Research poster creation–some helpful hints

- The best (and standard) size for a research poster is A1. To make an A1 sized poster, go into PowerPoint and set the page up as A1. To do this in PowerPoint 2007 click on 'Design', then 'Page Setup'. Select 'Custom' for the 'Slides Sized for' box, then set the width of the page to 84.1cm and the height to 59.4cm. This will give you a landscape page (click on 'portrait' to automatically make the page portrait).
- You might like to use a blank design for the slide, as this means that you can change the background colour to your own specification. A pale background colour works well (e.g. light blue). Select the background colour using the 'background styles' option and choose 'Format background'.
- Research posters are rarely large blocks of text. Instead, you might like to break the text up into boxes (using the 'Shapes' option from the 'Insert' menu). Depending on which version of PowerPoint you use, you may have to draw a text box inside the box. The colour of the text box can be darker than your background colour (e.g. dark blue on a light blue background). It's best to use Arial font, and to avoid colourful fonts (green, red, yellow) on a white background–this makes your poster accessible to all readers.
- Font size will automatically increase along with the size of the page, but you should avoid adding any text under size 14 font (not clearly visible for readers).
- It's helpful to set out your poster in a clear and easy-to-follow way, so you could use a flow chart or a timeline to organise your poster. Arrows and lines can be found under the 'Shapes' option.
- The title of your poster should be clear and should stand out (you might like to use size 54 font).
- Break the text up using pictures (this works well in a flow chart or timeline). Pictures only come out when printed if they are saved as 'TIFF' files and then inserted into the poster. If you are using a photo from the internet, save it as a TIFF file to your computer and then insert it into the poster. A thin border (e.g. ¾ or 1 point) tends to work well, and helps to make the picture stand out from the background of the poster.
- Set the poster out like a condensed essay–with an introduction and a conclusion–summarising your findings.
- Don't forget to reference primary or secondary texts (a small box for a bibliography can work well), and indeed any pictures than you use. A concise explanation of the pictures can be helpful.
- Before you print, make sure that the text can be read from a reasonable distance, and that none of the text is obscured by the colour of the text box.
- Finally, when presenting the poster take your audience through the poster methodically and explain any pictures and their context.

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