

CS494 Senior Project Presentation

Date Assigned: Tuesday, April 10, 2012

Senior Projects Day: Wednesday, April 25, 2012

Practice Presentations: April 17, 19

Your Senior Projects Day presentation is a very important part of your Senior Project. You should spend a fair amount of time preparing your talk; this time includes not only developing clear slides, but also planning the talk well and practicing it.

Unlike other presentations, I won't be able to give you an exact outline to use for your presentation. All of your presentations should include a significant introductory section that includes a description of your project area, motivation for doing your project and a brief explanation of what your project is. Of course, the introductory description should be understandable by a wide audience, so you need to spend a fair amount of time carefully writing this section.

After the introduction, you should spend some time describing the types of things you need to do to start a large software project. Describe the type of planning and designing you did for your project. If it seems appropriate, you can show a diagram of your project modules (make sure it's readable for an audience, though!).

Next, you need to describe how you developed and implemented your project. You should give an overview description, but you should also focus on at least one module/area in depth. Describe what the importance of the area is and the difficult issues associated with it.

Some of you will then have comparisons of different algorithms/parameters that you will want to present. Finally, you will provide a short demo of your project.

The format of your slides should be very simple. Here are some guidelines:

1. Use a sans serif font (Arial, Helvetica, etc.).
2. Use a simple color scheme. Either use a white background with dark text (blue or black) or a dark background (blue or black) with white text. If you want to include any other design elements on the slides, keep it simple (some colored lines along the top and bottom, for example).
3. Do not use the PowerPoint animation capabilities unless there is a clear need.
4. Use screen shots of your project to help you explain your project.
5. Do not overload your slides with information. (Do NOT use class lectures as your example—they're always too jam-packed with info). Keep the number of points per slide to about 3-4.
6. Do not write complete sentences for your bullets. Also, do not feel obligated to put every detail you plan to say on your slide. That's why people are there—to hear what you have to say, not to read it. Write enough to help you remember what you want to say and to help the audience follow what you're saying.

7. Make sure that every figure, image, diagram, etc. is readable by the audience. That means any text shouldn't be smaller than 24 point.
8. Your font size shouldn't be smaller than 24 point on your slide, but aim for about 32 or 28 point for your main points and 40+ point for your slide title.
9. Make sure your slides and your talk about something that you're proud of. Make sure they look professional and that you know exactly what you want to say.
10. Practice to make sure your talk is exactly 20 minutes long!

I think that you've had enough experience with presenting by now that this should seem easy. Don't be overconfident, however. Explaining your project in a manner understandable by many people is very challenging. Do not wait until the last minute to think about this. Start early—think of an outline of what you want to cover and go from there.

Bring four hard copies of your slides (3 slides per page) to your practice presentation. Your classmate and myself will be the only ones attending this presentation. You will be videoed during this presentation and will be expected to critique your video.