PRESENTATION GUIDELINES

The IQP teaches you lifetime skills and making public addresses is one of the important educational components of your project experiences. During the preparation term, before traveling to the project site, each team will make a number of preparatory presentations both in class and in the PQP. Moreover, a presentation typically takes place at the end of the ID2050 term to illustrate the final project proposal. The same presentation is sometimes delivered to the sponsor at the beginning of the on-site period. A final 30+ minutes presentation takes place at the very end of the IQP term on site. There will be additional presentations throughout the term on location as well. This brief document is intended to help you develop a successful final presentation that is gradually built over several weeks of practice. If you should find yourselves in the finals of the IQP award, your chances of winning will be based exclusively on how well you present your findings.

Standard Presentation Structure
- Title Slide
- Mission?
- The LARGE Context (if closely relevant)
- The SPECIFIC Context (background to set up the problem/issue)
- Current Problem/Issues (may start off with this if appropriate)
- What's been done + Gap (slip it in)
- YOUR MISSION/SOLUTION to above problems and gaps
- Presentation Outline (based on Objectives), then FOR EACH OBJECTIVE
  - Additional Background (as needed -- not much in IQP, quite a bit in PQP)
  - Methodology (brief in IQP, but very detailed in PQP)
  - Results (*expected* in PQP)
  - Analysis (*expected* in PQP)
  - Conclusions (not in PQP)
  - Recommendations (not in PQP)
- Last slide (should show the most interesting graphic) -- the presentation should end on a high note
  - Wrap up statement (make it powerful) -- wait for applause
- Acknowledgments (after applause)
  - Orally ask for Questions or Comments

Parts shown in yellow may or may not be present in PQP presentations
Parts shown in green are omitted in PQP presentations

- You should figure that each slide will take approximately 1 minute to present (some may take less and some more, but this is a good average).
- Always start with a TITLE slide where the project title appears, together with your names, the WPI logo, and the sponsor's name and logo.
- While the first slide is up, you should introduce yourselves and the project, by stating the title. **AVOID saying: "We are the such-and-such project team"** (where such and such is a short version of your title). Say instead: "We are (engineering?) students from WPI and we have completed a project entitled: such-and-such".
- You have a choice of whether to announce your mission right away or wait until AFTER the gap.
- The **second** slide could be used to introduce the LARGE context in which your project takes place. This is akin to the first rhetorical move of your introduction. You can omit this if the broad topic is not so relevant to your project. If the Large Context is too broad and not useful, skip it.
- The **third** slide should be used to introduce the SPECIFIC context in which your project takes

place. This is akin to the second rhetorical move of your introduction and it should specify the real issue you are trying to address together with your sponsor. You may mention a "gap" in the knowledge here, but the third rhetorical move (the "gap") is not usually spelled out on separate slide in the presentation. The gap is hinted at or mentioned in the course of the presentation of the SPECIFIC issue and then the presentation immediately jumps to the mission statement (see below).

- The **fourth** slide follows from the other two and announces the Overall Goal (or Mission statement) of your project as an answer/solution to the aforementioned problems/issues. This is akin to the fourth rhetorical move of your introduction. Notice that the third move is skipped, although some hints of a gap could be given during the presentation of the third slide above. Your project objectives should be **bulletized** under the main goal. Do not write out your mission statement in full (too much text). The slide should be entitled "PROJECT GOAL" (or something like it).
- After the Goal slide you should give the audience a mental framework to prepare them to receive the rest of the information by **outlining** the whole presentation. This slide is used as an index through the rest of the presentation.
- Background slides are important in the early weeks of preparation, but will be the first to be sacrificed when the final presentation comes around, to make room for more important stuff. This does not mean the Background will disappear completely, but it will be reduced in size to the essentials.
- Methodology is the most important part of the PQP presentations, but becomes less important in the final IQP presentation, although it never disappears completely. This should contain the essential Objectives and How you accomplished them.
- Results and Analysis are minor players in the PQP, but are the main dish in the final IQP. The bulk of the final IQP presentation will be devoted to these. In the PQP you may choose to omit these, unless you have some good mock-up graphics to show.
- Conclusions are the climax of the presentation. This is the time to pat yourselves in the back and emphasize how good your project was. It may be combined with Recommendations.
- The presentation should officially end after the Conclusions/Recommendations. This is where you will put your final "powerful" concluding remark (see below). Let the audience clap, then bring out the Acknowledgments.
- Acknowledgments are meant to recognize your advisors (if we deserve it) and liaisons (whether they deserve it or not) and anyone else that was useful to your project. Do not turn this into a mockery by thanking your neighbor's dog or your boyfriends and girlfriends. Keep it professional.
- You may have a final slide to prompt a discussion of your project.

