



## The Williams Honors College Guide to Research Posters

**Introduction:** Research posters are powerful visual tools widely used in academia to summarize information, present research findings, and stimulate discussion. Whether used in classrooms, conferences, or symposia, posters serve as concise representations of complex topics, requiring careful consideration in design, content, and presentation.

**1. Understanding the Purpose and Audience:** As you plan your poster, keep in mind the aim of the poster (presenting the results of your HRP) and your audience (peers and faculty).

**2. Writing Content for Posters:** Key written elements include the thesis/main point, supporting points, evidence, analysis, and identifying information. Emphasize minimal text, use bullet-point-like sentences, cite sources, follow conventions, and proofread diligently.

- **Written Elements on the Poster:**
  - **Thesis/Main Point:** A title and other prominent features should quickly and clearly convey your subject or main argument.
  - **Supporting Points:** Headings, subheadings, and other features should indicate specific aspects of your topic, argument, or findings.
  - **Evidence:** You could use statements from readings or other writings to support and clarify your argument. Cite all writing and images that you take from outside sources.
  - **Analysis:** Brief text accompanying images should explain how the images illustrate your supporting points.
  - **Identifying Information:** The poster should mention your name and/or the names of your team members and their affiliations.
- **Other Aspects:**
  - **Minimal Text:** Visuals will do most of the talking. However, the poster also needs text to explain your visuals and to quickly convey your argument. Choose your words carefully because your poster should not include much text. Avoid blocks of text on the poster. Use lists and bullet points as much as possible. In general, pictures or diagrams of an experimental setup are better than text.
  - **Bullet-point-like Sentences:** Only put the essential text that will convey your ideas on your poster.
  - **Citations:** You must cite any relevant sources of textual or visual information on the poster.

- Conventions: Proofread to make sure you follow the conventions for grammar, mechanics, and style on your poster.

**3. Designing the Poster:** Visual communication requires careful attention to layout, visuals, and fonts. Use high-quality, relevant images, and maintain a balance between text and visuals. Consider poster templates (referenced at the end).

- **Navigation:**
  - Your poster should establish a clear pattern for reading. Remember that your audience typically views your poster from three to five feet away. Make sure that the text and visuals on your poster are visible from that distance.
- **Images:**
  - Your images are the most important component of the poster, so use good, high-quality images. Do not use copyrighted images. The larger the image, the more attention it will receive, so keep that in mind while deciding the layout and size of your images.
- **Arrangement:**
  - Pay attention to the arrangement of the elements on your poster and aim for consistency. Keep images close to the text that analyzes them. Use text boxes, lines, and other design features to show relationships between images and text.
- **Sizing:**
  - Provide larger images and more prominent design elements for sections that you want your audience to focus on. Give more prominence to images and minimize the text on your poster.
- **White Space:**
  - It is also important not to fill up the space on the poster with excessive information. Leave enough blank or “white space” so that your poster does not look cluttered.
- **Colors and Fonts:**
  - Unless you are making certain specific design choices, choose colors that show a high contrast between the background of your poster and the text on the poster. Choose a light-colored font, for example, only if your poster has a dark background. Black script on a white background has the highest contrast.
  - Choose the font style on your poster carefully. Sans Serif fonts like Arial and Verdana are more legible from a distance than Serif fonts like Times New Roman.
  - Keep colors/fonts/borders/overall design simple. The more complex it becomes, the more it could distract from your message.
- **Type Sizes:**
  - Make the type on your poster as large as possible. At the minimum, type should be 72 points for the title, 36 points for the headings, 24 points for body copy.
- **Consistency:**

- Aim for consistency. Use colors, fonts, type sizes, and other design features consistently throughout patterns.
- **Poster Templates:**
  - Listed are links to helpful templates that you can consider when creating your research poster:
    - <https://www.posternerd.com/sciposters-templates>
    - <https://undergradcollege.utexas.edu/our/poster/templates>
    - <https://www.posterpresentations.com/free-poster-templates.html>

**4. Printing the Poster:** Each UA student can print up to two posters. You should use the largest format possible (4ft x 3ft). Do not wait until the last minute to submit your poster for printing. Use the Bierce Maker Studio Print poster request at <https://libguides.uakron.edu/c.php?g=1319635>

