



Making Scientific Posters

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What is the purpose of a poster?

- Why would you want to make a poster vs. other presentation forms?
- What are the strengths & weaknesses of this medium?
- What have you liked or disliked about posters you have seen?
- There are no hard and fast 'rules'



Audience & Message

Audience

- What are you making the poster for?
 - homogeneous or heterogeneous audience
 - be aware of your use of jargon

Message

- What do you really want people to ‘get’ from your poster?
 - results vs. main message of a poster
 - use of titles to emphasize message



How do you start?

- **First - what program are you using?**
 - Powerpoint, CorelDraw, Illustrator
- **Second – what style of poster?**
 - a bunch of small sheets or one big sheet
- **Third – what are the key elements that need to go onto the poster?**
 - key sections, graphs, tables, abstract
- **Fourth - how will you lay out your poster?**
 - left to right or key points centred
 - play around with laying out the key elements to see what is most effective



Text

Text

Text

What are common problems with posters?

- **Size - minimum 24 pt., 36 is better**
- **Font - keep it simple**
 - **Arial or Times New Roman**
- **Amount of text**
- **Point form & bullets versus paragraphs**
- **Handouts**
- **Titles - usually 100+ and can be a bit more creative in font; what about questions**
- **Affiliations of the authors**



Graphics and logos

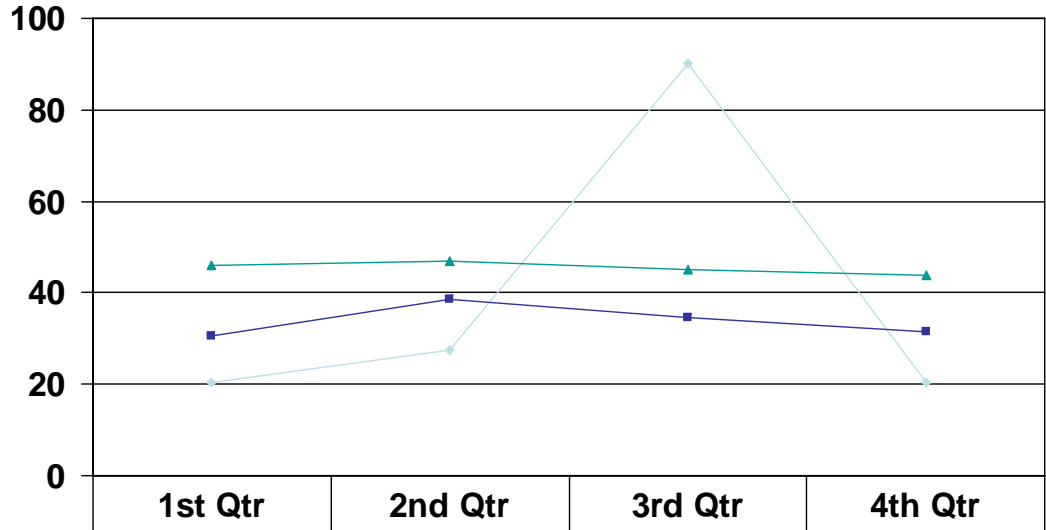
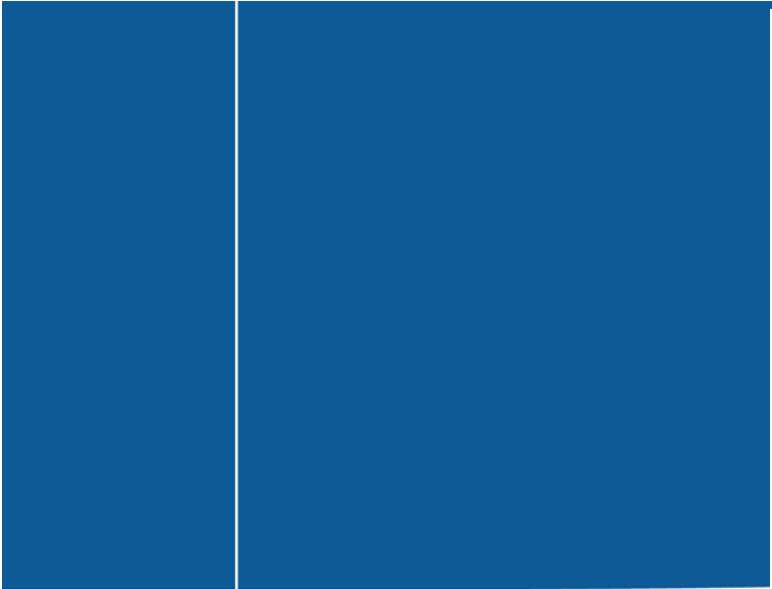
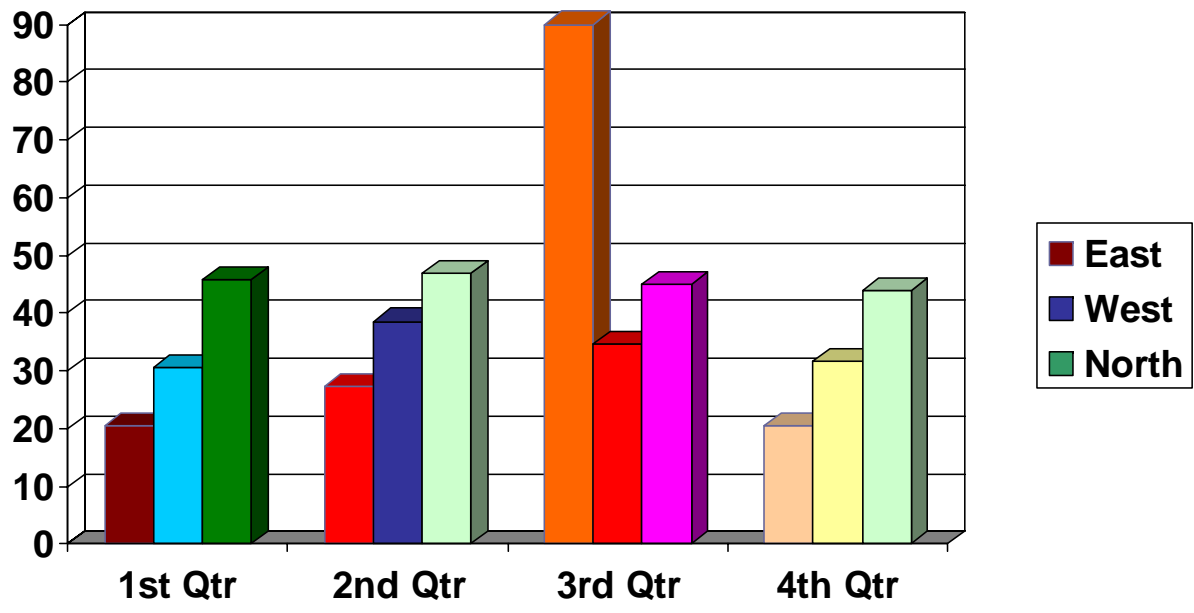
- Graphics should illustrate and enhance key points
- Aim for a balance of text and graphics
- Some professional disciplines such as pathology often have a higher # of graphics \Rightarrow photographs
- Copyright, permission to use
- Logos
 - organization/funders
 - size and placement



