

It's a Poster about Posters: How an In-Person Science Literacy Poster Session Went Online

Grace Romund, Justin Fuhr, Marie Speare, Vickie Albrecht, Maureen Babb & Ryan Schultz
University of Manitoba Libraries



University
of Manitoba

Background

The University of Manitoba's science librarians developed a three-credit, second-year course entitled "Information Skills for the Sciences" that was delivered for the first time in the fall of 2020. The culminating project of the course was a scientific poster session where students shared their research project as a poster presentation with their instructors and classmates.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the course was moved to online synchronous delivery and all assignments needed to be adapted for the online format. We designed a virtual poster session simulating an in-person event, hosting the poster session on Zoom for a class of twenty students using breakout rooms to separate presentations.

Design

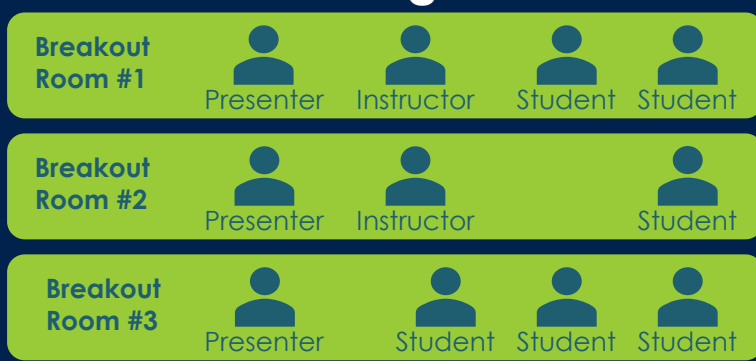


Figure 1. Poster Breakout room structure. Instructors and students could move between rooms to attend all presentation sessions.

We designed a virtual poster session simulating an in-person event on Zoom for a class of twenty students. Breakout rooms were used for each presentation. Some students worked on their posters in pairs. Poster session took place during class (75 minutes).

A practice session was held in advance to familiarize students with the technology and room setup.

Half of the class presented for the first part of the class while the other half attended the sessions. Students were given co-host privileges and so were able to switch from one breakout room to another.

Two instructors marked each poster, to which they were assigned in advance. Posters were also uploaded to the course learning management system. A library technician attended to help with technical issues.

Assignment Guidelines

Students were given the following instructions:
The goal of this assignment is to make a visually appealing poster, summarize your topic in a way that is easy for others to understand, and be able to talk about the key points in a poster presentation setting. You will be also pulling together what you have done throughout the course, specifically from other assignments.

Content requirements:

Title	Subheadings
Your name	Conclusions
Introduction	References
Methods	Graphics

Grading Rubric

Presentations were marked out of 30

30 points	The presentation was the appropriate length. It did not seem hurried or too slow. The presenter spoke clearly. Presenter demonstrate full knowledge of the material and can explain and elaborate when questions are asked.
22.5 points	The presentation was the appropriate length but seemed slightly hurried or too slow. The presenter spoke clearly most of the time. Presenters have sufficient knowledge of the material to answer questions.
15 points	The presentation was the appropriate length but seemed very hurried or too slow. The presenter spoke clearly and distinctly only some of the time. Presenters have difficulty answering questions beyond a rudimentary level.
0 points	The presentation was too long or too short. The presenter did not speak clearly. Presenters cannot answer expected questions.

Discussion

This online poster session successfully simulated a live event; students delivered a live poster presentation and were free to mingle and visit other posters at will. The event was not without problems however, as some students ran over their allotted time, and instructors found they did not have much time to attend a presentation before needing to move on to the next one. All in all, however, the event was a success.