

EECS Senior Design Courses (EE415/416 and CptS421/423) Guidelines on Poster Formatting

This guide highlights the common formatting issues in creating your Senior Design Project Poster:

1. Use Microsoft Power Point to produce your poster electronic file.
2. Poster Template:
Please use the provided template to start your poster. The template is formatted as landscape, with a width dimension of 48 inches and a height dimension of 36 inches. Please do not change the poster size.
3. Margins:
Leave a 0.75"-1" margin around the edges of the poster. The easiest way to see whether your margins are correct is to use the Grid feature. Go to View tab and select the Gridlines checkbox. This will superimpose a grid with one inch squares on your slide.
4. Logos:
The provided template displays a high resolution, sanctioned WSU logo on the left-up corner. Include your sponsoring company's logo on the right-up corner. Use a company logo with your industry mentor's permission and, if used, the logo resolution must be of very high quality.
5. Mandatory Sections (Glossary, Acknowledgements, Team Name)
Each poster will have the following three sections on the right-down corner (see the poster template).
 - (i) Glossary, where you define the technical terms and acronyms..
 - (ii) Acknowledgement, where the team thanks their mentor, the sponsoring company and other persons who have contributed to the work.
 - (iii) The team name, where you print your team name (just the team name, not the members).
6. Fonts:
Font Style, use a standard font, such as Arial, Calibri, Times New Roman, Tahoma, and Verdana. Make sure that you use the same font style throughout the poster.
For the title, use bold, with font size between 80-120 points.
For the subtitles (team members, sponsoring company, mentor, etc.), make the font size slightly smaller than the title. A font size between 45-65 points usually works best.
For the section headers (Background, Objective, Results, etc.), make the font size approximately 50% larger than the body text, between 36-72 points. Make sure that all section headers are the same font size.
For the body text, make the font size between 24-48 points. Make sure that the body text is the same font throughout the entire poster.

DON'T USE ALL CAPS for any portion of your poster. It is harder to read and it looks like you are shouting.

Be conservative. This is important for two reasons. First of all, familiar fonts are easier for your audience to read. Secondly, your poster will be printed from a different computer besides your own. Fonts that are embedded in the originating software but not embedded in the destination software are frequently a source of poster printing errors, regardless of what printer service you use.
7. Formatting the Poster Body:
 - (i) The provided template divides the main body of the poster into 3 panels. You may reformat the body as you like.
 - (ii) Consider how to arrange poster elements, images and text within the body. The overall format of a good poster is dictated by the way we assimilate information. People approach new information in a known spatial sequence: we tend to focus more on the center of the poster and we track vertically from top to

bottom, and horizontally from left to right. This means that you should put the most important message in the center top position followed by the center middle, top left, top right, bottom left, and finish in the bottom right corner. Consider including a catchy picture or diagram in the vertical center.

- (iii) Your poster components should be logically organized.
- (iv) Your poster should include a clear problem statement, clear solution description, and clear visualizations of your final results.
- (v) A picture is worth 1,000 words. Avoid long (and medium) length paragraphs of text on your poster. Use lots of graphical displays.
- (vi) The poster should facilitate discussion between the team and the audience thus you should not require the audience member to read complicated paragraphs or complicated equations before they can understand your work.
- (vii) Utilize your poster space effectively. Excessive white space on your poster should be avoided.
- (viii) Please refer to the previous years' posters for examples.

8. Working with Images:

If you would like to include photos or other images in your presentation, be very wary of using low resolution images. Although they may look fine on the screen, these images are low-resolution and may not look good when printed, particularly if you increase the size of the image in PowerPoint.

Photos taken with a digital camera are usually high resolution and should print well. Scanned images should be at least 300 dpi (dots per inch) in resolution and saved as a high quality file.

Tiff files tend to be very reliable when it comes to poster printing (they keep their proper aspect ratio, etc.) When resizing images of any kind, you should avoid distorting the image perspective.

(The standard Mac method of dragging an image from a different application into PowerPoint will frequently result in the image not being displayed correctly on a PC, which is where the poster will be printed from. If you design your poster on a Mac, it is highly recommended that you open your final version on a PC before you submit it to print to make sure that your images and other formatting are correctly converted.)

9. Background: Don't use bitmap background images, including the built-in background images "sandstone", "granite", etc. If background bitmap images are accidentally used then the plotter will spend about an hour "Processing PS" before it begins.

10. Before Printing your Poster:

- (i) Proof read your poster on your originating computer system but also on the destination computer system that will be used to print the poster.
- (ii) Allow your mentor to proof read your poster before printing and ask if the logo resolution is adequate. Company logos are very important to sponsors and you will find that they are very protective of its use.
- (iii) Print a mini-poster: Even though your PowerPoint slide is designed to print at a very large scale, it is possible to print the whole thing on a letter-sized piece of paper. It may be easier to proofread, and check layout issues. Here's how to print a mini version of your poster. Go to File: Print and make sure that the Scale to Fit Paper option is checked, select your favorite printer and click OK.