CARNEGIE MELLON UNIVERSITY, HEINZ COLLEGE
STRATEGIC PRESENTATION SKILLS (90-718), 6 UNITS
SPRING 2021 MINI 3

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

Strategic Presentation Skills provides practical instruction for preparing and delivering professional presentations. Activities and assignments include: developing targeted, strategic messages; structuring content; designing meaningful visuals; exploring presentation technologies; and presenting via a Web-based platform. Students engage specific audiences using a communication style (both verbal and nonverbal) suitable for workplace environments. Overall, the course helps students develop confidence and apply effective techniques when speaking in a public setting.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

- Compare and contrast effective versus ineffective professional presentations
- Conduct an audience analysis and adapt messages to particular audience members
- Establish a professional presence through nonverbal communication
- Structure a logical, cohesive message via verbal and visual transitional devices
- Maintain time constraints, clarity in voice projection, and eye contact
- Design and utilize visuals *(e.g. slides, logos, photographs, tables, graphs, charts, and diagrams)* effectively
- Engage effectively with attendees and respond eloquently to questions from the audience
- Demonstrate a presentation conducted remotely
- Provide productive feedback to peers
- Self-evaluate professional development as a public speaker

REGISTRATION

Once a section of Strategic Presentation Skills is full, then enrollment is dependent on: (1) the number of registered students who drop the section and (2) the waitlist order. Students who miss the first class meeting can be automatically dropped from the course. Priority registration may be given to students for whom Strategic Presentation Skills is required *(including BSCF seniors).*

REQUIRED TEXT & TECHNOLOGY

- Munter, Mary and Lynn Russell. Guide to Presentations, Fourth Edition. Upper Saddle River, NJ. Prentice Hall. *(ISBN-13: 978-0133058369)*
- Chicago Manual of Style or Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (APA)
- Zoom video-conferencing technology. Access via Canvas using official CMU account only.
- Acclaim video-hosting and commenting technology. Access information is provided via Canvas. Students will use Acclaim for self and peer assessments of recorded presentations. Base comments on the presentation skills rubric provided in this syllabus *(see page 4)*.

CLASSROOM POLICIES

Professional conduct is necessary. While our class is in session refrain from: accessing personal media and doing other coursework. Demonstrate respect for everyone in the remote classroom environment through active listening and productive *(skills-focused)* comments.

ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION

This course consists of synchronous lectures and asynchronous skills-building activities. Students are required to demonstrate engagement as the audience for in-class presentations. The course grade can be lowered due to a student's lack of participation in class sessions via Zoom or in remote presentation exercises.

Temporary Distance Format: All rights to the syllabus, course content, assignments, and instructional activities reserved by course instructor.

ASSIGNMENTS

Instructions for assignments will be posted to Canvas. Assignments are due on the dates stipulated in the schedule of classes in the syllabus *(see Table 2)* unless otherwise announced. Include your name and section in all electronic files submitted. Presentation assignments will be staggered over two class meetings. The instructor will announce via Canvas the order of student presentations.

*POLICY ON EXTENTIONS**

Assignments submitted past the due date and time earn a failing grade unless: (1) a religious observance or a documented medical condition prevents on-time submission; and, (2) the student has consulted with the instructor in advance for approval of an alternate deadline. *Additional flexibility could be provided given COVID-19 circumstances.

EVALUATION

The semester grade will be based on:

- Participation & Exercises: *(10%)*
- Briefing: Visuals *(20%)*
- Briefing: Presentation & Assessment (30%)
- Technology Presentation & Assessment *(20%)*
- Enhanced Visual Design Presentation *(20%)*

Rubrics *(documents that detail evaluation criteria)* are included in this syllabus. Missing self or peer assessments of recorded presentations via Acclaim result in one letter grade deduction off that assignment. Incomplete assessments of recorded presentations result in half a letter grade off the assignment. Work submitted with incomplete citations earns no higher than a C grade or could be deemed an academic integrity violation *(see page 2: Academic Conduct).*

Letter grades issued for each assignment will be converted to a final grade for the course based on the Heinz College Grading Scale *(see Table 1)*. Note: grades are non-negotiable.

