

## Oral Report Guidelines

After preparing your written reports, the oral reports should not require *major* additional effort with the exception of graphics and practicing and practicing and practicing... There are few hard and fast rules governing the oral presentation of scientific papers. To help you design your presentations, we will follow several general rules. These are outlined below.

### Content of Oral Reports

Oral reports should follow the standard format for a scientific paper, and contain the following distinct sections:

- *Introduction*
- *Methods*
- *Data*
- *Interpretation*
- *Conclusions*

The content of these sections is defined in the *Lab Report Guidelines*; be sure to review these guidelines as you prepare your oral presentations. *Note, for the oral presentations design your talk as if the audience is geologically educated but unaware of your specific study.* You should divide the time allocated to your talk (**5 minutes**) roughly as follows:

- *Introduction: ≤ 30 sec*
- *Methods: ≤ 30 sec*
- *Data: ≤ 90 sec*
- *Interpretation: ≤ 120 sec*
- *Conclusions: ≤ 30 sec*

Note that these are merely rough guidelines, but you should definitely spend the bulk of your talk on the *Data* and *Interpretations* sections. Also, your time limit is **10 minutes** for lab reports that summarize **2 weeks** worth of lab reports.

### Graphics

You use Powerpoint for all parts of your talks. In many cases, the same figures that you prepared for your written reports may be recycled and used in your talks. In some cases you may want to prepare an image or two that is not included in the written report.

There are a number of resources available to you for graphics. These include:

- figures from your written reports
- digital images that I will have taken of us in the field doing the lab that you will be discussing. These will be saved on the course web page
- google image—an excellent source of images that can be incorporated into your powerpoint presentations
- the departmental slide and overhead collections (>3000 images), which you may scan and incorporate into your Powerpoint presentation.

**A note about legibility.** All images, whether slides or overheads but especially figures that you have made from your written reports, *MUST* be legible from the back of the classroom. A common problem with figures that were prepared for written reports is that text is far too small and line weights far too low to be visible when projected on the overhead projector. If images of figures that you have made for your written reports are not legible, you should increase the font size as necessary. Practice your talk using your figures in the classroom to be sure that all figures are legible. Remember, figures do not have to be *slick* but they do have to be *clear*!!

### Delivery

There are as many valid speaking styles as there are good speakers; no single style fits all. In general though, the following will serve as guidelines:

- do not read your paper; you may have notes, but in general you should know your talk well enough to *not* have to refer to notes repeatedly
- do not memorize your talk; it comes off too mechanical
- speak clearly and concisely
- avoid the *ums*-- this can only be accomplished by practicing your talks repeatedly so that you know where your thoughts are going
- speak to the audience rather than to the slide screen or overhead projector
- if using overhead transparencies, point to the screen on the wall *NOT* the transparency itself

**Time**

For all oral presentations, one student in the audience will be designated as timer. You will have a maximum of 5 minutes to present your paper. For oral reports that summarize 2 weeks worth of data, you will be given a maximum of 10 minutes. You will be informed (by flash card) when there is 1 minute remaining and again when there are 30 seconds remaining. You must practice your talks repeatedly to be sure that you can complete your presentations in less than 5 minutes.

**Grades**

Your talks will be graded for content and delivery, and for the way in which you handle questions during the questioning session that will follow each talk.