Helping to Bridge the Communication Gap through Community-Engaged Research Presentations

Grace Pelak, BS & Barbara Rochen Renner, PhD

University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Health Sciences Library

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Background:

- Recent investment by scholars in **community-based research approaches,** such as community-based participatory research (CBPR)

- Need for academic researchers to learn how to **present research results to community** - rather than academic - audiences.

- Faculty and students often **look to librarians for support** in creating presentations

- The Health Sciences Library was approached by the director of a new course for assistance in just this situation

Course-integrated instructional session

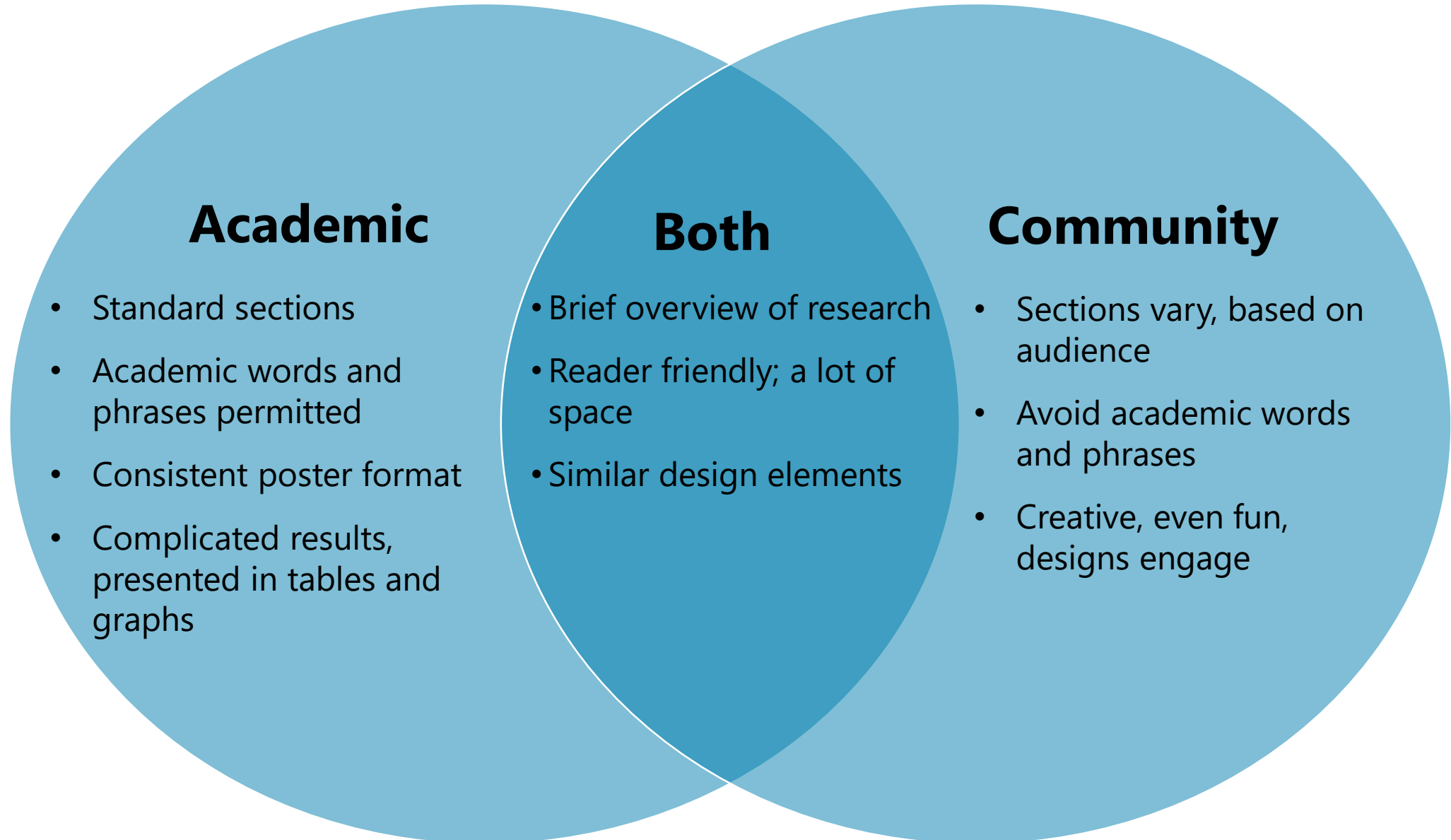**Who**: Student Research Assistant and Librarian

