

# Presentation Basics – Virtual or In-Person

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## video conferencing prep

- ▶ run the conference tool (zoom, WebEx, Skype, etc.) with a friend and check that your image (camera), and more importantly, that your audio is clear, and you volume is good
- ▶ if you are presenting in a noisy environment, try using zoom, as it has good ambient noise reduction
- ▶ if you are in a larger room with hard walls and floors, you may want to hang a blanket on the wall, or drape it over nearby furniture, or put on the floor. This will reduce some of the room echo.
- ▶ worse case, use a smartphone ear bud and microphone combination cable to give you higher quality audio
- ▶ place your camera on top of the screen where you will be looking at your presentation. This way, you will largely be looking your audience "in the eye"

3

## practice your presentation

- ▶ record your presentation with zoom ahead of time
- ▶ watch your presentation and make needed changes (make notes for stumbles, mannerisms, getting the words right)
- ▶ do not read your slides; Always paraphrase your slide content like you are having an informal conversation with your audience
- ▶ practice the talk enough times to get the talk to the right length and so that your delivery is smooth; Note you will likely be a little faster live
- ▶ it is best to present to several colleagues so they can provide feedback on your materials and what you say in the talk
  - we call this a "dry-run." Always dry-run high profile talks: seminars, conference presentations, speaking at a conference/event, thesis and dissertation defenses, and when you start teaching to other students

5

## create your presentation

- ▶ standard rules apply, just like a face-to-face presentation
- ▶ make sure your presentation is in 16:9 format as this displays best on your audiences' computers
- ▶ inspect your slides full screen on a laptop to ensure the various text in the presentation is large enough to read on the screen
- ▶ like in any presentation, make sure your slides are uniform from a font and font size perspective
- ▶ number your slides so your audience can easily direct you back to slides that they have questions about

## practice – masters class

- ▶ masters class – if you really want to hone your presentation skills
  - record your talk
  - first only "listen" to your talk. Do not watch the video. This will help you correct any things in your vocal delivery that need adjustment, e.g., like saying "uh" over and over.
  - then watch your presentation video showing the slides and your face, BUT WITHOUT ANY SOUND. This will help you correct any mannerisms that you do not want in your presentations
  - then finally watch with both video and audio and make any final adjustments

## presentation time

- ▶ make sure your computer is plugged in if it is a laptop
- ▶ warn your roommates/family you are giving a talk (to keep noise down)
- ▶ sit up straight
- ▶ you may have notes in your slides, but you can always lay notes out in front of you on the desk
- ▶ if you are hosting the video conference, record your presentation if your tool allows it; If you are not the host, ask the host to record if they can. it is always nice to have a copy of a talk you have given.
- ▶ always introduce yourself at a level appropriate for your audience
- ▶ have a friend attend the talk and open the chat window JUST TO YOU. they can help you keep track of time by texting you messages, e.g. "15 min. left", "10 min. left", etc.

7

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# question time

- ▶ many recommend not having a “thank-you” or “questions?” slide. It is often better to show a summary slide with your contact info at the bottom
- ▶ another good last slide has the 1–3 bullet items you hope your audience carries away and remembers from this talk
- ▶ for any long, interactive questions, suggest the audience member and you take further discussion “off-line,” and move on to other audience questions
- ▶ when questions wind down, thank the audience (and host)

GOOD LUCK!