UCI UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH SYMPOSIUM POSTER PRESENTATION GUIDELINES

The 2021 UCI Undergraduate Research Symposium will take place online on Friday, May 21, 2021. Undergraduate researchers will have the opportunity to present their work to an audience of faculty, fellow students, corporate partners, community members, family and friends. Hundreds of oral and poster presentations make the Symposium an exciting celebration of the undergraduate research culture at UCI.

The Symposium will be hosted on the Whova online platform. Student presenters will receive e-mails from Whova with a unique link to register on the platform. Student posters will be available for viewing before, during and after the event, and will be made up of **three distinct parts:**

➢ **The poster.** You will create a digital poster—to display on a screen instead of printing—-to show the essential elements of your research. You will upload this file to your Whova profile before the event.

➢ A short **video file** to accompany your poster. You also upload this file, in which you briefly discuss your research and your poster, to your Whova profile. Viewers can play the video while looking at your poster.

➢ Your **live presence online.** We will assign you a 15-minute slot during which guests can talk to you directly about your research and your poster.

What is a Poster?

A poster is a document that summarizes and describes your research. It, along with your video, should provide a clear picture of your project's goals, results, conclusions and implications. For our online Symposium, a poster is more flexible than the traditional printed board displayed at in-person conferences. We recommend that you consider the following:

Whova requires posters to be submitted in Adobe Acrobat (pdf) format, with a maximum file size of 10MB.

We recommend that you use the traditional 36 x 48-inch poster format.

Your poster document can contain more than a single page although, for readability, we recommend that you use no more than two or three.

Here are some **Examples of Undergraduate Research Posters**.

Designing Your Poster

Space on a poster is limited, so pick what to present wisely. Your display should be self-explanatory and have a logical flow—viewers should be able to follow the order even if you are not present. Start with a rough draft of your design on paper, using graph paper or Post-it notes to simulate sections.

Place your title at the top of the poster and make sure that the text is large and clear. Include your name and major, and the name and department of your faculty mentor, in addition to other co-authors.

Incorporate appropriate graphics in your poster. Label or describe any charts, tables, figures, graphs, or photos that you use. Make sure all edges line up evenly.

Does Your Poster Communicate its Message?

Many posters look great but fail to communicate their information clearly. Ask yourself these questions when you are designing your poster.

Is your message clear? Focus on the results and their importance. Avoid exhaustive descriptions of your methods.

Is everything on your poster critical to communicating your message? Remove everything that is not vitally important. Simplify your text by using short bullet points and phrases instead of complete sentences.

Is your organization easy to follow? Most people read from top to bottom, then left to right. Consider numbering your headings to further clarify the flow of information.

Do your headings deliver real information? Good headings by themselves can summarize the main points of your poster if readers are in a hurry.

Is your text easy to read? Because your poster will be viewed online, all of the text must be readable on a computer screen or other device.

Is your poster cluttered by too many fonts? Do not use more than two typefaces. Instead, use bold, italic and size to set type differently. Times New Roman, Arial, Garamond, and Verdana are suggested typefaces.

Are your colors distracting? Stick to a simple color scheme (try a couple that complement or contrast with each other, such as black or navy on white). Avoid red/green combinations, as this is the most common form of color blindness.

Are your graphics clear and easy to understand? Avoid elements—such as unnecessary background colors and overly specific labels—that do not add useful information. Explanations should be within or next to figures, not referred to from elsewhere.

Does your poster have a good balance between text, graphics, and white space? Use white space consistently to emphasize separate sections and to keep the poster from becoming too cluttered and difficult to read.

Can you talk about your poster without reading directly from it? Be ready to discuss details that questioners cannot read for themselves. People are interested in additional information and your interpretations.

Preparing Your Video

Your video should be a 2- to 3-minute presentation that illustrates your poster. Use this time to discuss the high points of your research and point out the important features of your poster. Use these tips to create a video that is both informative and interesting.

Be simple. Clearly establish a single focus for your video and eliminate anything that doesn't directly support that focus.

Organize your thoughts. Start with an outline and develop good transitions between sections. Emphasize the real-world significance of your research.

Create effective notes for yourself. Have notes that you can read. Use an outline or other brief reminders of what you want to say.

Have a strong opening. Why should the audience listen to you? One good way to get their attention is to start with a question, whether or not you expect an answer.

Define terms early. If you are using terms that may be new to the audience, introduce them early in your presentation. Once an audience gets lost in unfamiliar terminology, it is extremely difficult to get them back on track.

Finish with a bang. Find one or two sentences that sum up the importance of your research. How is the world better off as a result of what you have done, and what impact has it had on you?

Do not keep a single camera angle. If you are doing a screen sharing of your poster and recording it. Alternate between the sections of the poster that you want to emphasize, while you are talking about them, with sufficient magnification that the audience can easily read.

Practice, practice, practice. The more you practice, the more comfortable you will be in front of the camera. Practice in front of a friend or two and ask for their feedback. Record yourself and watch/listen to it critically. Make it better and do it again. Only upload the video after you are comfortable that it demonstrates your best work.

Time yourself. Do not wait until the last minute to create your video. You only have 2-3 minutes total, and time goes by faster than you think.

Here are some other resources to help you create an excellent poster presentation and present your research effectively to your audience.

[How to Record a PowerPoint Presentation with Audio & Video](#)

[Rehearsing & Recording Your Presentation in PowerPoint](#)

[How to Record a Presentation on Zoom](#)

[How to properly present PowerPoint slides in Zoom](#)

Your Online Session

You will be assigned a 15 minute time period to be live on Zoom to answer questions from Symposium guests, and asked to create a Zoom link to add to your Whova profile. This will be your opportunity to interact directly with people who are interested in your research. Keep these tips in mind as you prepare for and conduct your online session.

Consider your environment. When setting up, consider what your audience will see and hear. Try to find a place that is free from outside noise and eliminate as much clutter as possible from within the camera's view. Avoid having bright sources of outdoor light behind you and block windows that create sharp contrasts on your image and background.

Test your equipment beforehand. Use the controls in the Zoom app to test and adjust your audio and video equipment (click the arrow next to microphone or camera in the bottom left of the screen to access audio and video menus).

Run a test meeting. You can create a test meeting in Zoom (http://zoom.us/test) that will let you test your audio and video setup and your internet connection before your Zoom meeting. See the Zoom website for more information: (https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/115002262083-Joining-a-test-meeting).

Close other programs. Close programs running in the background to prevent interruptions by app notifications, and turn off your phone, or put it on silent. This will limit your distractions.

Share well. Open all of the files you want to share (PowerPoint, videos, etc.) before you share your screen. Then, when you do share your screen, consider selecting your entire screen, so that you can easily jump between each medium, rather than having to do a "new share" each time. Be sure that your screen only displays things you wish to share. If you're playing an audio file (or video with sound), select "Music or Computer Sound Only" from the Advanced screen sharing menu before sharing your screen.

Look at the camera. It's important to maintain your connection to your audience by looking at the camera, not at the faces on the screen. It is best if the camera is slightly higher than eye level, perhaps just above the screen.

Consider questions you might be asked. Show your materials friends, co-researchers, and people who are not familiar with your topic. See what questions they have and prepare short answers for them.

Keep your answers short and to the point. Time will go by quickly, so you want to be able to deal with as many questions as possible within that time. If you don't know the answer to a question, admit it. Consider asking for contact information for the questioner. Then you can look into the answer and provide it to them after the event.

Be excited. If you remember to be excited, your audience will feel it and automatically become more interested.