Do's

- Plan the presentation so you devote ample time to the "meaty" stuff.
- Rehearse the presentation and TIME it. There's nothing worse than being rushed by a tight schedule and having to breeze through some of the slides in a hurry.
- Make sure the presentation has a well-organized and logical structure
- Know your stuff! Mastery of the content is the main ingredient of a successful presentation.
- Concentrate on "delivering" the information to your audience. You are presenting to them! You should present your project to inform them! You are just the vehicle. You should be able to provide the necessary emphasis to guide the audience through the slide. Don't just read the slide! The audience can do that. You are the value-added intermediary to drive the information to their brain!
- Make eye contact whenever possible. Use this to get feedback from your audience and to gauge their level of understanding. Adjust your presentation accordingly.
- Use BIG text. The slide should be readable from a distance.

- Keep fonts and styles consistent throughout.
- When using bullets or lists, make sure each item in the list is congruous with the others. For example, if the list is made up of VERBS (complete, analyze, determine, explore, etc.), make sure ALL bullets are verbs.
- Keep it professional. Jokes are OK in moderation (one or two at most), but they should be appropriate and tasteful.
- When the presentation switches to another team member, make sure you summarize your part and introduce him/her appropriately. For example: "Now that you know what methodology we adopted to accomplish our objectives, John/Jane will present to you the results we obtained during our study…". The new presenter should start by saying: "Thank you Jack/Jill" (thanking his/her teammate for the lead-in).
- If something goes wrong, take a second to compose yourself. Don't panic! It's better to excuse yourself and get back on track than to flounder aimlessly for a while.
- Take deep breaths between slides and whenever possible. Be relaxed and confident. You are the experts! The audience is made up of human beings too and they will generally be supportive of you. They don't want to see you fall apart, they want you to succeed.
- Try to put some "suspense" in your presentation. If your analyses produced counterintuitive results, lead the audience into thinking that the "intuitive" results were indeed obtained and then surprise them with the next slide… Put some drama into your most outstanding findings.
- Try to come up with a "powerful" final sentence that will leave the audience in awe. It may be well-worth dedicating extra time to this and it should be rehearsed to perfection.
- Be prepared for the worst. For the final presentation, it will be wise to have a backup paper printout of the slides that could be copied and distributed if all else fails. Also, have the presentation on a thumb drive, as well as "in the cloud".

Don't's

- Do not READ your presentation! Use cue cards to remind yourself of the main topics, if necessary. The slide itself should eventually be a sufficient reminder of what you need to say.
- Do not crowd-up the slide with lots of text. Keep it simple and to the point. Text should give facts
- Do not use distracting backgrounds or animations. Spiffy up the slide to keep it from being boring, but don't overdo it. Animations are useful but should be used wisely.
- Use pointers (laser or otherwise) sparingly and be careful not to fidget with them.
- Try not to gesticulate too much, but try also to avoid being too rigid. Be natural!
- Refrain from "generic" titles like "Title" or the like. Make sure the titles of the slides are meaningful.
- Do not ramble on off a tangent. Get the point across and leave it at that!
- Don't get into technical details! Tell us the essentials and forget about the specifics. Audiences have a very brief attention span. Use your time wisely.
- Don't mumble! Enunciate clearly and project your voice to the far reaches of the room you are in.
- Don't look at the projection screen too much. Glance at it when you are changing topic or slide, but don't stare at it. You are not presenting to the screen, but to the audience!
- Do not use the "canned" clip-art that comes with powerpoint. It is mostly cheesy. Use figures, graphics and photos that you gathered in the course of your project instead.

INDIVIDUAL PERFORMANCE PARAMETERS:

- thorough yet synthetic (good detail, no "fat")
- well structured and organized (easy to follow, good use of headings and bullets)
- interesting and informative (useful stuff, not a "dump" of the literature)
- well presented (good presence, tone of voice, eye contact)

- good visuals (not just boring text slides)

GROUP PERFORMANCE PARAMETERS:

- thorough and cohesive overall (on target, no major omissions, well blended together)
- well structured and organized (no overlaps, good transitions, introduction, conclusion)
- interesting and informative overall (we all learnt something from this group)
- well presented overall (consistent style/format, well rehearsed, good Q&A discussion)
- well timed (everyone had equal share, within time limit)