to read. This includes the font color compared to background color. Contrasting colors, or colors that are opposite to each other on the color wheel, will make text easy to read when paired together. Also keep in mind the shade of the color that you’re using. Neon colors, for example, might be distracting and difficult to read. Instead of overloading your poster with colors, find a color scheme with a few main colors that are easy on the eyes.

- **Choosing Fonts**

Font styles can also be a creative way to present your information. Be careful not to use fonts that are hard to read. If your audience has a difficult time reading your information, you might quickly lose their attention. Consider using a nicer, slightly more intricate design for major headings and titles, but keep the bulk of information in an easier to read font like Arial, Helvetica, or Georgia.

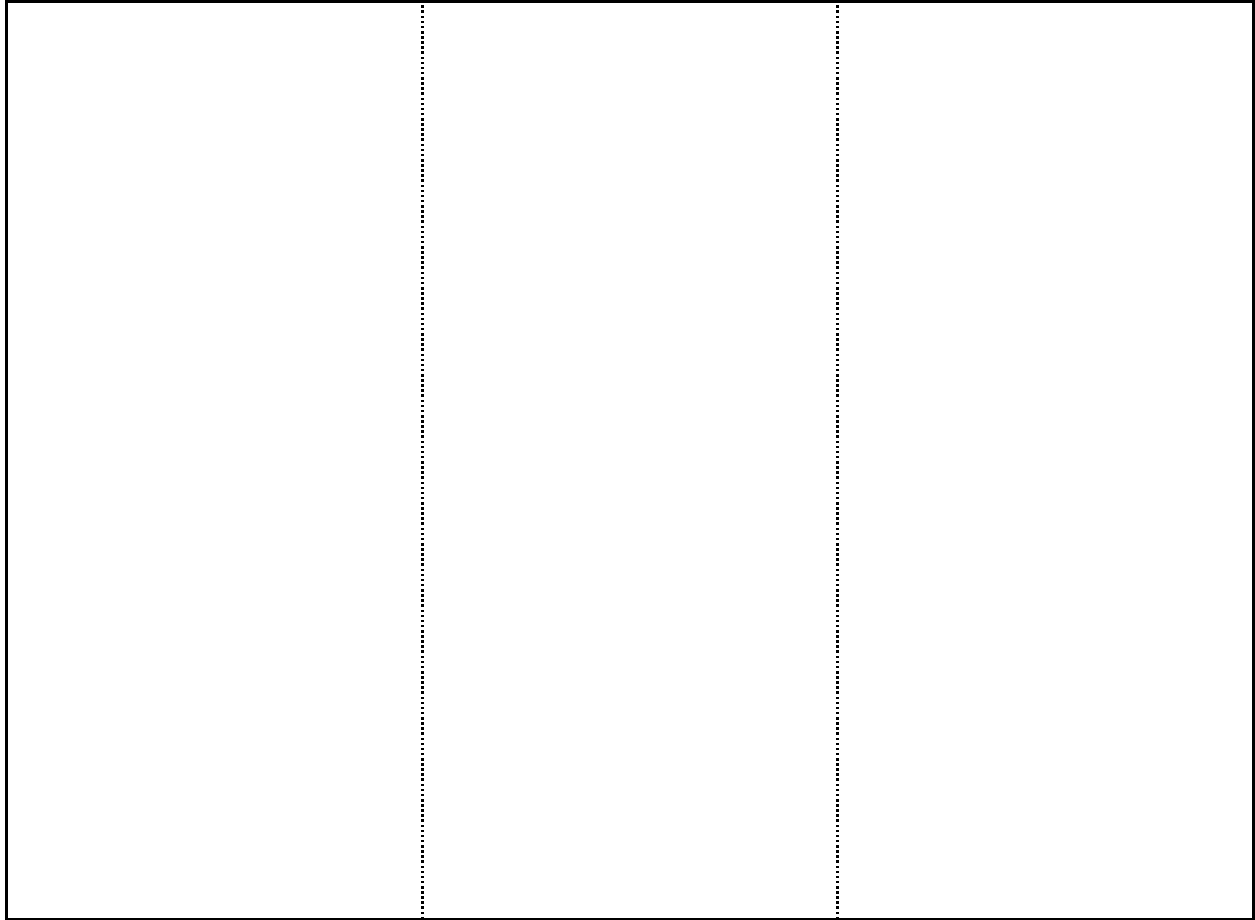
Use the sample tri-fold poster below to plan how you might design and organize the content of your poster.



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### Poster Outline



#### A Few Presentation Tips:

- **Be prepared:** Have some idea of what you want your audience to take away from your presentation and what information will be essential to convey to your them. Anticipate the questions you might receive from your audience. If you don't know the answer to a question, prepare a professional response as well as a way to get back to the audience member later, if appropriate.
- **Speak clearly:** Be aware that your presentation might be in a room with several other presenters, all speaking at the same time. It can be loud and crowded as you talk to your audience.
- **Consider body language:** Practice referring to your poster without turning your back or leaning in the way. Be aware that too much fidgeting or movement may be distracting.
- **Have fun:** This kind of project is slightly different from a paper presentation since it offers you the chance to interact more directly with your audience. Relax and enjoy your chance to demonstrate your knowledge on your subject.

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