GUIDELINES FOR POSTER PRESENTATIONS
3rd ISDSC Speaker Confirmation Form
November 28-December 2, 2005 • University of Miami RSMAS • Virginia Key (Miami), Florida, USA

Attention to detail is vital when preparing for any presentation. For posters, a general concept is the information should stimulate discussion, not give a long presentation. Because space is limited, keep text to a minimum, emphasize graphics, and make sure every item in the poster is necessary.

Preparation and Layout
• Draw a rough sketch of the poster on graph paper to develop a clear idea of which components will go where.
• The poster will be in A0 DIN format (portrait): 46.8” high x 33.11” wide (1189MM x 841MM).
• The poster display board will be 4-feet high x 6-feet wide (1.22 M high x 1.83 M wide), so there will be two posters per board. Boards are approximately 30 inches (76.2cm) off the floor. See diagram on first page.
• Include the title and authors of the poster as listed in your abstract.
• Information on the poster should read like a book – flowing from left to right and from top to bottom.
• It may be helpful to use arrows or identifiers (sequential letters or numbers) to guide the reader through the poster.
• You can also arrange it in two or three vertical columns, but not horizontal strips.
• The introduction or rationale should be placed at the upper left and the outcome/impact or concluding comments should appear at the lower right. Objectives and other information will fill the remaining space.
• Keep it simple – too much information leads to messy or “busy” posters.
• Avoid overwhelming your audience with too many numbers, words, and/or complicated graphs.
• Stick to two or three main points. Too many can confuse the viewer. Get feedback from others before finalizing it.

Text
• Double-space all text, using left justification.
• Use short sentences, simple words, and bullets to illustrate discrete points.
• Written material should be concise. Avoid using jargon, acronyms, or unusual abbreviations.
• The printed outcomes/impacts should permit observers to focus on a concise statement of your central findings that lends itself to discussion.

Fonts
• All information should be large enough to read easily from at least 4 feet away (1.22 M).
• Suggested text size is no smaller than 24 point; Author(s) and affiliation(s) should be at least 42 point; Subheadings should be at least 60 point.
• The title should be printed across the top of the poster in characters of 80-150 point. (Again, allow for the 4”x4” poster number in the top left-hand corner.)
• San serif fonts. (The small finishing strokes that stem from the upper and lower ends of a character) are easiest to read. Suggested options include: Arial, Century Gothic, Franklin Gothic Medium, Lucida Sans.
• Choose one font and then use it throughout the poster.
• Add emphasis by using boldface, underlining, or color. (Italics are sometimes difficult to distinguish from regular.)
• Do not use all caps unless it is for one or two word headings. ALL CAPS TEXT IS NOT THE EASIEST TO READ.

Illustrations (graphs, charts, photos, etc.)
• The success of a poster directly relates to the clarity of the illustrations and tables.
• Self-explanatory graphics should dominate the poster (at least 50% of your poster space).
• Keep captions brief.
• A minimal amount of text should supplement the graphic materials.
• Graphic materials should be visible from a distance of four (4) feet.
• Only include essential information in graphs and tables.
• Label data lines in graphs directly, using large fonts and color. The use of legends and keys will take the viewer more time to interpret your message.
• Lines in graphs should be thicker than normally provided in printed letter-sized paper reports or manuscripts.
• Use colors to distinguish different data groups in graphs. Avoid using patterns or open bars in histograms.

Use of Color
• Overuse of color can be distracting – restrained use of 2 to 3 colors for emphasis is valuable.
• Two to three related background colors will unify the poster.
• Use a light background with darker photos; a dark background with lighter photos.
• Use a neutral background (gray) to emphasize color in photos, a white background to reduce the impact of colored photos.