Presentation Guidelines
Preparing Effective Classroom Presentations

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Presentation Guidelines

Abstract

This presentation is intended to assist students in preparing effective presentations for the courses of Prof. James Sterbenz.
Presentations

Purpose

• Presentation is a sequence of
  - {slides | foils [IBM] | vu-graphs [Bell Labs]}

• Purpose
  - reminder of what to say and when
  - visual assist for attendees, but *not a distraction*
  - permanent record of talk for presenter and attendees
Presentations
Structure

• Structure
  – title foil: title, name, affiliation, email, URL
  – abstract (for printing - may be as small as 12 point font)
  – outline (repeat at each high-level section)
  – content
  – summary
  – acknowledgements
    • any imported content
    • anyone who helped with presentation content
  – references (for printing - may be as small as 12 point font)
    • full citations as in a paper

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Presentation Guidelines
Presentations
Page Style: Header and Footer

• Header and footer
  - name, title summary, page number, date, affiliation logo
  - should not take significant fraction of page area

• Title
• Text
• Background
Presentations
Page Style: Title Block

- Header and footer
- Title
  - meaningful summary of major point on foil
    - subtitle when groups of foils
- Text
- Background
Presentations

Style: Text

• **Text**
  - clear non-distracting font
    • e.g. Tahoma, Arial, Comic, Times
    • use symbols, italics, sub/superscript for math
  - use reasonable font size (e.g. 24pt / 20pt / 18pt)
    • disable PowerPoint autoformatting options
      - Tools → AutoCorrect Options… → AutoFormat As You Type
      - uncheck AutoFit boxes
      - the only useful options is “smart quotes”
    • manually decrease spacing only if *absolutely* necessary
  - use consistent style for *emphasis* and de-*emphasis*
    • your style may evolve over time; refine as necessary
Presentations
Style: Text

• Text
  - proofread
    • spell check your text
    • have a native-English speaking friend or colleague proofread
      - especially if your native language is not English
  - avoid fancy animations (e.g. fly-in)
    • bells-&-whistles sell product; don’t make good presentations!
    • but appear or dissolve-in can be useful to not reveal next point
  - your style may evolve over time
    • refine as necessary
Presentations

Style: Diagrams and Plots

• Diagrams
  – use when beneficial to explain concept
  – use animation *only* when needed to clarify
    • manual animation steps can be easier to edit and print
    • with animation only for movement within a step
      – e.g. packet flow

• Plots and graphs
  – try to match foil style if generated by other programs
    • foreground/background
    • fonts
Presentations

Style: Background

• Background
  – wallpapers are very distracting: *avoid them*
    • some PowerPoint templates are *very* bad
      – e.g. ocean, clouds, cascade
  – use contrasting background/text
    • light on dark best for projection
      – cool background colors are soothing (green, cyan, blue, violet)
    • dark on light best for printing
      – use color judiciously to allow black/white printing
      – can be difficult to maintain both light/dark and dark/light
  • avoid gaudy combinations
    – e.g. blue/red, red/green, blue/orange
Presentations
Semantics

• 1 major idea / foil
  – meaningful titles
  – use structure with sub-titles when necessary

• Structure bullet items into *meaningful* hierarchy
  – fit most bullet items on a single line
    • they *summarise* your spoken points
  – if you must wrap…
    …use linebreak or remove bullet and set indent
Presentations
Presentation Style

• Rate
  – 1 foil / 2 min. average guideline for most presenters
  – plan ahead!
    • do dry run practice in front of mirror or colleague

• Talk “to” the foils
  – don’t read the bullet items
    • reminder to presenter of what to say

• Use pointer judiciously
  – don’t randomly wave about
  – laser pointers are cheap – get one
Online Presentations

Metadata

• Insert correct metadata (especially for author)
  - in PowerPoint: File → Properties
• inherits some metadata from PowerPoint
Online Presentations
Portable Format

• Put online in a portable format
  - PDF or postscript
  - embed \textit{all} fonts
  - consider restricting PDF editing:
    Document $\rightarrow$ Security $\rightarrow$
    Show Security Setting for This Document $\rightarrow$
    Document Properties $\rightarrow$ Security $\rightarrow$
    Security Method $\rightarrow$ Password Security:
    Permissions: Restrict Editing
      (set password)
    Printing Allowed $\rightarrow$ High Resolution
    Changes Allowed $\rightarrow$ None
Online Presentations

Source Risks

• Online version should *never* be in MS-Office source
  - makes intentional cut-and-paste more difficult
  - unintentional reformatting can drastically change document
    • accidental editing
    • incompatible versions of PowerPoint
    • missing and incompatible fonts
End of Foils