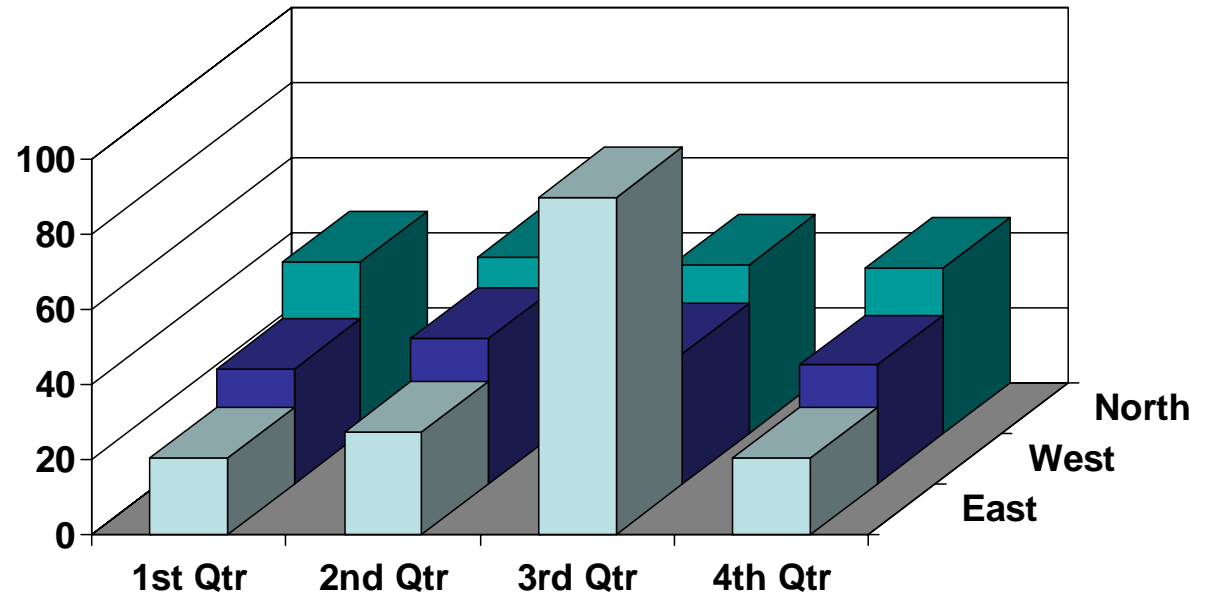
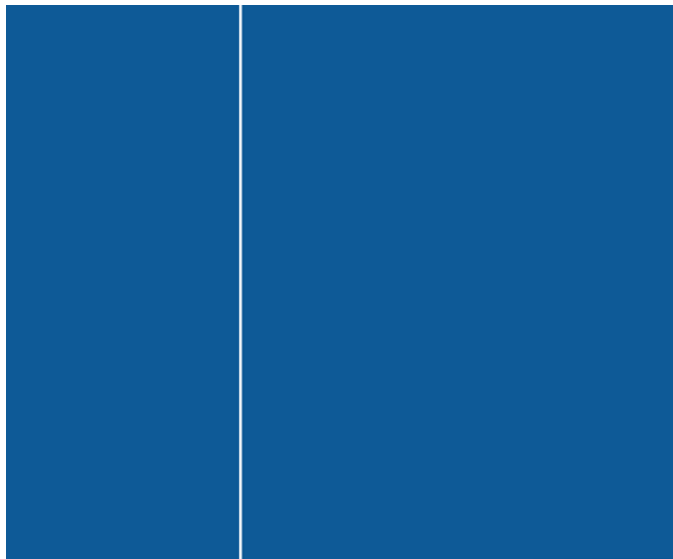