What: Teach PhD students (community-based participatory research) to present research results to community audiences

How: Research best practices to present to community audiences:
- literacy and health literacy levels
- use of plain language
- use of clear communication
- use of visuals and infographics

To further aid dissemination of these resources, an online guide was also created

Academic vs. Community Research Poster Presentations

Academic

- Standard sections
- Academic words and phrases permitted
- Consistent poster format
- Complicated results, presented in tables and graphs

Both

- Brief overview of research
- Reader friendly; a lot of space
- Similar design elements

Community

- Sections vary, based on audience
- Avoid academic words and phrases
- Creative, even fun, designs engage

Know your audience

Who is your audience? Parents, teachers, high school students, politicians, church leaders

What are their interests and concerns? What do they want to know!
- Adapt the poster to fit <u>their </u>needs

Think about what is most **relevant to them**

Respect cultural norms and customs

Check Readability & Reading Levels in Word (search "readability" in Microsoft support for settings)

Plain Language

Plain language does not mean you're "dumbing down" your work!

Avoid acronyms

Avoid scientific or academic specific language.

Consider grade level   (Check readability of text in Word)

Avoid "academic buzz words"   For example, "validated survey"

Clear communication

- Organize information with most important points first

- Break complex information into chunks

- Use **active** voice

  - Use Word readability statistics to check this!

- Don't assume you are being "too basic"

