



Council on Undergraduate Research
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POSTER PRESENTATION

Most of the preparation comes before you have arrived ---- clear layout of your material, and practice in talking about it.

Other tips:

1. Be on time in setting up your poster.
2. Photos will be taken by CUR, and often by the Congressional offices. You may also want to bring your own camera; CUR will not be able to photograph every exhibit and will not be able to forward copies to you (although you may download those we use on our website).
3. As with the office meetings, do not be too disappointed if your Representative or Senators do not attend. Your work will still be seen by many policymakers, faculty, and your student colleagues. We are inviting federal agency representatives who actually fund undergraduate research --- it is important for them to see the results in order to want to continue these programs. We are also inviting some science reporters. Take time with everyone who appears; you never know who they are.
4. The people who visit your poster may be more curious about YOU than your research. Be prepared to talk about your background and future plans.
5. Remember that you know more about your research than any of the visitors, even professors. This should give you confidence to convey your ideas. But do not forget that all research raises more questions than are answered, so be prepared for questions that you cannot answer. Think of ways that future research might address some of these questions.
6. Take time to look at the posters of your fellow students during the allotted time, but stay near your own poster during the full session so that you do not miss any visitors.
7. Have a good time. You have earned it.

YOUR POSTER

Posters will be displayed on room dividers that are nominally 5 feet high and 5 feet wide. Two posters will be displayed on each room divider (one on each side). Each participant will have an area that is approximately 56" wide by 48" high. Posters that are wider than 56" WILL NOT be permitted to be displayed. All of your materials must be mounted on the wall. There is no room for additional displays or materials.

Each participant will need to produce a capital-lettered header that will run across the top of the display area (56" wide by 6" high) that will include the name of the student(s) on the top line and the name of the university and funding agency on the bottom line. Be sure to identify the funding agency with the word "Sponsor: ..". For example:

STUDENT NAME(S)
INSTITUTION NAME, ADVISOR: ADVISOR NAME(S)
SPONSOR: SPONSOR NAME(S)

This will leave a space of 56" wide by 42" high for your poster.

Pages of text, graphs and photographs should be mounted on a colored cardboard backing. A border of approximately 1/2" should be used. Multiple pages may be mounted on a single piece of cardboard. Please understand that in terms of layout we're not trying to be overly prescriptive. We would like some degree of uniformity between posters for appearance purposes. You can also use a single poster for your presentation.

While the layout and design of the poster is up to you, the first element in your display should contain the title of your project, a list of all project collaborators, and an abstract. Please remember that the title of the research is not referenced on the block-lettered header mentioned above, so it is important that you include it in the poster space.

All poster materials will be attached to the carpeted faces of the room dividers with Velcro fasteners. YOU NEED TO BRING ENOUGH VELCRO TO ATTACH YOUR POSTER TO THE ROOM DIVIDER. Pins, scissors and knives are not allowed past security, so prepare these materials in advance. We will NOT provide materials for you.

GETTING PREPARED

While many individuals in Congress have a broad understanding of multiple disciplines and a few have developed a sophisticated understanding in some areas, most members of Congress do not have your depth of knowledge, especially in your particular field.

For this reason, you should prepare your poster and your oral remarks for an audience that is educated and knowledgeable, but that has a limited technical background. To the extent possible, you should also try to put your work into a broader context. Try to avoid the use of technical jargon and use effective graphics (charts and photographs) on your display whenever possible.

Generally members of Congress are interested in people. They may, for example, want to know how your work might benefit the voters back in their districts (please be a little careful here. Do not make too great a stretch of what might be possible or it will be apparent. Not every research project has an immediate application. There is plenty of good basic research that needs to be done before solid applied work can be pursued.) It is also quite likely that besides hearing about your work, members of Congress and their staff will want to know about you and how involvement in undergraduate research has affected your education and life. They may want to know how you got involved in undergraduate research, who you worked with, and how undergraduate research has affected your career plans. You should be prepared to answer these kinds of questions.