

## Language, Texts and Technology

Washington State University, spring 2010

Advice for creating the WSU Vancouver Research Showcase poster

<http://ltspring2010.blogspot.com/>

[ ] **Give the judges what they want:** Look carefully at the judging criteria, provided on the class blog and the back of this form. Those are not gauzy ideals. They are really code words for specific things. 1. Significance = Your poster needs to have in a dominant design position some kind of compelling statement that makes a passerby want to stop and explore your research. 2. Presentation = You must provide the basics in an orderly fashion, including identification (names of group members, DTC, WSU Vancouver, etc.), an introduction that puts the research in context, a research question and hypothesis, a section on methods, a section on results, a section on conclusions (or implications for future research) and references (list only academic journal articles in this part). 3. Methods = Again, they want to know specifically how you conducted this research, in detail, with numbers. 4. Visual impact = They aren't necessarily looking for award-winning design, just not a jumbled and cluttered mess. If you can give them award-winning design, though ... 5. Interview = Elevator pitch, followed by knowledgeable and articulate answers to their questions.

[ ] **Use your DTC computer skills:** Hand-crafting a research poster is like sewing your own clothes. Unless you can do it perfectly, don't bother. A much better alternative is to create the poster in a design program, such as Adobe InDesign, and print it at Kinko's (or wherever) to fit the poster dimensions. Then attach the printed poster to the three-paneled poster board in the most aesthetically appealing way possible (printing each panel separately can eliminate the bulges at the folds).

[ ] **Details, details, details:** Design the poster so it reads left to right, top to bottom, flowing naturally. Pick an easy-to-read font. Line up your columns. Frame your photos/maps. Spell check your poster! Read it over and over again to yourself (and others, if you can) to make sure it comes across as conversational yet also grounded in deep thought and hard work. Imagine you walked by this poster. Would you stop? You want to show only your best here, leaving all of the chaff behind.

[ ] **Be concise and visual:** Posters just show the tip of the iceberg of your deep research. They should not have more than 500-1,000 words. It's not about quantity. It's about quality. Every single word on this poster should carry impact and be important. If not, cut it. And try to show your work as opposed to telling about it. Use graphs, photographs, maps, etc., not gratuitously but as efficient ways to share important information that can't be illustrated as powerfully any other way.

[ ] **Give your research the high-quality and energetic presentation it deserves:** If you aren't excited about the hard work you put into this, no one else will be, either. Make your poster as visually stimulating as possible, prepare your pitch and dress professionally for the presentation. Try to get people to talk with you about this work, which will help to shape your ideas about what you have done and what still needs to be done.

## WSU Vancouver Research Showcase Poster Judging Criteria

Judges: Please consider the following criteria when grading posters. Award up to 10 points to each section.

1. **SIGNIFICANCE:** How significant or relevant is the work to the author's field? To society in general? [Do they identify and address a significant problem?]
2. **PRESENTATION:** How logical are the ideas presented in this poster? How interesting is the manner of presentation? How clearly written and free of significant grammatical problems and/or jargon is its abstract?
3. **METHODS:** If applicable, how suitable is the design for the stated objectives, and how appropriate are any analysis techniques applied?
4. **VISUAL IMPACT:** How effective is this poster visually? How valuable is each figure and graph in furthering viewers' understanding of the subject? Do the figures and graphs effectively convey information?
5. **INTERVIEW:** How knowledgeable and conversant is the presenting author with the work presented in the poster?