GEOL 3050 Final Project/Poster Suggestions and Guidelines

Reminder that your final posters are due, *ready to print*, by the end of class on Tuesday, 12/1. It would be best if you showed up at 2:00 with it done, we checked it out, and you took the rest of the afternoon off. If it isn't done at the beginning of class, make sure it is very close.

General Guidelines:

Most any format is acceptable although Powerpoint might be easiest. Set up the slide size under "Page Setup" and "custom size". 48" long by 42" high are the dimensions.

Don't wait until the last minute to start your poster – it will take quite a few hours to produce something you're happy with.

Thursday, 12/3, be ready to discuss your poster to strangers. Be able to give them the 5 minute overview as to what you did, why it's important and what you learned. Be prepared to answer questions. "Walk them through" the poster.

Your poster needs the following parts prominently displayed:
(1) Title (big text, include your name)
(2) Introduction (scientific problem at hand, background info and motivation for the work)
(3) Methods/Analysis (what it is you actually did, what data you used and what it represents, what GIS analysis was done, potential errors/assumptions in your methods, etc)
(4) Results (the findings from your analysis)
(5) Conclusions/Discussion (a discussion of your results including what they mean, a summary of what you've learned and how it relates to the bigger picture) Some people prefer a separate discussion section talking about the results, and then a conclusions section that sums everything up.
(6) References used (full citations and website URLs for data sources).

Tips for construction and layout:

1) The goal is for someone to be able to walk up to the poster and get a quick sense of the problem, what you did, and what you found. Make it readable and in a logical order for the audience (like don't put your conclusions at the top and the intro at the bottom).

2) Make sure people can read all the text from 4' away. Nothing smaller than 32 pt font size.

3) Label the sections with even larger fonts (>50 pt). Use background shading, color boxes, lines, etc, to separate out sections.

4) Don't use dense blocks of text. Instead use bullets and numbered lists whenever possible. It makes reading/understanding it much easier for the audience.

5) Use lots of figures. Pictures, maps, graphs, etc. Make their labels readable.

6) All maps need the proper elements (scale, grid, north arrow, title, legend, etc). Include index maps as necessary. Graphs and pictures need proper labels too.

7) Prominently display the main points and results.

8) Include references to data used and other citations as appropriate.

9) Avoid overcrowding; also avoid lots of empty space.

10) The title should be the largest text and include your name.

You will be graded on everything listed above as well as the amount, quality and complexity of the GIS analysis completed.

Remember Rule #1: Don't embarrass your professor. And Rule #2: Don't embarrass yourself.

Follow the above guidelines closely and you'll be fine. Don't procrastinate – it will take longer than expected to make the poster. I usually spend 8-10 hours making a poster for a professional meeting.