GRADUATE RESEARCH POSTER GUIDE:
How to Prepare your Content for Poster Presentation

A guide for selecting relevant content from your project for poster presentation
What can I do a Poster on?

• The content on your poster will vary based on what sort of project you are presenting. Any discipline can create a poster!

• Types of projects can include:
  • Thesis projects
  • Research projects/papers
  • Capstone projects/papers
  • Internships & Practicums
  • Independent Studies

• The content of your poster will determine which judging category you will be placed in

• See gradschool.cofc.edu for more information
What should be on my Poster?

• Keep overall word count between 300 - 800 words
• Make your text clear, concise, and to the point
• Use bullets, numbering, and headlines to increase ease of reading
• Include acknowledgements, author(s) name(s), and institutional affiliation
• Identify your graduate program and the institution(s) involved without acronyms or abbreviations (CofC, DNR, NOAA, etc.)
Where to Begin?

• What is the most important/interesting/astounding finding from my project?

• What information should I have written down vs. what can I convey during my talk?

• What am I trying to communicate about my project with this poster?
Thesis Projects:

• Most common poster type
• Typical Content Sections
  • Introduction/Background
  • Hypothesis/Objectives
  • Methodology
  • Expected Results/Actual Results
  • Discussion/Significance
  • Next Steps/Further Research
  • References & Acknowledgements

What about my Abstract?
The abstract is only required for your application and doesn’t need to be included on your poster!
Research Project/Paper

• Non-thesis research

• Typical Content Sections:
  • Introduction/Background
  • Hypothesis/Objectives
  • Methodology
  • Expected Results/Actual Results
  • Discussion/Significance
  • Next Steps/Further Research
  • References & Acknowledgements
Capstone Project/Paper

• Some programs require capstone projects/presentations

• Typical Content Sections:
  • Background/Introduction
  • Purpose
  • Methods/Phases of the Project
  • Results/Conclusions
  • Discussion/Significance
  • Next Steps/Further Research
  • References & Acknowledgements
Internships & Practicums

• Also referred to as “applied research”

• Typical Content Sections
  • Background
  • Overview of Internship site
  • Issues facing site/organization
  • Objectives/How to Address Issues
  • Methodology
  • Expected Outcomes/Actual Outcomes
  • Discussion/Significance
  • Next Steps/Further Research
  • References & Acknowledgements of Host Site
Independent Studies

• Typical Content Sections
  • Research Question
  • Description of the Project
  • Learning Objectives/Outcomes
  • Materials & Methods
  • Discussion/Significance
  • Further Study/Next Steps
  • References & Acknowledgements

Utilize your syllabus and faculty supervisor for guidance!
What are the Judges looking for?

• Here are some of the aspects related to content that judges will be paying attention to when viewing your poster:
  • Is the problem/research question described succinctly?
  • Are the title and objectives stated clearly and provide appropriate context to the poster?
  • Does the background information provide good rationale for the work done?
  • Does the content grab interest?
  • Are methods made clear and complete?
  • Is the project feasible?

See “Judging Criteria” guide for more info!
Examples from Past Entries

2016 Winner: Sciences, Mathematics, & Business

Chasing the Salt-Wedge: Assessing the Recreational and Commercial Blue Crab Fisheries of South Carolina
McClellan, K. (MES, College of Charleston), Childers, M.J. (Clemson University), Fowler, A.E. (DNR, College of Charleston)

Introduction

While commercial fishing landings of blue crab in South Carolina fluctuate substantially from year to year, there has been a consistent decrease in landings and fisheries-dependent revenue since 2014. This decrease has been attributed to various factors, including weather and climate conditions, but the environmental variables, such as salinity and temperature, which are used to estimate blue crab growth in commercial bycatch, have not been extensively studied. The decrease in landings, along with changes in blue crab size and composition, has led to questions about how changes in environmental variables are affecting the crab. This study compiled data from fisheries-dependent surveys conducted in the last decade to examine the impact of these variables on blue crab landings.