Table 1. Heinz College Grading Scale

Grade	Interpretation	Points	Graduation Credit
A+	Exceptional	4.33	Yes
A	Excellent	4.00	Yes
A-	Very Good	3.67	Yes
B+	Good	3.33	Yes
B	Acceptable	3.00	Yes
B-	Fair	2.67	Yes
C+	Poor	2.33	Yes
C	Very Poor	2.00	Yes
C-	Minimal Passing	1.67	Yes
R	Failing	0	No
I	Incomplete	0	No

Source: Heinz College Student Handbook, 2019-2020

ACADEMIC CONDUCT

Assignments are submitted via Turnitin. This technology compares files with content available on the Internet and with files previously uploaded. The site generates a report indicating matching content. If an academic integrity violation is suspected, the student will be contacted to meet with the instructor to determine if a violation has occurred based on Carnegie Mellon University's Policy on Academic Integrity. Note that plagiarism includes:

- Presenting another writer's work as your own;
- Cutting and pasting content verbatim without using quotation marks to indicate a direct quote;
- Inserting a direct quote or paraphrasing content without citing the source in-text with a corresponding Bibliography or References page – in a manner consistent with an APA, MLA, or Chicago style guide;
- Providing incomplete or incorrect information about the source cited*;
- Over-relying on templates or another writers' phrasing.

Plagiarism is a serious offense that will result in the student failing the course. All academic integrity violations will be reported to the associate dean's office. Additional penalties may be imposed. Also, submitting work written for another course is not acceptable. Consequently, a failing grade will be issued for that assignment.
*Refer to a Chicago or APA style guide for formatting citations. Resources are posted to Canvas.

Table 2. Schedule of Classes and Assignments *(subject to change)*

	TARGETED SKILLS	READINGS	SCHEDULE OF ONLINE SESSIONS AND WORK DUE
Week 1	Analyze the Audience Apply Presentation Tactics	Chapter 1	February 2: • Online class session via Zoom *(overview: course and assignments)* February 4: • Online class session via Zoom *(lecture: audience engagement tactics)*
Week 2	Identify Your Intent Manage Nervous Symptoms	Chapter 2 Pages 136-143	February 9: • Online class session via Zoom *(Ted Talk video and discussion)* • **Briefing topic statement due** *(post to Canvas > Discussions > Briefing Topic)* February 11: • Online class session via Zoom *(Briefing content development exercise)* • **Technology topic due** *(post to Canvas > Discussions > Technology Topic)*
Week 3	Make the Most of the Message	Chapter 3	February 16 and February 18: • **Technology Presentation due in class** *(presentations will occur over 2 class meetings; complete self-assessment and 1 peer review via Acclaim using presentation skills rubric)*
Week 4	Structure the Content	Chapter 4	February 23: • **No class – CMU Scheduled Break Day** February 25: • Online class session via Zoom *(lecture: visual design)*
Week 5	Design Effective Visuals	Chapter 5	March 2: • **Enhanced Visual Design Presentation due** *(self-recorded and self-uploaded to Acclaim; complete self-assessment and 1 peer review via Acclaim using presentation skills rubric)* • Online class session via Zoom *(lecture and exercise: handling difficult questions)* March 4: • **No class session via Zoom** *(asynchronous activity: watch all visual design presentations on Acclaim and apply those skills to your Briefing slides)*
Week 6	Refine Your Nonverbal Delivery Communicate Key Points	Chapter 6	March 9 and March 11: **Briefing – Draft Visuals due** • Online class session via Zoom *(Visuals workshop part 1 and 2)*
Week 7			March 16: • **Briefing Presentation and Visuals due** *(presentation self-recorded and self-uploaded to Acclaim; submit slides on Canvas > Briefing Visuals)*

ASSESSMENT RUBRIC: PRESENTATION SKILLS

Competency: To communicate and interact productively with a diverse and changing workforce and citizenry.

- Learning Outcome: Prepare professional and effective presentations appropriate to the objective and context.
- Learning Outcome: Prepare communications suitable for diverse audiences.

