How Can I Incorporate a Group Poster Session into my Class?

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Poster Session for 0401-381

1. **Poster format requirements:**

   Poster Title (Scientific, but interesting)

   Article Title (in APA format) Author(s) of the journal article

   Source: Journal, volume issue, pages cited in APA format

   Abstract (per class discussion)

   Introduction

   Methods and Materials

   Results

   Conclusions and Implications

   Acknowledgments (if needed)

   Further references (List 3 articles that have cited the research article or discussed the same research topic since the poster article was written; locate with *Science Citation Index* and cite using APA format).

   Reviewers (Poster session group members)

II. **Group poster expectations:**

   Whole group prepares one poster on the poster board collaboratively.

   Poster contains at least three graphics (any type).

   Visual appeal and technical correctness are evident.

   Each group member will take an individual turn giving a short summary of the group poster and answering questions for at least 10 minutes.

   All group members observe, read, and take notes on all the posters.
III. Individually graded assessments poster session requirements:

*All 381 students will complete Poster Article Review Worksheet.

*All 381 students will complete an open notes content quiz on posters.

*All 381 students will critique the posters and poster process in a comprehensive, reflective, written two-page assignment.

All 381 students scored will be marked satisfactory or ineffective on an individual basis when they are observed reviewing the poster and/or leading the oral discussion.

IV. Total Assessment:

Each poster will receive one grade; each group member will get that same grade. Each student's total grade on poster work will be a weighted score combining the poster grade and the * noted assignments above as shown in the grading values chart. If the instructor deems the oral poster presentation is unsatisfactory, 8 points will be subtracted from the total poster session grade.

V. Individual Total Poster Grade Report

Name___________________________

Poster topic ______________________

Group poster grade _________ X 3 = _________

Initial Poster Article Review (50 pts.) _________

Poster Content test (100 pts.) _________

Reflection (50 pts.) _________

Total _________ (Divide by 5)

Oral report ____S _____U

TOTAL POSTER PROJECT Grade _____________
Group Poster Session Do’s and Don’ts

1. **DO** select the articles that students will present yourself; always select one more article that the number of groups you plan to have - 4 to 6 students per group and 4 or 5 poster groups per class will work for a 75 minute session.

2. **DO** select articles of approximately the same difficulty and length from the same or similar journals and make a copy of the article for yourself and the title page for each article.

3. **DO** have the students number off, but keep control of that process so that you can subtly maximize group diversity.

4. **DO** have students make a list of the poster group, identify their topic, and turn that data in to you before they leave the first session; this helps you assign absentees to the right groups.

5. **DO** make students responsible for an accurate record of each member’s attendance at the in-class sessions.

6. **DO** display the poster board and, if possible, a sample poster in the first work session.

7. **DO** invite a few academic guests to drop in on the session - faculty, staff, librarians, graduate students, etc. and consider some SIMPLE refreshments. Both are nice “I am proud of your success!” gestures.

**DON’TS**

1. **DON’T** forget to explain to your students why you are having a poster session, why you are selecting the articles, why you are having them number off in groups, and why the points awarded for the poster (*not total grade*) will be the same for all members in the group.

2. Excluding the poster presentation, **DON’T** spend a whole class period on the poster. The 15 to 45 minute suggested tasks are productive “breaks” from lecture and discussion.

3. If students are having problems working together, **DON’T** step in and solve their problems!

4. **DON’T** confuse having student groups stand up in class and show posters with having students participate in an authentic group poster session. Engaging students in developing and displaying a group poster, taking individual ownership by giving an oral presentation and answering audience questions, and viewing posters as an active, self-regulated, reflective learner is a “high impact” transformative experience! (See Kuh reference.)

5. **DON’T** forget to save a record of each poster topic, your group feedback form and the names of group members in it for future use. Students do remember transformative experiences and will want you as a reference!
Biolit Poster Quiz - Fall 2010: Example Questions from the Open-Notes Test

HORSES:

1. Check the behaviors that were statistically shown to be reduced when horses travelled with a mirror instead of alone:
   ______ A. Duration of vocalization
   ______ B. Head tossing
   ______ C. Eating behaviors
   ______ P. Pawing

2. What effect did each of the three treatment groups have on the heart rate of the horses?

3. For what reason did the researchers collect data on the ear temperatures of the horses as well as rectal temperatures?

4. What effect did travelling have on the ear temperature of all the horses?

WESTERN LOWLAND GORILLAS

1. What was the independent variable in this experiment?

2. What was the dependent variable in this experiment and what were the two treatment groups of that variable?

3. Which group of gorillas was statistically more aggressive when large visitor groups were present? How was "aggressive behavior" operationally defined?