- Explain research as you would to family and friends

- Respect cultural values and norms
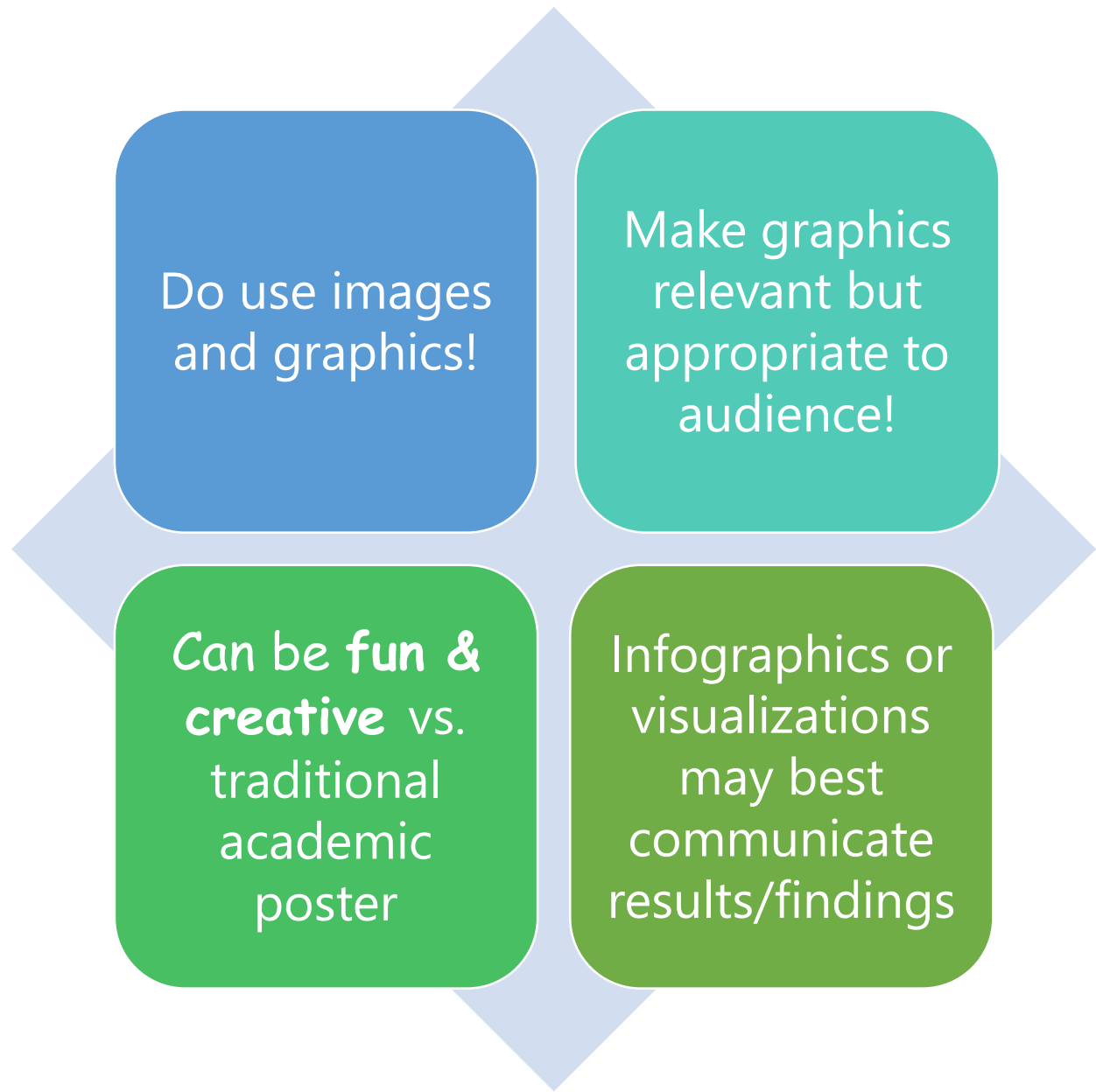
Communicating Data

- **Use large text to highlight important numbers**

- **Narrative is another tool for presenting data**
  - Tell your audience the story with words, visual images, or both
  - Use a short narrative, such as an anecdote, quotation, specific example, vignette

Communicating Data

- **Keep numbers simple** and report those most important to the audience
  - Include just the most relevant information
  - Limit yourself to communicating three or fewer numbers
  - Round to whole numbers when possible

- **Reduce any chance of mix-ups or mistakes** by thinking about ways your audience might misunderstand research results
  - Common mistake: "correlation equals causation"

Images and Graphics

Do use images and graphics!

Make graphics relevant but appropriate to audience!

Can be **fun & creative** vs. traditional academic poster

Infographics or visualizations may best communicate results/findings

What is an infographic?

- Information graphic

- A visual description or story of a topic

- Visual representation of information or data

PEMAT Assessment Tool

Tool to check patient materials - useful for posters and infographics, too:

- Checklist with online score sheet and instructions:

  https://www.ahrq.gov/ncepcr/tools/self-mgmt/pemat.html

- Separate tools for print and audiovisual materials

Check Readability & Reading Levels in Word

Displays information about the reading level of the document, including readability scores according to the [Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level test](#) and [Flesch Reading Ease test](#).

PC/Windows:

- Go to File > Options.

- Select Proofing.

- Under **When correcting spelling and grammar in Word**, make sure the **Check grammar with spelling** check box is selected.

- Select **Show readability statistics**.

- After you enable this feature, open a document, and [check the spelling](#) by pressing F7 or going to **Review** > **Spelling & Grammar**. When Word finishes checking the spelling and grammar, it displays information about the reading level of the document.
    - **Important:** You must correct or Ignore all errors found in the document before the readability statistics will display.

