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

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
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

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

• 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
• 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

• 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

Portable Format

• Put online in a portable format
  - PDF or postscript
  - embed all fonts
    Printing Allowed → High Resolution
    Changes Allowed → 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