What is a poster presentation?
Imagine a science fair with lots of people mulling around getting excited about the projects. Now imagine a room filled with Carolina students standing in front of large, printed posters on easels. The room is a buzz with conversation and enthusiasm. People walk up to a poster and ask, “Can you tell me about your research?” The student researcher (or group of researchers) gives a brief overview (~2-3 minutes) to start a conversation. The visitor will often have a question or two that engages in further conversation before moving on to another poster. Let’s examine some tips on being either a visitor to a poster or the student researcher(s) presenting a poster.

Tips for visiting a poster. (Please visit at least three posters)
- Look around and see which posters don’t have a lot of traffic. Visit these and show these students some love and attention!
- While you could read the poster quietly, this defeats the purpose of us all being together in this collaborative atmosphere. So, try beginning the interaction with “Can you tell me about your research?”
- After the researcher(s) give you an overview, it is polite/standard to ask at least one question. You can ask something specific about the research, or try questions like “What was most challenging or surprising to you about the work?” or “Do you think the skills you learned here will help you in the future?”
- A typical visit to a poster is about 5 minutes, but good interactions often last longer.
- Before you leave, be sure to thank the researcher(s) for sharing their work and take a photo of the QR code.
- Each poster will have a QR code that links to a quick 3-question feedback form meant to help students develop their communication skills. We ask that you do this in between visiting posters. Your feedback will be anonymous.

Tips for putting a poster together and presenting.
- Before you put your poster together, be sure you are clear on any specific instructor guidelines and expectations. These tips are general tips.
- Work backwards from what you will want to talk about when someone visits your poster. With these goals in mind, you can have a poster that best supports you in your communication and your own presentation style. You’ll want to communicate about:
  - The question, problem, or issue you have identified and are working to answer and address. Why is the question or issue important and novel?
What methods did you use to answer the question or address the issue?
What did you find or discover?
Did anything not go according to plan? Did you have to repeat anything or re-construct some aspects of your project?
How did collaboration come into play in your project? Why was it helpful?
Why should your audience care? Tell us about why this work is relevant to others in the field or to the general public.

- Think about a poster design that helps you communicate these points. Typically, you’ll want to emphasize visuals more than a lot of words. For example, if you want to explain a location, add a map. If you want to describe methods, consider a small flow diagram that helps you and the visitor see the big picture design. You do not want to read your poster to your visitor, as illustrated in the first few minutes of this video.
- Outline what you want to say and practice it with a slide presentation before you put your poster together. By talking through it, you’ll likely want to revise it several times before committing to an order and specific text/graphic elements. If you are in a group, decide if you are each going to take turns doing the entire presentation or if you will take parts of it when a visitor comes to the poster.
- Want to see some tangible examples from past students? Click here to see some past asynchronous online presentations. At an in-person event, don’t be afraid to engage with your visitors and have fun! This should be a conversation.
- Here are some videos with tips, but don’t feel like your poster needs to fit any particular format described here. Be creative. Let your poster be your companion tool for effective communication.
  - Giving an Effective Poster Presentation
  - Effective Poster Presentations for Your Research Conference
  - Presentations 101
  - Presenting a Poster in the Humanities

Tips for poster size.
Recommend a maximum poster size of 48”x36” or 36”x48” (width x height).

Tips for poster printing.
To ensure poster delivery for the Research Expo, submit for printing by November 22, 2021.
  - Print Stop located on the second floor of the UNC Student Stores.
  - PhDPoster has free pickup available at the Health Science Library.
  - FedEx Kinko’s located on Franklin Street.

Please register to attend the Fall 2021 Expo here.