

## Guidelines for Posters for the 2009 Science Division Research Fair

### Important Dates

**Last day to send poster to Instructional Graphics for printing: Friday, Oct 2**

**Posters up: Thursday, Oct 22**

**Exposition: 12:30 -3:30 PM on Friday the 23rd of October**

**Posters taken down: Friday, Nov 6**

### **The Event**

Each year the Science Division hosts a research exposition designed to acquaint the Calvin community and the general public with the research activities of students within the Division. Students prepare posters that describe their research and the posters are displayed in the Atrium (front entry area) of DeVries Hall. The exposition is from **12:30 -3:30 PM on Friday the 23rd of October** when students are asked to meet visitors and informally describe their work. Thereafter, the posters remain on display for approximately two weeks.

### **Purpose and Audiences**

The Research Fair's purpose is threefold:

- to give students a forum for presenting and informally describing their research
- to provide students with practice opportunities for presentation activities at scientific or other meetings
- to acquaint people unfamiliar with the Science Division with the diversity and depth of research performed within the Division

The Calvin community and visitors are invited to attend the Research Fair. This audience consists of:

- all Calvin students, not just those in the Science Division
- parents – each year the Research Fair is held during Family Weekend
- faculty, staff, administrators
- visitors and friends of Calvin College

Note that this audience is a general audience which most likely lacks the training to understand a particular scientific discipline in depth. Therefore, you should consider this audience in planning your poster and be ready to explain your work in very general terms to be understandable by a college-educated layperson.

### **Specific Guidelines**

1. Design your poster presentation. You should discuss format, content, and effective presentation techniques with your professor. As you plan, remember that:

- **the poster's most important purpose is to communicate your project and results to as broad an audience as possible**
- the poster is not intended to be an exhaustive list of your research activities. Rather, it is intended to provide an introduction and overview of the problem, the results, and the application.
- your poster should appear as a single cohesive document. Avoid using a compilation of individual slides.
- bulleted lists, reduced wording, and pictures facilitate easy reading and good comprehension. Pictures can show process and context

- if possible, think about how to make your poster interactive. Introduce the topic broadly – the general appeal is likely to quickly engage a reader. Could you ask some questions to stimulate interest? Could you ask the reader to make choices to predict outcome?

2. Your poster minimally should include the following information:

- the problem you were trying to solve
- why that problem or topic is important, or how it's relevant to something the general audience can understand
- what you did to solve the problem or explore the phenomenon
- your results
- how your results relate to the problem, i.e., what's the "take home" message

Sometimes posters have rather formal sections, i.e., Abstract, Introduction, Methods, Results, Discussion, Acknowledgements. However, these sections might not be the best for your particular poster. Remember, you need to communicate as if you were talking to a non-science major.

3. Prepare the poster. If you wish to have Audio Visual print your poster, prepare it as a single PowerPoint slide (a poster that contains many individual PowerPoint slides looks choppy and is often unappealing). For preparing a single PowerPoint slide, Calvin's Instructional Graphics Department has prepared a template, which is available on their website:

[http://www.calvin.edu/admin/igs/ppt\\_postertemplates/](http://www.calvin.edu/admin/igs/ppt_postertemplates/)

4. Send your finished poster as an email attachment to [posters@calvin.edu](mailto:posters@calvin.edu) (Instructional Graphics) for printing. In the subject line of your email, put: Science Fair, professor's last name, your last name. If you do not use this type of subject heading, it may get overlooked. If you have trouble emailing your poster, you can also bring it to the Instructional Graphics office (Hiemenga Hall 225) on a flash drive (between 9:30am-4:30 pm).

(Check with your supervisor prior to submitting it to AV. This should be done prior to **October 2, 2009**. After that date there is no guarantee the poster will be printed by AV.)

If you had a Calvin funded Science Division fellowship, the cost of printing your poster will be paid from a Science Division account. The Science Division account will not, however, pay for laminating and mounting on foam core. If your research was funded by an external grant, your poster should be paid for from that grant. The Science Division Administrative Assistant will supply the account numbers to Instructional Graphics. If you or your professor have any questions about the cost of poster printing, please call the Science Division Office (526-6200).