MAC/iOS and further information

- https://support.office.com/en-us/article/get-your-document-s-readability-and-level-statistics-85b4969e-e80a-4777-8dd3-f7fc3c8b3fd2

Check Readability & Reading Levels in Word

Resources at the Library

Library guides/resources

- [Consumer Health at HSL](#)
- [Health Literacy & Patient Education](#)
- [Lecture on infographics](#)
- [Data visualization guide](#)
- https://guides.lib.unc.edu/presentations
- https://guides.lib.unc.edu/infographics

Additional Resources/References:

Plain Language.gov
https://www.plainlanguage.gov/
https://plainlanguage.gov/resources/checklists/checklist/

NIH Catalyst: The Training Page: Plain Language Posters
https://irp.nih.gov/catalyst/v22i3/the-training-page-plain-language-posters

CDC tips for plain language posters
https://www.cdc.gov/healthliteracy/developmaterials/plainlanguage.html

NIH tips for communication and using plain language
https://www.nih.gov/institutes-nih/nih-office-director/office-communications-public-liaison/clear-communication
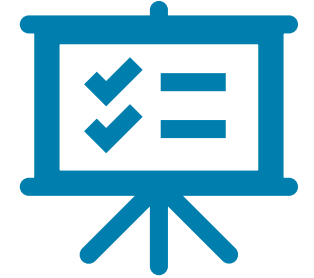
AAAS (American Association for the Advancement of Science) Communication Fundamentals
https://www.aaas.org/resources/communication-toolkit/communication-fundamentals

AAAS Engage with the public and policy makers
https://www.aaas.org/pes/mini-workshops

Infographic Resources

- Discipline specific, for example:

    ASHA (American Speech-Language-Hearing Association) website search:
    https://find.asha.org/asha#q=infographic&sort=relevancy

    WHO (World Health Organization) infographics:
    https://www.who.int/mediacentre/infographic/en/

    CDC (Centers for Disease Control) infographics:
    https://www.cdc.gov/socialmedia/tools/InfoGraphics.html

    APHA (American Public Health Association) Infographics:
    https://www.apha.org/news-and-media/multimedia/infographics

    Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS) Infographics:
    https://www.apha.org/news-and-media/multimedia/infographics

- **Tool to help create Infographics**: Canva, https://www.canva.com/

LibGuide

Community Engaged Research Posters & Infographics: Home

Resources for designing posters and infographics to present Community-Based/Community- Engaged Research to non-academic audiences

Resources at the Library

- Consumer Health at HSL
- Health Literacy & Patient Education
- Lecture on Infographics
- Data visualization guide
- Presentations
- Infographics

Contact Us!

Exploring data and communicating findings through data visualization: Lorin Bruckner, Data Visualization Services Librarian

Using plain language and appropriate literacy/health literacy levels:Terri Ottosen, Community Engagement and Health Literacy Librarian

Designing Community Poster

Designing Posters for Community Audiences

Tips for poster design:

- Know Your Audience
  - Who is your audience? community leaders, community advocacy members, parents, other stakeholders
  - What are their interests and concerns? What do they want to know!
    - Adapt the poster to fit their needs

Using Images and Graphics

Tips for using images and graphics:

- Make graphics relevant but appropriate to audience!
- It is ok to be fun & creative when using graphics to communicate your message
- Infographics or visualizations may best communicate results/findings

PEMAT Assessment Tool

The most important tool for assessing patient materials (print or A/V) can be put to good use with posters or infographics.

The Patient Education Materials Assessment Tool (PEMAT) and User's Guide

https://guides.lib.unc.edu/CER-posters

Future Directions

- Designing community research presentations requires creativity and thoughtfulness

- Librarians can make a difference in teaching scholars how to disseminate academic research to community partners

- Principles are beneficial for future instruction and may also inform how librarians communicate more effectively with the community

Thanks!

- **Grace Pelak**
  pelakg@email.unc.edu
  Graduate Research Assistant

- **Barbara Rochen Renner, PhD**
  brrenner@email.unc.edu
  Liaison, Allied Health Sciences

Health Sciences Library

University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill