

## Geosciences 308      **Tips for oral presentations**

Presentations are during your regular Wed or Thurs lab. Each is limited to seven minutes (that's less time than you think) and no more than five powerpoint slides (or overheads!).

1. Focus on content, not style. Fancy backgrounds or animations usually indicate that more time was spent on style rather than substance. Don't give that impression.
2. Make your slides legible. Use 16 pt size fonts or larger. Don't underline. Be sure that the color of the text contrasts with the background; there's nothing wrong with black on white.
3. One slide, usually the first, should have the full citation of the article that you are reviewing.
3. One slide should include a clear statement of the purpose of the study or the research question that is being asked. You also need to communicate the context of the study – how this study is relevant to larger issues.
4. Be sure to include data and/or illustrations from the paper in your slides. Simple ways to do this are to copy images from the paper into your slides. Five text-only slides are boring. Some can be text-only, but illustrations keep people alert and they keep your audience from staring at **you**. Be sure that the illustrations are relevant.
5. Make sure that you cover the material in a logical sequence (intro, purpose, methods, results, interpretation, conclusions, your evaluation). The five slide limit means that you may have to combine some of these sections in one slide.
6. Do not read your slides. We can read your slides, thank you. Have something to say that's not on the slides, or use different words to communicate what's on your slides. We can read your slides faster than you can read them out loud. Have something more to say than what is already on your slides. Nothing induces sleep in an audience faster than a speaker who is reading his/her slides.
7. At the end of your presentation, say "thank you". That way, everybody knows that you have finished and it's also a signal for the audience to applaud. Applause is good.