LEVELS OF PROFICIENCY	MESSAGE EFFECTIVENESS	STRUCTURE	VOCAL SKILLS	NONVERBAL SKILLS
The extent to which the presenter demonstrates the skills listed in each category.	--Prepared content based on audience demographics and roles --Ensured content is suitable for diverse audiences --Engaged the audience via tactics that encourage participation or that enhances the recall of main ideas --Included essential information the audience would need to take action --Addressed likely areas of resistance from decision-makers and other stakeholders --Closed with a call to action and thanks the audience	--Introduced self and topic; welcomes audience, builds interest --Previewed the content via an agenda --Maintained a logical sequence and categorization of information --Connected content blocks via specific verbal transitions --Reiterated main ideas or benefits in a summary --Included a question and answer session (if time allows) --Stayed within allotted timeframe	--Projected voice to the back of the room --Enunciated words clearly --Maintained a moderate rate of speech so that the audience can process the information --Avoided excessive use of filler words (e.g. uhm, uh, ahh, like, so, etc.) --Used professional language --Demonstrated verbal tactics (e.g. verbal flags)	--Maintained visual contact with other people's eyes --Scanned the room to include audience members who may have questions or comments, and to build rapport --Used gestures and facial expressions that match the verbal statements --Maintained a straight posture and plants feet when standing still --Utilized the stage to engage the audience --Wore professional attire
4 Advanced; Professional and effective	Demonstrated advanced use of all elements related to message effectiveness.	Demonstrated advanced use of all elements related to structure.	Demonstrated advanced use of all elements related to verbal skills.	Demonstrated advanced use of all elements related to nonverbal skills.
3 Acceptable; Minor modifications are recommended	Demonstrated acceptable content; however, content could be more engaging or more targeted to the audience.	Demonstrated an acceptable structure; however, structure could improve via a more complete introduction, verbal transitions, or a strategic close.	Demonstrated acceptable verbal skills; however, voice volume, clarity, word choice, and/or appropriate vocal expressions could improve.	Demonstrated acceptable nonverbal skills; however, body language, eye contact, or professionalism could improve.
2 Limited; Substantial modifications are needed	Demonstrated limited content. Modifications are needed to ensure content reflects critical thinking and is suitable for the audience.	Demonstrated limited control of structure. Modifications are needed to ensure a complete introduction, logical sequence, verbal transitions, and/or a strategic close.	Demonstrated limited control of verbal skills. Voice volume, clarity, word choice, and/or vocal expressions need improvement.	Demonstrated limited control of body language, eye contact, or professionalism. Direct eye contact or appropriate posture, gestures, or facial expressions are needed.
1 Unsatisfactory: Does not meet course requirements	Does not meet the minimum course standards for message effectiveness.	Does not meet the minimum course standards for structure.	Does not meet the minimum course standards for verbal skills.	Does not meet the minimal course standards for nonverbal skills.
Score				

