Guidelines for Creating and Presenting Capstone POWERPOINT Presentations

Each student will make a presentation of their capstone project using POWERPOINT software. While each student should use his or her discrete research and findings to prepare this presentation, the following guidelines will help to ensure uniformity, understandability, and timeliness in all presentations.

Students can use a maximum of 12 slides for their capstone presentation. This should result ina presentation of approximately 8 minutes, followed by a question and answer exchange with attendees. The purpose of the following guidelines is to help you make an impressive, professional presentation of your research in the time allotted.

Presentation Design:

Preparing a good presentation always takes longer than you anticipate. The key is to start early and allow enough time to adequately prepare. Knowing the material well and being prepared are the best keys to success in giving a presentation. The following guidelines will assist you in adequately designing a well done presentation.

- Brainstorm:
    - What does the audience know about the material?
    - What do you want them to learn?
    - Try starting with the last slide first. If you do not know where you are going it is highly unlikely that you will be able to get there. Plan the conclusion first. Know what you want to convey to the audience, then make the rest of the slides lead to and support your final results.
    - Write out an introduction. Start with a 15 word summary. If you can't summarize your idea in fifteen words, rewrite it and try again until you can.
    - Outline your story. You want your presentation to have a logical flow. You are telling a story that should have a beginning, a middle, and an end. Tell you audience what you are going to tell them (beginning), tell it (middle), and then summarize it (end).
    - Stick to the key concepts. Avoid description of specifics and unnecessary details.
    - Strive for clarity. Are the words you are using unfamiliar jargon or acronyms? Are the words unambiguous?
    - Background: You need to give a sufficient but not a comprehensive background for your subject. Do not get bogged down covering your literature review, rather focus on your research and findings.

- Preparing Your Slides:
    - Use only one message per slide. Each slide should address a single concept. Slides should follow a logical progression, with each building upon the other.

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- o Use brevity: Your presentation should contain no more than 12 slides. In general, using a few powerful slides is the aim.
- o Do not overload your slides with too much text or data. Too much text makes a slide unreadable. Stick to a few key words. If your audience is reading the slides they are not paying attention to you. Keep your points/fragments short, usually 10 to 20 words.
- o Maintain Parallelism: Use fragments not full sentences.
- o Use a font of 44 for titles, 28 to 34 for subtitles, and 28 to 34 with a bold font for text.

- o Use no more than five lines of text on any one slide and use both upper and lower case text, not all caps.
- o Use contrast: Light on dark background or dark on light, and be consistent. Colors appear lighter when projected so look at on a projection screen ahead of time.
- o Use as few numbers as possible (they are confusing to the audience). Numbers should never be ultra-precise. Revenues of $660,101.83 looks silly. Just say $660 thousand.
- o If you use statistics, use the same scale for numbers on a slide. Cite your source on the same slide as the statistic, using a smaller size font.
- o Maintain professionalism, do not use animations or "cute" templates in your presentation.
- o Have all text appear at the same time that the slide does. Do not have text that appears as the speaker talks.
- o Number each of your slides and give them a title.
- o If you use charts remember that numbers in charts can be very hard to read. Ask yourself, is there a better way to present this information? Clearly label all charts.

Presentation Guidelines:

- ● Content and Timing – Practice your presentation:
    - o Talk through your presentation to see how much time you use for each slide. It can be helpful to use the "timer" tool in PowerPoint.
    - o Make a list of keywords/concepts for each slide.
    - o Do not attempt to memorize your text.
    - o Do not use PowerPoint or note cards as a "crutch". Know the content of your presentation.
    - o DO NOT READ YOUR SLIDES. Your audience can read them much faster than you can talk.
    - o Step out from behind the podium.
    - o Avoid distracting mannerisms in both speech and movement (i.e. saying "um" of shifting your weight from side to side, etc.)
    - o Have a rehearsed opening statement and use it. Do not attempt to improvise at the last moment.
    - o Always have a prepared handout when giving a POWERPOINT presentation. You never know what will happen.
    - o To end on time, you must PRACTICE! When practicing try to end early.

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- Presentation Style:
    - o Arrive early, do not fight an LCD projector in front of an audience.
    - o Always stand, you are the expert on this topic.
    - o Always introduce yourself whenever you talk.
    - o Be in control, save questions for the end.
    - o Speak clearly with sufficient volume, be loud and clear.

    - o Think about breathing. This limits the "ums" and "aahs" of your presentation.
    - o Make eye contact with the audience.
    - o Think SLOW! You are almost always going faster than you realize.
    - o Have a conclusion and reiterate. Stress again your value added (tell the people what you told them), this is why you are presenting. What do you want your audience to do? What do you want them to remember?

    - o **Always leave time at the end for a few questions.**
        - ▪ If you have trouble answering a question you can always use statements such as, "that's a really good question," or "I'm glad you asked me that," to buy yourself time to organize your response.
        - ▪ Do not be afraid to say "I don't know" or "give me your card and I will get back to you on that question."