

Technical Presentation Course Syllabus

Course Description

In this course, students will develop the oral presentation skills needed to present scientific and technical research findings in their specialist field. The course will be divided into two parts.

In Part One of the course, students will develop the basic strategies they need for preparing and giving an effective presentation in science and engineering. First, they will learn about the importance of presentations and the problems associated with them. Next, they will learn how to design a presentation by considering issues of audience, purpose, organization, flow, and style. Then, students will learn about popular delivery strategies and slide design techniques. They will conclude the section by studying ways to improve their delivery speed, stress, intonation, and pronunciation. At the end of Part One, students are expected to design and give a short five to ten minute oral presentation related to their research interests.

In Part Two of the course, students will focus on the language needed during each part of the presentation (opening, outline, background, materials/methods, results, discussion, summary, and Q&A). By analyzing the language used in a model presentation given at a real-world engineering conference, students will learn many of the common features of presentation language and develop confidence to deliver their own presentations in English. Students will also practice the target language through a series of short pair and group activities, and work toward a final presentation related to their research interests. At the end of Part Two, students are expected to design and give a five to fifteen minute presentation related to their research interests. Unlike the first presentation, this will be more detailed and will accurately reflect the type of presentation students will need to give at an academic conference.

Course Goals

- Understand the importance of presentations and their inherent problems.
- Identify the audience, purpose, organization, flow, style, and delivery of presentations.
- Use natural-sounding linking phrases and expressions when navigating and explaining presentation content.
- Cite and reference presentation resources and data.
- Use popular presentation software packages.
- Design clear and attractive slides.
- Deliver a presentation from notes with comprehensible pronunciation.
- Control nerves and deliver a presentation with confidence and authority.
- Understand how to deal with questions from the audience.

Textbook and Materials

Anthony, L. (2010) *Presenting Research in Science and Engineering* (2nd Edition).
Tokyo, Japan: DTP Publishing.

Course Schedule

Week 1	(1) General Introduction: Aims of course. Evaluation procedure. (2) Overview of Oral Presentations: Importance of oral presentations. Types of oral presentations. Differences between Japanese and English presentations. (3) Introductory-Presentation: Experiencing the problems of talking in front of people (4) Introductory-Presentation: Understanding body language
Week 2	Considerations when preparing an oral presentation - audience, purpose, organization (1)
Week 3	Considerations when preparing an oral presentation - organization (2), flow, style
Week 4	Presentation Delivery (1) Presentation delivery approaches (2) Importance of visual aids and problems with using slides (3) Designing effective slides (PowerPoint tutorial) (4) Speed, stress, intonation, and pronunciation
Week 5	(1) Overview of Presentation One - Topic of general interest (2) General design and format for Presentation One. (3) Guidelines for preparing presentations and completing evaluation reports.
Week 6	Presentation One (session 1) - Topic of general interest in science and engineering (5-10 minute presentation + 2 minute question/answer session)
Week 7	Presentation One (session 2) - Topic of general interest in science and engineering (5-10 minute presentation + 2 minute question/answer session)
Week 8	Presentation One discussion and feedback
Week 9	Language of presentations (1) Explaining the title, outline, and summary
Week 10	Language of presentations (2) Explaining the background, problem, materials, methods, and processes
Week 11	Language of presentations (3) Explaining and discussing data in the form of figures and tables
Week 12	Language of presentations (4) Understanding and answering questions from the audience
Week 13	(1) Overview of Presentation Two - Topic from specialist field of study (2) General design and format for Presentation Two. (3) Guidelines for preparing presentations and completing evaluation reports. (4) Group Work
Week 14	Presentation Two (session 1) - Topic from specialist field of study (5-15 minute presentation + 2 minute question/answer session)
Week 15	Presentation Two (session 2) - Topic from specialist field of study (5-15 minute presentation + 2 minute question/answer session)

Other

1. Students are required to work individually or in groups, and give a series presentations of increasing sophistication in English over the course. Students are also required to evaluate and submit reports on the presentations of other students in the class. Therefore, attendance and participation are an integral part of the course.
2. A basic tutorial on the use of presentation software (Microsoft PowerPoint) will be given, although prior knowledge of such software is useful.

Grading

Students will be evaluated based on a portfolio of work comprising of:

1. Observations of the student's Presentation One (Topic of general interest in science and engineering) performance (30%). Student materials used to prepare Presentation One (10%). Student evaluations of other students' Presentation One performances (5%).
2. Observations of the student's Presentation Two (Topic from specialist field of study) performance (30%). Student materials used to prepare Presentation Two (10%). Student evaluations of other students' Presentation Two performances (5%).
3. In-class participation / Textbook exercises / Homework (10%)

Final Grade		Final Grade	
Grade A+	90-100%	Grade C	60-69%
Grade A	80-89%	Grade F	0-59%
Grade B	70-79%		