ASSESSMENT RUBRIC: AUDIENCE ANALYSIS

LEVELS OF PROFICIENCY	OBJECTIVE	AUDIENCE (STAKEHOLDERS)	AREAS OF PRIOR KNOWLEDGE	AREAS OF RESISTENCE	TACTICS TO ACCOMPLISH THE OBJECTIVE
	The objective states exactly what you want listeners to fund, support, and/or implement by the time you're finished. For this assignment, select **one feasible** objective.	**Who is listening to me?** What are the roles of the audience members? Do they have specialized knowledge? Are they diverse in demographics, specialized knowledge, and/or interests? What is the perspective of the organization they represent? **Select a key decision maker:** Who is it? What are his/her special interests and biases?	**Is my proposal new to them?** Are they familiar with the problem I'm addressing? Have they heard my arguments before? Are they sympathetic to my concerns? How does my proposal or recommendation satisfy their needs?	**What argument(s) might be presented from the audience?** Do they have different priorities? Do they have concerns about the cost, risks, timing, and implementation of my proposal? What resources are available for the kind of request I'm making? Is there a political or institutional climate to consider? Do they have false assumptions about the topic?	**Ethos:** How can I establish my credibility and trustworthiness? Have my listeners met me before? What do they know about my training? Do they trust me? **Logos**: What tangible evidence (e.g. documented examples and data) can I use to support my argument? **Pathos:** How can I appeal to the imagination, curiosity, and emotions of my listeners?
4 **Advanced; Professional and effective**	Established an exceptionally clear and well-structured objective.	Outlined the roles and interests of the audience and the key decision-maker extremely effectively. Biographies were carefully analyzed rather than summarized.	Established an exceptionally clear and well-structured overview of the proposal. Considered the audience's knowledge of this topic.	Established an exceptionally clear and well-structured argument. Proactively addressed the audience's likely questions and objections using detailed language.	Established exceptionally clear and well-structured strategies. Multiple, relevant examples and/or evidence were included to build ethos, logos, and pathos.
3 **Acceptable; Minor modifications are recommended**	Established an acceptable objective, although it must be rewritten for clarity.	Outlined the audience and the key decision-maker, although additional details or analysis could be added for clarity or for persuasiveness.	Established an acceptable overview of the proposal, although it must be rewritten to better demonstrate analysis of the audience.	Established an acceptable argument, though could address probable questions and objections in greater detail.	Established acceptable strategies Supporting evidence could be stronger.
2 **Limited; Substantial modifications are needed**	Provided a limited overview of the objective.	Provided a limited overview of the audience and/or the key decision-maker. Biographies were simply cut-and-pasted, or summarized, but not adequately analyzed.	Provided a limited overview of the proposal. Essential details were lacking. The outline was far too broad to be useful; and/or it is not feasible or applicable to the audience.	Provided a limited overview of the argument. Responses to probable questions and objections were lacking.	Provided a limited overview of the strategies. Ethos, logos, or pathos were not fully established.
1 **Unsatisfactory; Does not meet course requirements**	Does not meet minimal course standards for establishing the objective.	Does not meet minimal course standards for analyzing the audience.	Does not meet minimal course standards for considering the knowledge of the audience.	Does not meet minimal course standards for anticipating likely objections.	Does not meet minimal course standards for strategic planning.
Score					

ASSESSMENT RUBRIC: STRUCTURE

LEVELS OF PROFICIENCY	INTRODUCTION	BODY	SUMMARY	QUESTIONS & ANSWERS	FINAL CALL TO ACTION
	WELCOME • Introduced self and topic **HOOK** • Engaged audience with a surprising fact (with source if applicable) • Connected the hook with briefing topic • Stated the objective or recommendation upfront **AGENDA** • Provided a preview of the content of the presentation and used parallel structure	**POINT 1** • Transitioned from agenda to point 1 • Supported information with reliable, verifiable sources • Cited sources for point 1 **POINT 2** • Transitioned from point 1 to point 2 • Supported information with reliable, verifiable sources • Cited sources for point 2 **POINT 3** • Transitioned from point 2 to point 3 • Supported information with reliable, verifiable sources • Cited sources for point 3	**TRANSITION** • Utilized a transition statement to start the closing **REITERATED MAJOR POINTS** • Focused on the benefits to the audience	**PREPARATION (THIS STEP IS DONE PRIOR TO PRESENTING)** Q: Listed questions audience members are likely to ask following the presentation. A: Listed brief, yet informative responses to each of the questions.	**RECOMMENDATION** • Reminded audience why the request should be granted. • Made a specific "ask."
4 **Advanced; Professional and effective**	Prepared a highly effective and well-structured introduction.	Prepared a highly effective and well-structured outline of points 1, 2, and 3. Transition statements were logical and flowed smoothly throughout the outline.	Prepared a highly effective and well-structured closing.	Prepared a highly effective and thorough Q & A.	Prepared a highly effective and well-structured final call to action.
3 **Acceptable; Minor modifications are recommended**	Prepared an acceptable introduction; however, the introduction must be rewritten for clarity or effectiveness.	Prepared an acceptable outline for points 1, 2, and 3; however, the points must be rewritten for clarity or the transitions could be improved.	Prepared an acceptable closing; however, the closing must be rewritten for clarity or effectiveness.	Prepared an acceptable Q & A; however, the questions or answers must be rewritten for clarity or effectiveness.	Prepared an acceptable final call to action; however, "the ask" must be rewritten for clarity or effectiveness.
2 **Limited; Substantial modifications are needed**	Limited introduction. Components were lacking.	Limited outline. Missing information for points 1, 2, or 3. Transitions were lacking.	Limited closing. Major points were not effectively reiterated.	Limited Q & A. Questions were not well thought out and/or the answers were lacking useful details.	Limited final call to action. "The ask" was lacking.
1 **Unsatisfactory; Does not meet course requirements**	Did not meet the minimal course standards for the "Introduction" and/or essential components were omitted.	Did not meet the minimal course standards for the "Body" and/or essential components were omitted.	Did not meet the minimal course standards for the "Closing" and/or essential components were omitted.	Did not meet the minimal course standards for the "Q & A" and/or essential components were omitted.	Did not meet the minimal course standards for the "Final Call to Action" and/or essential components were omitted.
Score					