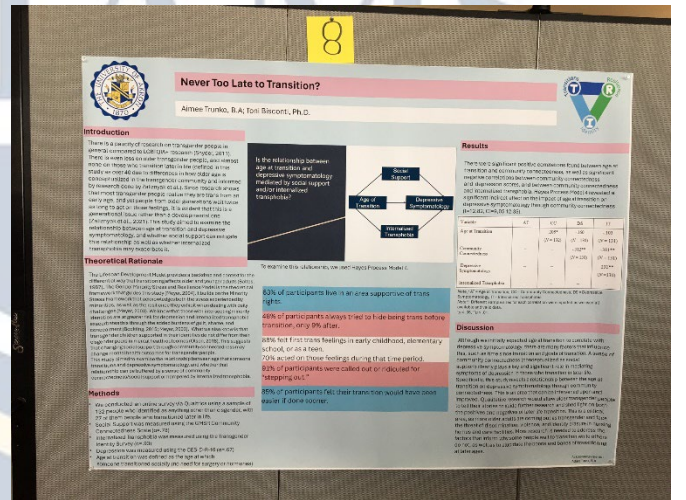
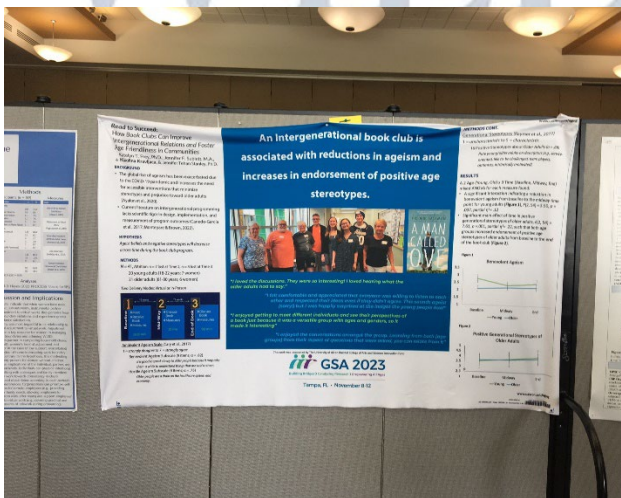
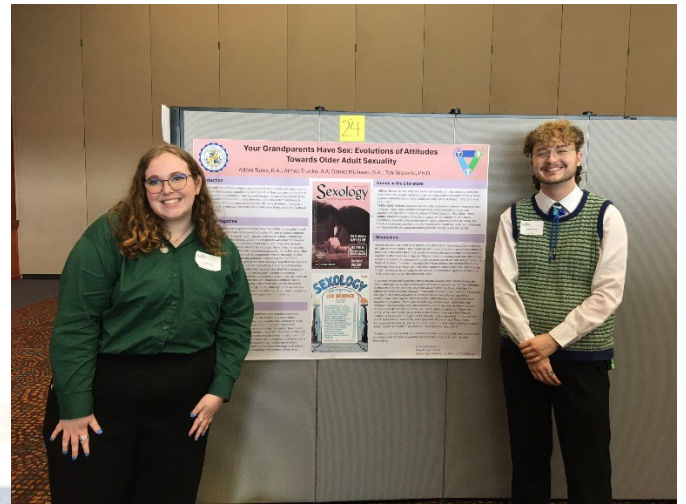
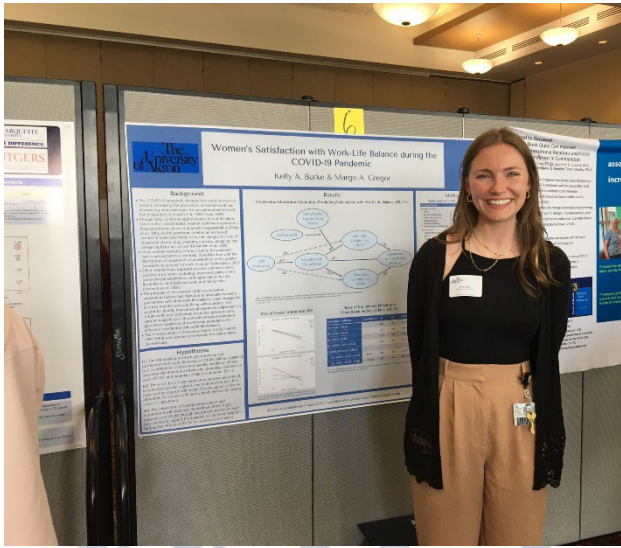
**5. Presenting the Poster:** Practice presenting and be prepared to answer questions. Have a short summary ready and interact with the audience actively. Stand by your poster, be welcoming, and avoid reading directly from it. Focus on conveying main arguments and findings, using visuals and headings to support your points.

- **Presentation Tips:**
  - Prepare a short summary of your research.
  - Interact actively with the audience.
  - Stand by your poster for the entire poster session.
  - Avoid reading directly from the poster.
  - Utilize visuals and headings to convey main points effectively.



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• Poster Examples



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