4. What was the important preliminary conclusion that this study offers to zoo managers who have gorilla areas?

5. How might you improve this experimental design?
Poster Group Article Review

Please locate your poster article by going to the Cook Library Home Page and finding the journal in which the hard copy appeared and then locating the research article in the appropriate volume. This is a required rough draft writing.

A. What did the researcher(s) want to know?

B. What did they do to answer the question?

C. What did they find out?

D. What is/are the implication of what they found out?

E. Which graphic did you find most effective? Give two reasons why.

F. Did you understand what the statistics selected by the researchers(s) had to say? Give an example.

G. What are four "fuzzy things" about the article? You may comment on big ideas, vocabulary, statistics, words, or anything you don't know about the organism.
Group Evaluation for the ________________________ Poster

Format Expectations:

Overall appearance and visual appeal (includes font size, layout, and “timing”):

Clarity of background terms:

Quality and relevance of the 3 graphics to understanding the article or topic:

Alignment and thoroughness in presenting the purpose, methods, and results:

Validity (per original source) and transparency of conclusions and implications:

Attention to audience, tone, academic writing, discipline-specific expectations:

GROUP POSTER GRADE ______________________
Poster Reflection

Our poster session was a great learning experience in many aspects. Through my own project and by the presentation of other posters, I discovered the characteristics of research papers and how to properly transfer that information onto a poster. The poster session exposed me to facts and research areas that I did not know beforehand. I also learned valuable factors about myself that will be advantageous in my future.

Each poster was generally well-presented, but some had better qualities than others. Some posters did a good job describing the article so that readers clearly understood the concept and research aspects of the authors. For instance, the poster about polyandry in small marsupials did not leave the observer confused or unable to comprehend any terms. The abstract and introduction were simple and to the point. They also included the hypotheses of the scientists in four succinct ideas. This allowed onlookers to understand why researchers thought polyandry would be beneficial compared to having one sexual partner. Another positive quality that I noticed during presentations was overall simplicity and consistency in appearance of posters.

The group who presented bias in observer gender had a consistent font, matting technique, and their poster was visually appealing to any audience. A final strength that I noticed was appropriate an affective graphics. From what I recall, every poster group had graphics that were relevant to their posters but the marsupial group stands out the most. They had a picture of the marsupial that was being studied, as well as various graphs depicting the results of female's choice in body size, the order of male mating, and the survival of offspring in relation to male mating order. Each graphic assisted the observer in understanding the overall study.

Though each poster had many strengths, there were also a few weaknesses that must be addressed. When presenting a poster to any audience, it should be visibly appealing and comprehensive. The group who presented
the study on mirrors used to reduce stress for horses in trailers had a great presentation and information, but their poster was somewhat confusing to follow. Sometimes too much information or trimming leaves the reader lost; this was the case when I looked at their poster. Another weak spot was the lack of preparation for some group members. When being involved in a poster session, you should know enough about your subject to be able to present it to an audience without reading word for word from the poster. I found that the group member who lectured to me from the gorilla experiment did not know much about their research paper and could not give details when asked. I am sure that there were members from almost every group who need to improve this aspect. Besides presentation skills, some groups could have made their information more straightforward so that everyone could get the significant data without having to re-read things several times. I think that the group who focused on behavioral analysis of prey-seeking snakes could improve on this aspect.

Throughout this process, I learned that I ultimately have no experience with formal research papers or posters. I was able to gather relevant skills from this project such as the important aspects needed for a research paper and poster presentation, as well as proper poster session etiquette. I also discovered that I need to work on simplistic writing. I had to edit my sections of our poster several times until I finally reached an appropriate and comprehensive passage. Most importantly, I left the poster session knowing that I enjoy presenting for an audience in this manner. I was not uncomfortable or stressed by having to summarize information to others and this is something that I know will benefit me in the future. This poster session was extremely beneficial and should be a part of the curriculum for all biology majors.
RESOURCES

1. WWW.NCSU.EDU/PROJECT/POSTERS (Site note states: We maintain this as the entry point to the site as we continue to improve it. We do not guarantee that any other links will maintain the same name through time. You need not ask our permission to reproduce for free distribution (i.e., not for selling) any of our material that appears on the Resources page, including the Quick Reference and poster evaluation criteria. We do, however, ask that you attribute this material to our site. The citation for this site shall be Hess, G.R., K. Tosney, and L. Liegel. 2010. Creating Effective Poster Presentations. http://www.ncsu.edu/project/posters/NewSite/ Site visited July 23, 2012.


