

Presentation Guidelines: Content

Consider that you are not just showing what you learned, but that you are contributing to your classmates' knowledge and helping the St. Andrew's community to grow intellectually. Develop your content with this in mind.

The following points should be considered when developing your content:

- Show evidence of higher-level thought.
- Research thoroughly so that you have a rich understanding of your subject matter, with the ability to answer questions from your audience.
- Ensure that the majority of your content and many of your ideas are original and inventive
and based upon logical conclusions and thorough research.
- Include complete and accurate information.
- Engage your audience with rich content, enthusiasm, and eagerness to encourage them to want to learn more.
- Devise ways to help the audience understand and relate to the content.
- Explain difficult concepts and vocabulary.
- Include meaningful audience involvement or participation.
- Use visuals to support or extend the content.
- Properly cite sources according to MLA style or the like.

Presentation Guidelines: Organization

The organization of your presentation shows evidence of your preparation and attention to detail. If your presentation is organized and polished, your audience will be able to focus on your content and message.

Consider the following criteria when putting together your presentation:

- Include a greeting and an introduction of yourself and your topic.
- Use an introduction which engages the audience and is related to the content--a "hook" to get the audience interested.
- Follow a logical sequence.
- Maintain a fluent pace. (This takes practice!)
- If you are using PowerPoint slides as prompts, elaborate on brief points instead of reading lengthy text off each slide.
- Involve your audience in a meaningful way, allowing time for them to think and respond.
- Logically conclude the presentation.
- Rehearse several times..

Presentation Guidelines: Speaking and Presenting Skills

How you present yourself to your audience makes or breaks your presentation. Practice many times so that you are confident and can concentrate on the content and your audience during the presentation.

Keep the following points in mind as you prepare and present your presentation:

- Show confidence. (Preparation and practice will help this!)
- Know your content well enough so you don't need to be prompted or to read extensively from notes.
- Show enthusiasm for your topic.
- Use an interested, conversational tone of voice.
- Use humor, as appropriate, to connect to or extend the content.
- Make eye contact with various members of the audience.
- Use good posture and dress appropriately.
- Use body movement for effect only, otherwise stand still when speaking.
- Stay within two minutes of allotted time.
- Refrain from using empty words and fillers, such as "uh, like, you know, uhm..."

Presentation Guidelines: Visuals and PowerPoint

Visuals should support or extend the oral component of your presentation. They must be well-constructed and easy for your audience to see.

Some ideas for visuals include:

- PowerPoint slide show (see below for PowerPoint guidelines)
- Poster
- Model
- Transparency
- Video
- Real object
- Map
- Illustration
- Hand-out (attractive, well-organized with relevant information)

PowerPoint Slide Show Guidelines

Before you create a PowerPoint slide show, ask yourself this question: "Is this the best format to aid in presenting the results of my research findings and conclusions?" If you answer "yes,"

consider the following criteria when creating your slide show:

- Begin with an introductory slide including your topic and the names of the presenters.
- Each slide should contain main points, not the entire text of your presentation. You

should use the points for elaboration.

- Font size should be no smaller than 32 points and the style should be consistent throughout the slide show.
- Font color should contrast with the background color. Font color, typeface and contrast should be visible.
- Images should reinforce or extend the content and be visible from the back of the room.
- Use a lot of "white space," refraining from cluttering each slide.
- Use sound prudently—only for extending or supporting the content.
- Slide transitions should be consistent throughout the presentation.
- If linking to web sites, those should also be visible from the back of the room.
- Use correct grammar, spelling, punctuation, and capitalization.
- Include a "Works Cited" slide.
- Include an opening slide stating that your project contains copyrighted materials (if indeed it does), which have been used under the fair use exemption of the U.S. Copyright Law. If you have made alterations, those must be indicated.
- Try to rehearse your presentation with the computer connected to the projection device.
- Caution:** *If the desktop of your computer is decorated with photos, illustrations, slogans, etc., make sure that the content is appropriate for public viewing. If not, change it prior to your presentation.*

Presentation Guidelines: Group Presentations

Most careers require you to problem-solve with other colleagues, presenting results to a boss, board of directors, or a committee. Working in a group should be a good experience, but can also be stressful if you don't share the work load and cooperate.

The following points can help ease the stress and produce a polished presentation:

- Follow the guidelines in the other sections: Content, Organization, Visuals, Speaking and Presenting Skills.
- Share the work load.
- Contribute the same effort you would to an individual assignment.
- Include complete and accurate information.
- Make the presentation look unified—not like separate presentations put together.
- Give equal presentation time to each group member.
- Practice together several times before the actual presentation.