ASSESSMENT RUBRIC: VISUALS

FORMAT		CHARTS, GRAPHS, & PICTURES	WRITING	FONTS AND BACKGROUND
Introduction Started with a title slide including: the presenter's name, role, title and date of presentation. Included a "hook" slide to generate attention. (E.g. this slide could show compelling information, dispel a common myth, or use an image to ask a question or to tell a story.) Included an agenda slide to preview content. **Body** Organized content into logically categorized blocks to support main objective and to aid recall. **Closing** Closed with a summary slide. Returned to the title slide or used a contact information slide for questions session and the final call to action. Referenced sources on final slide or footnoted citations on each slide with external information.		Used charts, graphs, diagrams, and/or images to reduce bulleted text. Reduced clutter on charts, graphs, diagrams, and images. Ensured readability when visualizing data. Strategically implemented animations and transitions to focus attention or to aid structure. Followed Chicago or APA formatting and citation guidelines for visuals.	Used "Message Titles" (i.e. sentence titles, or headlines). Matched content of each slide to the slide's title. Left-aligned text. Limited the number of words on each slide. Used parallel structure in lists. Proofread work for grammatical, spelling, and punctuation errors. Cited sources according to Chicago or APA style.	Used a professional typeface and readable, complimentary colors (followed textbook guidelines for font face, color, and style). Designed text that can be easily read from the back of the room without being unprofessionally large (followed textbook guidelines for font size). Used a simple background; it did not distract from the written content or the verbal message. Avoided excessive: colors, clip art, or animation. Demonstrated fonts and backgrounds that are professional and aid branding or message effectiveness.
4 **Advanced; Professional and effective**	Displayed an exceptionally clear, logically structured, and strategic format.	Displayed exceptionally clear and well-designed charts, graphs, diagrams, and photos.	Displayed exceptionally clear, professional, and strategic writing skills.	Displayed highly professional, easy-to-read, cohesive fonts and a branded, non-distracting background.
3 **Acceptable; Minor modifications are recommended**	Displayed an acceptable format. Minor revisions could be made for a more logical or strategic flow of information.	Displayed acceptable charts, graphs, diagrams, and/or photos. Minor changes could be made for clarity or effectiveness.	Displayed acceptable writing skills. Minor revisions could be made for clarity or effectiveness.	Displayed acceptable fonts and background design. Minor changes could be made for better readability, cohesiveness, or professionalism.
2 **Limited; Substantial modifications are needed**	Displayed limited use of a professional format. Multiple, significant revisions could be made for a more logical or strategic flow of information.	Displayed limited use of professional charts, graphs, diagrams, and/or photos. Multiple, significant revisions could be made for clarity or effectiveness.	Displayed limited use of professional writing skills. Multiple, significant revisions could be made for clarity or effectiveness.	Displayed limited use of professional fonts and background design. Multiple, significant revisions could be made for better readability, cohesiveness, or professionalism.
1 **Unsatisfactory; Does not meet course requirements**	Did not meet the minimal course standards for "Format."	Did not meet the minimal course standards for "Charts, Graphs, & Pictures."	Did not meet the minimal course standards for "Writing."	Did not meet the minimal course standards for "Fonts and Background"
Score				