**Diversity of Marine Life**

For this assignment, we will learn something about marine life and the marine environment. You will pick a marine organism to study, and make a scientific-quality poster to present in class in a poster session. Your task is to create a poster according to the process below.

1. Topic choice and initial research. Perform research on your topic. Look for graphs, images, maps, etc. that can help communicate your story. Stay focused. The poster you create should be specific to your topic.

2. Create a poster of your research.

* Follow the advice on the handout titled “Effective Scientific Posters” <http://www.ncsu.edu/project/posters/documents/QuickReferenceV3.pdf> , and from the Creating Effective Poster Presentations website at <http://www.ncsu.edu/project/posters/index.html> , and the presentation you saw in class. All of the advice is the same.

You will then create a poster using the process described below:

**Using MicroSoft PowerPoint to Create a Poster**  
instructions adapted from <http://www.ncsu.edu/project/posters/NewSite/CreatePosterSoftware.html>Introduction

These are instructions for creating what's called a "single sheet" or "strip" poster using MicroSoft PowerPoint as the main software tool. The purpose here is to for you to experience the way this is normally done in science. An advantage here is that you can see your poster design before actually assembling it. The poster dimensions for this time is 24” X 36”. The paper can be arranged in either portrait (24" wide x 36" high) or landscape (36" wide x 24" high) mode. That choice is up to you.

Setting up PowerPoint

**Note:** These instructions might vary a bit among versions of PowerPoint.

First, open a new file and choose the **blank page** as your layout. In version 2010, choose **Design**, then **Page Setup**.

To design a large poster, you must tell PowerPoint (or whichever program you're using) how large the paper is. You can do this by going to the **File / Page Setup** menu -- just enter the width and height you want, within the limitations given above. It should choose Portrait or Landscape automatically, based on the height and width you enter.

Once you've done this, press **OK**. PowerPoint may complain that the size exceeds that of the current printer -- just say **OK** to continue – we will deal with this later. You should now be facing a blank page in the appropriate dimensions. If the rulers are turned on, you'll see that it's the size you asked for.

Under **View**, choose **Ruler**. You may also want to **Gridlines**. This may help you keep track of the size of things and spacing.

Creating Your Poster

You can treat this extra-large page just like a PowerPoint slide -- write text, add images, graphs and so forth. The difference is that for all but the largest font sizes, you will have to zoom in on the section you want to work with. Depending on which version of PowerPoint you have, zooming in may cause a "Slide Miniature" to appear -- this gives you an overview of your page. There's really no difference between what you've done before on standard sized slides and what you can do here -- there's just more space to do it on.

Printing a Small Version

To see how your poster looks on paper, you can actually scale it to fit on a standard 8.5x11 inch sheet of paper. I recommend that you do this, because ...

|  |
| --- |
| * it's a good way to print and check your work, without wasting a huge sheet of paper * It is a good way to check your text size. If you can't read it on the 8.5x11 page, your font is too small. * It will help you keep oriented when you finally to assemble your poster.   To scale to 8.5x11, go to **File / Print** ...  **PC:** Make sure your regular printer is selected. At the bottom of the dialog box is a checkbox that says **Scale to fit paper** -- check it and go.  **Mac:** In the dialog box, you will see a pull-down menu on the left hand side, a line or two down. It probably says **General**. Click on that and select the pull-down item that says **Microsoft PowerPoint**. Look for the box that says **Scale to fit paper** and check the box. Then continue with your printing. |

Poster Assembly

* When you are ready, print all the items that will go on your poster. Since you now have them sized correctly on your PowerPoint slide, you can print them directly from there and they will be correctly sized for your poster. Sometimes the printer wants to split the poster in the wrong places so the other way is you can copy your items to be printed onto a word file, then print. If color printing is an issue for you, send me the image you want printed and I can do that part for you.

3. Present to class.

* Like before, plan on a 2-3 minute prepared talk, with 2 minutes for questions afterward. In making such a presentation,
  + Do not read the poster. Instead, give the big picture, explain what is important, and use the graphics on your poster to illustrate your explanation. Your poster and your talk should work together: during your talk you should be constantly referring to the graphics on your poster.
* You should know your material well enough so you do not have to continually read or search for information.
* This part will be conducted as a traditional “poster session” like at every scientific conference.

Particulars

* Minimum poster size is 36” X 24”. If you wish it may be larger, but it should NOT be smaller.
* It may stand by itself, or not. For those that are not self-standing we can tape them to the wall.
* The grade you get for your poster will be based on how well you followed the recommendations of the web references above, and against the rubric below.

Timeline

* Final topic choice \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
* Preliminary poster design \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
* Final poster design \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
* Poster session (completed poster due) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Poster Grading Rubric**  for \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

The following criteria is used to grade your poster, each on a scale of 0 to 4, where 4 = strongly agree and 0 = strongly disagree. The total combined value of your poster and presentation is 20 points.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Criteria** | **Score** |
| Appearance and Formatting |  |
| 1. Poster generally follows the recommendations given by the “Effective Scientific Posters” website and as presented to you in class. |  |
| 2. Words are easy to read from an appropriate distance (3-5 feet). |  |
| 3. Poster is well organized and easy to follow. |  |
| 4. Graphics and other visuals enhance presentation. |  |
| 5. The poster is neat and appealing to look at. |  |
| 6. Poster is free of grammatical and spelling errors. |  |
| Content |  |
| 7. Content is clear and easy to understand. |  |
| 8. Poster is focused on the original topic choice. Space is not wasted on peripheral information. |  |
| 9. There is sufficient detail to convey the science of the topic in question appropriate to an introductory college-level course in Oceanography. The poster reveals a depth of understanding that reflects considerable study of the topic in question. |  |
| 10. Poster is scientifically accurate. |  |
|  |  |
| Presentation |  |
| 11. Presenter has a good understanding of the topic. |  |
| Total = |  |