Special Skills Workshops # 3: Poster Making Session 1 - Preparing a Sample Poster

Speaker: Dr. Andrea Burrows, Grant Coordinator for NSF GK-12 Fellows and RET Projects
Dates: June 23, 2011
Times: 2:00 - 3:30 PM
Venue: University of Cincinnati, Old Chem. 615A

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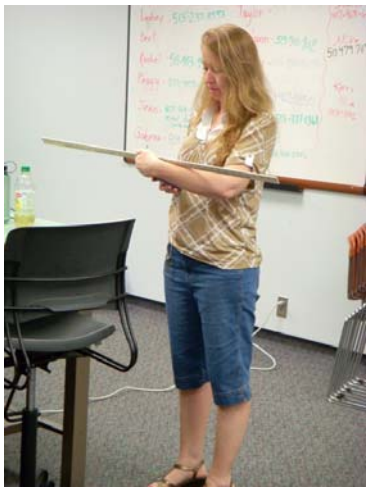
The Poster Making workshop session #1 was given by Dr. Andrea Burrows, Grant Coordinator for both the NSF Graduates K-12 (GK-12) and the Research Experience for Teachers (RET) at the University of Cincinnati. Dr. Burrows received her B.S. in Science Education/Biology from the University of Central Florida (UCF), M.S. in Science Education from Florida State University (FSU), and Ed.D. in Curriculum and Instruction from the University of Cincinnati (UC). Since 2007, Dr. Burrows has held the NSF GK-12 and RET grant coordinator position at UC. In August 2011, she will join as Assistant Professor of Secondary Science Education at the University of Wyoming. In addition to teaching courses at UC, Dr. Burrows has taught at Northern Kentucky University (NKU) since 2006. Prior to these university experiences, she worked as a middle and high school science teacher for 12 years in Florida and Virginia. Her research explores partnerships between teachers and scientists.



Dr. Burrows Explaining the Measurement Requirement for the Tower

Students of any age do not like to hear the word assignment, and the RET participants are no exception. The purpose of having the poster making workshop is to instruct the participants in the expectations of the assignment and to impress upon them the overall goal of the poster. The goal of having a poster developed is to help excite and inform the RET participant's students of their summer RET experience.

The participants anxiously awaited the instructions for the poster making assignment, eagerly wanting to get started. In order to have material to work with the class was given the challenge of building a tower from a limited number of supplies that would hold a certain number of apples. Obviously, the workshop participants worked diligently planning and building their towers with excitement.

The goal was to develop a tower that when free standing would support as many apples without collapsing, however the points would be awarded based on the height of the first apple (in inches to the nearest ½ inch times the number of apples) and from this experience the RET participants would then make a sample poster. The supplies included a large paper bag, masking tape strip, three marshmallows, four paper cups, three Starburst candies, a straw, newspaper and two pieces of paper, displayed below.

Material and Final Product of the Tower Building Challenge

After having already been introduced to the Wiki site the participants had to find the poster template on the wiki to begin designing their poster based on the challenge. As always practical application is the best. Once the use of the template was utilized it was obvious that this would not be too difficult. Since the framework had been established, Dr. Burrows then got down to business with the official requirements and explanation of what makes a good poster.

It was emphasized that to have an eye catching poster the audience for the poster must be taken into consideration. Since the poster will be used in each participant's classroom the poster's audience will vary from middle school level to high school. The RET participant's assignment is to create a poster for their classroom to showcase their RET experience with the hope of developing enthusiasm in their students for their RET lessons.

The poster requirements are that it must answer several questions: What was the research about? What role did the RET participant play in the research? What material was used? Data findings and what was learned? What is interesting about this project? and of course How can this new knowledge be used in the classroom? In addition, the following must be included the A (engineering Application), C (engineering Career connections) and S (Societal impact).

The poster should not include a detailed background history or a lot of narrative. To attract the passerby the poster should be attractive with a strong title. The flow of information on the poster should be as if a story is being told. In order to be able to read the information the font size should not

be smaller than 24 points. Other detailed requirements can be viewed at http://www.eng.uc.edu/step/wiki2011/2011/06/23/poster-templates/ emphasis should be on accurate content and attractive design elements.

As with any body of work the ethics of reporting information must be taken into consideration and the website http://www.uc.edu/ucomm/branding/ gives valuable information as to this standard. The documentation of sources of data/information should be given as well as not infringing upon copyright of the University of Cincinnati or others. Once the poster is developed it is important to proofread the document not only for obvious grammatical and spelling errosr but for the unauthorized use of others material as well.

The presentation of the poster will take place on the last day of the summer research and should include a brief summary of the summer experience. Since an individual will pay attention for an average of 3-5 minutes the presentation should not exceed this limit.