Methods

Fisheries Independent Surveys Methods
- Seasonal: Fall, Winter, Spring, Summer
- Day: High tide minus 1 hour, Low tide plus 1 hour
- Site: 12 stations
- Equipment: 60 cm x 60 cm, 0.2 mm mesh
- Catch: 0 to 10 crabs
- Weather: Wind speed > 8 miles per hour, wave height > 2 feet

Fisheries Dependent Survey Methods
- Season: July, August, September, October
- Location: Charleston, SC
- Equipment: 60 cm x 60 cm, 0.2 mm mesh
- Catch: 0 to 10 crabs
- Weather: Wind speed > 8 miles per hour, wave height > 2 feet

Research Questions

- How do changes in environmental variables affect blue crab landings?
- What is the relationship between blue crab landings and environmental variables?
- How do these variables change over time?

Results

- Blue crab landings decreased significantly between 2014 and 2018.
- There is a positive correlation between blue crab landings and temperature and salinity.
- Changes in environmental variables are likely responsible for the decrease in landings.

Future Work

- Further research is needed to understand the impact of climate change on blue crab populations.
- Development of predictive models to forecast future landings.

Acknowledgements

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Examples from Previous Entries

**2016 Winner:** Humanities, Social Sciences, Arts, & Education

### Introduction

The Lowcountry Digital History Initiative (LDHI) is a digital public history project of the College of Charleston housed by the Lowcountry Digital Library. Launched in 2014, LDHI serves as an online platform hosting historical exhibits that focus on underrepresented histories of the Lowcountry. LDHI is a digital museum providing wider access to information and stories that are often left out of history books.

### LDHI Objectives

- Keep the College of Charleston up to speed with how people digitally engage with historic and cultural information in the digital world.
- Encourage projects that highlight underrepresented race, class, gender, and labor histories within the Lowcountry region.
- Interpret diverse histories within the Lowcountry: various historical landscapes and structures.
- Provide a platform with guidelines and support for contextualizing and implementing digital interpretation strategies.
- Offer a dynamic, collaborative, and widely accessible outreach and educational capabilities of digital public history.

### Featured Exhibits

#### “Somebody had to Do It”: First Children in School Desegregation
- Examines the history of school desegregation in Charleston County and the U.S. South.
- Features exhibits with Black Americans who were the “first children” to integrate public schools in the mid-twentieth century.

#### Voyage of the Echo: The Trials of an Illegal Trans-Atlantic Slave Ship
- Explores the world of the Illegal trans-Atlantic slave trade by interpreting the voyage of the slave ship Echo in 1838.
- Utilizes documents from a major public trial to tell the story of a part of history with new evidence.
- Highlights discrete historical narratives including poster African presence, anti-slavery, slave rebellion, and the U.S. Civil War.

#### Keeper of the Gate: Phillip Simmons Iron Work in Charleston, South Carolina
- Outlines the history and work of Charleston’s award-winning and famous iron worker, Philip Simmons.
- Features the cultural and artistic legacies of the Lowcountry.

### Featured Upcoming Exhibit

Mother Emanuel Tribute
- An image-heavy tribute highlighting the memorabilia left at Mother Emanuel in the weeks and months following the June 17, 2015 shooting.

### Graduate Students’ Roles

LDHI projects are developed through collaborative teams of academic scholars, librarians, archivists, public historians, and graduate students. LDHI graduate student assistants play a crucial role in developing, editing, and laying out each project. In the process, we acquire skills in digital technology, editing, and archival research. In addition to offering a widely accessible digital exhibitions platform, LDHI provides a distinctive educational opportunity for us to work in the dynamic and growing scholarly fields of digital humanities and public history.

### Broader Implications

Increasing public access to academic information is an ongoing goal across academic fields. LDHI is an important College of Charleston tool to provide the general public as well as local and global educators with better access to the region’s history. LDHI is one of the College of Charleston’s tools to provide a wider audience with access to interesting and often untold stories of Lowcountry history and culture, promoting knowledge and understanding of people here and throughout the world.