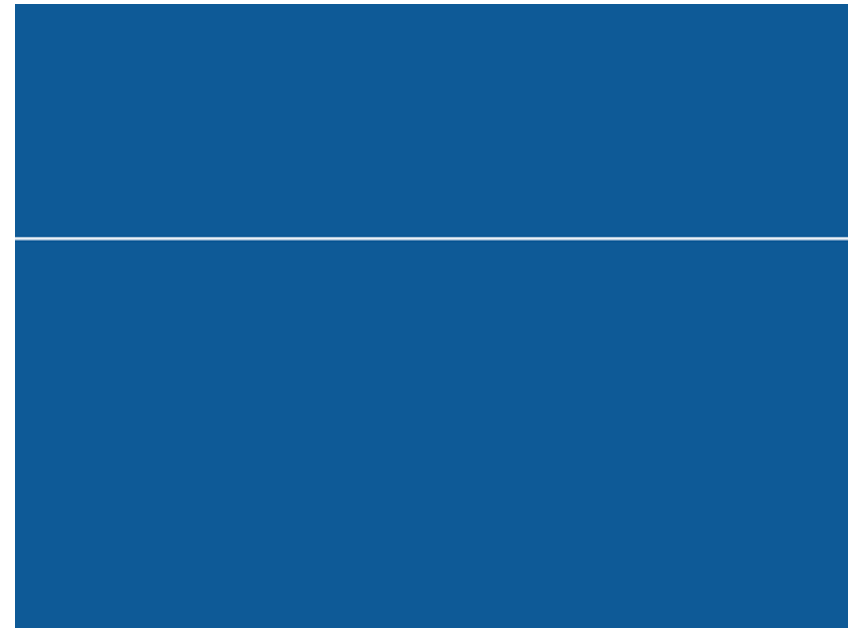
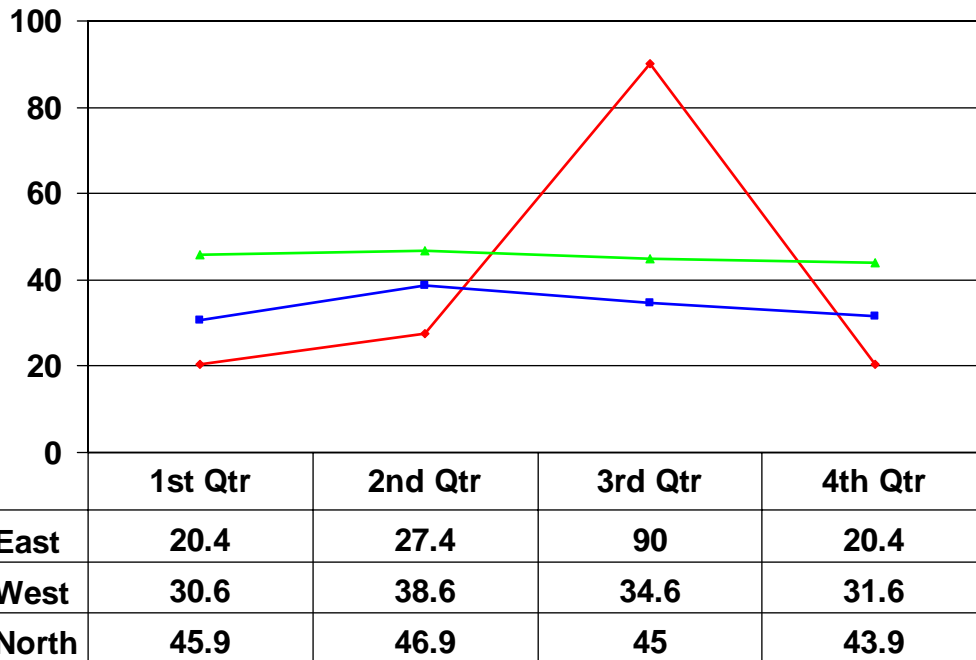
Figures, tables, charts & graphs