Presentation Grading Rubric

Goal	Weight	Criterion	Pres. 1	Pres. 2
Audience	2	The content fully or mostly addresses the interests and/or needs of the audience.		
	1	The content partially addresses the interests and/or needs of the audience. Some concepts and/or terms are unexplained.		
	0	The content rarely or does not address the interests and/or needs of the audience. Many concepts and/or terms are unexplained.		
Purpose	2	The purpose fully or mostly matches the description of the presentation as outlined in the course description.		
	1	The purpose partially matches the description of the presentation as outlined in the course description.		
	0	The purpose rarely or does not match the description of the presentation as outlined in the course description.		
Organization	2	The presentation fully or mostly follows a logical sequence, using standard macro/micro organization patterns.		
	1	The presentation partially follows a logical sequence. Some sections of the presentation seem unrelated to those before or after.		
	0	The presentation rarely or does not follow a logical sequence. Many sections of the presentation seem unrelated to those before or after.		
Flow	2	The presenter fully uses linking expressions and software navigation techniques to guide the audience through the presentation content.		
	1	The presenter partially uses linking expressions and software navigation techniques to guide the audience through the presentation content. Occasionally, the audience will experience confusion regarding the positioning and/or nature of the content being explained.		
	0	The presenter rarely or does not use linking expressions and software navigation techniques to guide the audience through the presentation content. Frequently, the audience will experience confusion regarding the positioning and/or nature of the content being explained.		
Style	2	The presenter fully or mostly adopts a semi-formal, natural sounding, presentation style.		
	1	The presenter sometimes uses an overly formal or presentation style.		
	0	The presenter often uses an overly formal or presentation style.		
Referencing	2	The presenter fully or mostly cites and references source material verbally and/or in slides.		
	1	The presenter partially cites and references source material verbally and/or in slides. Some noticeable citations and/or references are absent.		
	0	The presenter rarely or does not cite and references source material verbally and/or in slides. Many noticeable citations and/or references are absent.		
Delivery (language, grammar)	2	The presenter fully or mostly uses correct language and grammar expressions.		
	1	The presenter partially uses correct language and grammar expressions. Some language/grammar mistakes result in confusion about important aspects of the presentation content.		
	0	The presenter rarely or does not use correct language and grammar expressions. Many language/grammar mistakes result in confusion about important aspects of the presentation content.		

Delivery (slide language/ grammar)	2	Slides are fully spell and grammar checked, and exhibit many good examples of parallelism.		
	1	Slides are partially spell and grammar checked, and exhibit several good examples of parallelism. Some noticeable errors remain that could be detected using standard software tools and/or strategies explained in class.		
	0	Slides are rarely or not spell and grammar checked, and they exhibit few or no good examples of parallelism. Many noticeable errors remain that could be detected using standard software tools and/or strategies explained in class.		
Delivery (text/graphics)	2	Slides fully or mostly demonstrate an effective use text, graphics, and whitespace. All visuals can be easily viewed by the audience.		
	1	Slides partially demonstrate an effective use text, graphics, and whitespace. Some important visuals cannot be easily viewed by the audience.		
	0	Slides rarely or do not demonstrate an effective use text, graphics, and whitespace. Many important visuals cannot be easily viewed by the audience.		
Delivery (eye contact, body language)	2	The presenter fully or mostly displays confidence and authority through good eye contact and body language, resulting in an engaging presentation for the audience.		
	1	The presenter partially displays confidence and authority through good eye contact and body language. At several key points in the presentation, the audience may doubt the confidence and/or authority of the presenter through lack of eye contact and/or body language		
	0	The presenter rarely or does not display confidence and authority through good eye contact and body language. At many key points in the presentation, the audience may doubt the confidence and/or authority of the presenter through lack of eye contact and/or body language.		
Delivery (voice projection)	2	The presenter fully or mostly displays confidence and authority through good voice projection, resulting in an engaging presentation for the audience.		
	1	The presenter partially displays confidence and authority through good voice projection. At several key points in the presentation, the audience may doubt the confidence and/or authority of the presenter through lack of voice projection.		
	0	The presenter rarely or does not display confidence and authority through voice projection. At many key points in the presentation, the audience may doubt the confidence and/or authority of the presenter through lack of voice projection.		
Delivery (pronunciation)	2	The presenter fully or mostly speaks with a pronunciation that is comprehensible to an international audience.		
	1	The presenter partially speaks with a pronunciation that is comprehensible to an international audience. Some important words/expression cannot be easily understood by the audience.		
	0	The presenter rarely or does not speak with a pronunciation that is comprehensible to an international audience. Many important words/expression cannot be easily understood by the audience.		
Q&A	4	The presenter fully handles questions with confidence and authority.		
	3	The presenter mostly handles questions with confidence and authority. An occasional question is not understood and/or is answered in a way that is confusing to the audience.		
	2	The presenter partially handles questions with confidence and authority. Some questions are not understood and/or are answered in a way that is confusing to the audience.		
	1	The presenter rarely handles questions with confidence and authority. Many questions are not understood and/or are answered in a way that is confusing to the audience.		
	0	The presenter does not receive any questions and/or makes no attempt to generate discussion during the Q&A time.		
Timing	4	The presenter finishes the presentation in or around the allocated time, allowing for questions in the Q&A session.		
	3	The presenter finishes the presentation a little early or a little late, causing the Q&A to be extended or shortened by 30% of the allocated time.		
	2	The presenter finishes the presentation a little early or a little late, causing the Q&A to be extended or shortened by 50% of the allocated time.		
	1	The presenter finishes the presentation a little early or a little late, causing the Q&A to be extended or shortened by 70% of the allocated time.		
	0	The presenter finishes the presentation a little early or a little late, causing the Q&A to be extended or shortened by 100% of the allocated time.		

"fully or mostly" = 80-100% of time, "partially" = 50-79% of time, "rarely or does not"=0-49% of time