

CHEM 3420: Physical Chemistry II — Spring 2009

April 21, 2009

Group Oral Presentations

The time has come for you to present your project research to the class. Group oral presentations of your research will be during our extended class day, Monday, May 4 at 8:30. Each group of two will have about 25 minutes for their presentation. Groups of three will have an extra 10 minutes. This time includes a question and answer period which should be about 5–10 minutes. Each group is responsible for making sure that their presentation does not go over the allotted time.

The presentation should detail the motivation/background of your work, what sorts of questions you were looking to answer, your experimental methods, results, and a discussion of the results. Powerpoint would be a good tool, but overheads are acceptable as well.

This is a chance to share your work with your colleagues, so be sure to treat the presentation seriously, as if this were a mini-symposium at a conference. Don't forget as a member of the audience you also have a responsibility to listen to each group's presentation and ask thoughtful questions of the speakers.

Here are some do's and don'ts for group presentations:

DOs:

- One person should introduce the overall scope of the group's presentation and give the names of the speakers. Be sure to introduce a new speaker before that person begins his/her part of the presentation.
- Be sure to lay out the "ground rules" as the beginning of the presentation. About how long will you speak, do you want people to interrupt you with questions or should they wait until the end, etc.
- You may use note cards or other prompts to remind you of key words or issues you wish to cover in your presentation and help you maintain the organization of those issues. This should ensure your explanation is tight and easy to follow.
- Face the audience when you speak. Turn to the slides only if you wish to point out something illustrated in the slide.
- Use visual materials as often as possible to communicate your message. This can include pictures, graphs and/or tables. Be sure that as you show a slide/overhead you refer to it in your remarks. Maintain a careful and close correspondence between each visual you show and your comments on what the visual illustrates. The audience has to understand why you are showing a particular visual; you need to make that clear with each illustration that you use.
- Use pointers to indicate specific features of a slide.
- Dress appropriately for your presentation.
- PRACTICE YOUR PRESENTATION. You should not go beyond the allotted time.
- SPEAK SLOWLY AND ENUNCIATE CLEARLY. Rushing through the presentation in order to pack in a lot of material is a poor presentation strategy. Edit your presentation so that you emphasize only the most important points. Illustrate those points clearly.
- Good organization is the key to any presentation. You are trying to tell a story so you need to have a logical order of presentation and each slide should build upon the previous ones.

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DON'Ts:

- Avoid using slides crammed with text. Visual aids should be used to communicate concepts/facts that are best represented and understood visually.
- Do not read text directly from a slide. A slide may carry one or two important messages, and the audience will read those. The speaker should not read the text for the audience.
- Do not repeat what a previous speaker in your group has said. You may wish to refer briefly to another speaker's material, but large amounts of overlap should be avoided.
- Do not read your presentation. If you have good prompts, reading sentences and paragraphs can be avoided.
- Do not speak to the blackboard or slides; speak to the audience.
- Do not make jokes during your presentation or treat the presentation casually or as if it does not matter. The goal of your presentation is to communicate material to your audience. This should be accomplished in a respectful and professional manner.