- These should not duplicate text
- Choose those that support the message for this particular poster ⇒ leave the rest off!
 - highlight the particular SS finding(s) so that the readers can find it easily
- Ensure the legends are brief but clear
- Use distinct colours for each data series
- Choose appropriate chart style for data being presented





	1st Qtr	2nd Qtr	3rd Qtr	4th Qtr
East	20.4	27.4	90	20.4
West	30.6	38.6	34.6	31.6
North	45.9	46.9	45	43.9



Colour

Background colour

- Readability of elements on the background colour
- Does it enhance the overall poster? Is it aesthetically pleasing/easy to look at?
- Most common - light colour background

Text colour(s), box lines, title colours

- Do they highlight or distract?

Public disclosure & intellectual property

If you would like your discovery or invention protected, be aware:

- If enabling, then public disclosure will bar patent filing in most of the world
- The US and Canada give 1 year's grace for patent filing from the date of the public disclosure

Public disclosure includes:

- Public talks, posters, enabling abstract publication
- Formal printed publications
- Internet publication



Public disclosure & intellectual property

Talk to UBC's University-Industry Liaison Office (UILO) before your first public disclosure

• For more information:
<http://www.uilo.ubc.ca>

- There is also an IP Guide for grad students on the UBC Grad Studies web page at:
www.grad.ubc.ca under “Current Students”



Summary

- **Key Message for the right audience**
- **Text – highlight important points**
- **Graphics/Charts – balanced with text**
- **Effective use of colour for emphasis and ease of reading**
- **IP protection**
- **Resources**
 - **The Media Group**
www.mediagroup.ubc.ca
 - **colleagues - ask for feedback**

