Guidelines for Poster Preparation

General aim and format

- A poster is a graphically based approach to summarize work done in the Practicum. In presenting your project with a poster, you should aim to use the poster as a means for generating active discussion of the project.
- Content and layout of the poster should be of high quality, worthy of presentation at APHA.
- Develop the Poster as ONE slide in PowerPoint.
- Keep the text brief. Use bullet points rather than in sentences and paragraphs.
- Limit the text to about one-third of the poster space, and use "visuals" (graphs, photographs, schematics, maps, etc.) to tell your "story."

Content

- Project Title
- Agency/Program Description
- Learning Objectives
- Description of Activities and Outcome
- Student’s Lessons Learned
- Graphics and additional information (optional)

Design and layout specifications

- The entire poster must be mounted on a 28" tall x 40" wide three-panel display board. The poster does not necessarily have to fill the entire working area.
- The board must be oriented in the "landscape" position (long dimension is horizontal).
- A banner displaying your poster title, and your name should be positioned at top-center of the board (see Figure 1).
- Make it obvious to the viewer how to progressively view the poster. The poster generally should read from left to right, and top to bottom. Numbering the individuals panels, or connecting them with arrows is a standard "guidance system" (see Figure 1).
- Leave some open space in the design. An open layout is less tiring to the eye and mind.
Figure 1: Conventional layouts for a poster. Long panel at top-center is title/author banner. Individual panels can be connected by numbers and arrows. Also, note the use of space between panels to achieve visual appeal. (from: C. W. Connor, 1992, The Poster Session: A Guide for Preparation: U. S. Geological Survey Open-File Report 88-667.)

Lettering

- Text should be readable from 3 feet away. This suggests a minimum font size of 18 points.
- The title and your name should be at the top center of your poster. Lettering for the title should be large (at least 54-point font). Capitalize the first letters of words in the title.

Visuals

- As much as possible, present numerical data in the form of graphs, rather than tables (graphs make trends in the data much more evident). If data must be presented in table-form, KEEP IT SIMPLE.
- Visuals should be simple and bold. Leave out or remove any unnecessary details.
- Make sure that any visual can "stand alone" (i.e., graph axes are properly labeled, maps have north arrows and distance scales, symbols are explained, etc.). Each visual should have a brief title (for example: Figure 1 - Location of study area).
- Use color to enhance comprehension, not to decorate the poster.
- Make sure that the text and the visuals are integrated. Figures should be numbered consecutively according to the order in which they are first mentioned in the text.

Miscellaneous suggestions

- Simplicity is the key. Keep to the point, and do not try to cover too many things.
- When you begin to make your poster, first create a list of the visuals that you would use if you were describing your project with only the visuals. Write the text after you have created the list of visuals.

Resources

There are many online resources available, offering poster guidelines, advice, and even ready-made templates. Here are some examples, although beware that not all may apply:

http://www.cmer.wsu.edu/~yonge/ce465/poster.pd

http://limacenter.osu.edu/Poster/Index.html

http://www.apsnet.org/meetings/2003/Powerpoint_Posters.htm

http://ublib.buffalo.edu/libraries/asl/guides/bio/posters.html

http://www.people.eku.edu/ritchisong/posterpres.html
Printing

1. A suggested low-cost printing technique is to use standard 8.5” x 11” sheets of paper and neatly tape the sheets to a 28” tall x 40” wide three-panel display board.

2. Printing services are available (e.g., FedExKinkos) that allow you to have an electronically-based (e.g., Word, Powerpoint, Adobe Illustrator, Photoshop, PageMaker, Freelance, Corel Presentations, FreeHand, and Publisher) poster session presentation professionally printed on a single sheet. If you use these, be aware of the costs involved.