General Information

"Tell 'em what you're gonna tell 'em, tell 'em all about it, and then tell 'em what you told 'em."

Coordination and planning

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Introduction

A presentation can serve many purposes: you can inform and educate an audience, or you may want to persuade them of something. This skills training focuses on creating informative presentations about academic topics. It allows you to practice important skills that are essential to giving an effective presentation. This can help you improve future presentations, either at UCM or as part of a master's program, or a future job.

During the training we will pay attention to:

- Organisation: Brainstorming, organizing and outlining your presentations. Creating an introduction, body and conclusion for your presentation using explanations and examples to support your points. Setting up main points and sub points, as well as comparing and contrasting information.

- Delivery: Gestures, body language, and attitude. We will also focus on your voice, including pace and volume.

- Visual aids: Should support and not distract from the delivery. We will explore how to integrate visual aids effectively.

- Audience: Analyzing your audience's needs and adapting the presentation to their knowledge and interest. Interacting with the audience during the presentation and dealing with questions.

Besides giving presentations, an important aspect of this training is learning how to give and receive constructive feedback. Both the tutor and your fellow students will provide you with feedback. The

comments you receive after giving a presentation should be used towards your next presentation. The tutor will track your performance and check if you are improving.

To create a working environment in which all students feel comfortable presenting and giving and receiving feedback, each tutorial group consists of a maximum of eight students.

Attendance

Since there are only *seven* meetings **you can only miss one session for which you are not scheduled to present**. **Missing this meeting will, however, result in an additional assignment.** Missing more than one session will result in failing the skills training. The reason for this strict rule is that presenters learn more with a large audience who can provide them with feedback.

Students who want to request an Additional Assignment can request the form via MyUCM within ten working days after the end of the course (i.e., by the 20th April). For more information on Attendance and Additional Assignments, please visit MyUM – Rules and Regulations.

Assessment

Assessment will be a grade based on your two in-class practice presentations (40%), and on your final presentation (40%). The first five minute presentation will be assessed on a Pass/Fail basis. Failing the first five minute presentation will lead to an extra assignment during the course. The two practice presentations will each count for 20%. The feedback you give your fellow students verbally and in written form, as well as your overall participation, will count for 20%.

Before each presentation, a **printed outline** needs to be given to the tutor (so not sent by email) at beginning of class. Outlines which are not handed in will not be accepted by the tutor, so make sure you prepare in advance.

A list with the most important evaluation criteria will be made available on ELEUM and can also be found at the end of this course manual, together with the feedback form.

Written feedback forms: You will twice give written feedback to one of your fellow students. Your tutor will tell you when it is your turn. Send the feedback both to the person you are giving feedback to and your tutor within **24 hours after** the presentation was given.

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Visual Aids/ slideware

The use of slideware (e.g., PowerPoint, Prezi, Keynote) for your presentations is mandatory. For the final presentation, which will take place in the UCM Lecture Hall in the presence of your own tutorial group and two Presentation Skills tutors, slideware is also mandatory. Please note that both format and effects may change when you run a Keynote presentation over a UCM computer, or from a Mac to a UCM computer in general.

Re-sit policy

If a re-sit is necessary you will have to re-do one of the presentations. Re-sits are scheduled for the end of this semester, during the regular UCM re-sit week.

Computer related issues

Always bring your presentation with you on a USB memory stick. Apple users can check at the Front Office if one of the adapters fits their notebook; if so, they may use their Mac for their presentations. If not, the slides should be converted into .pptx files.

Before your presentation make sure you check if your slides, pictures and videos work; delays because of technical difficulties will have consequences for your grade. Additionally, make sure you know how to switch between your slideshow and any other programs that you may want to use (e.g., a browser, media player) – practice this at home before giving your presentation in class.

Topics

An important part of the preparation of your presentations in this skills training is to find a suitable topic. Since you are a liberal arts student, it is expected that you approach your topics from an academic perspective. Generally, you may approach your presentations in the same way you would approach a research paper, meaning that there should be a hypothesis or research question, a clear introduction with the general context, relevance of the topic and the goals of the presentation, a body consisting of clear arguments supported by scholarly sources, and a conclusion which sums up your main points and answers your research question or hypothesis.

A good starting point for a presentation can be to take a learning goal from a course you enjoyed in the past. Learning goals are usually formulated in the form of a question and are answered by reading relevant literature. An additional advantage is that the answers to learning goals are usually debatable, which allows you to take a stand and makes your presentation interesting for your audience. It is probably a good idea to keep this last point in mind: "what is…?" questions are less conductive to academic, argumentative presentations. Taking an academic approach to your

presentation topics is a very important criterion in this skills training and that failing to produce a presentation that is academically sound will lead to a failing grade. If you have doubts about whether your topic or approach is suitable, consult your tutor. You are encouraged to also consult with your tutor to ask for advice on the structure of your presentation, the approach to your topic or to ask questions about the assessment or the skills training in general.

Note: when it comes to picking your topics, try to think ahead (7 weeks preferably); you will want to save the best topic for your final presentation.

StudentPortal & References

You can find the UCM PowerPoint Training Manual and some literature to help you prepare your presentations in the StudentPortal environment for this skills training.

Throughout the skills training, more information on grading criteria, examples of outlines and literature will be communicated to you via StudentPortal.

First tutorial

The purpose of the first meeting is to discuss your experience with giving presentations and to give a small presentation in which you apply what has been discussed during the lecture and in the literature. The goal of the meeting is to establish the basic level of presentation skills of all students in the group, and to get to know your fellow presenters.

Presentation

All students will give a 5 minute presentation. As described during the lecture, the criteria for the presentation are:

- The broad topic of your first presentation is "Being a student at UCM". It is up to you which aspect(s) you want to talk about: education, rules and regulations, courses choices, social life, diversity of plants in the common room, etc. Give your presentation a "personal touch" so that your group gets to know you a bit better through your presentation.
- The introduction should include some form of attention grabbing device.
- All students should use slideware to support their presentation.
- It's useful to look at the evaluation form (at the end of this course manual, and on Eleum) to get an idea of how your presentations will be evaluated.

Feedback

Your fellow students will give you feedback on your presentation based on given criteria in weeks 2 and 5 or weeks 3 and 6. One student will write an extended feedback report (the "Student Feedback Form" on Eleum can be used as a template for this), and you will also receive verbal feedback from your tutor. Your tutor will instruct you on how to give feedback (good points and points for improvement).

Sending your presentation, outline and feedback

Please be sure to label your documents carefully and tell us in the title of your email what you are sending.

Label your documents in the following way:

a. PowerPoint: groupnumber_yourlastname

b. Outline: groupnumber_yourlastname_outline

c. Feedback: groupnumber_yourlastname_feedback

(So Daniel Smith this would be 04_Smith.pptx, 04_Smith_outline.docx and 04_Smith_feedback.docx)

Checklist for an academic presentation at UCM:

Organisation:
- ☐ Presentations should be max. 15 minutes, including questions. So in practice, talk for no more than 12-13 minutes to leave sufficient time for one or two questions.
- ☐ There should be a research question, thesis statement (claim), and outline of what you are going to talk about.
- ☐ Presentations should contain references to other literature or sources, in written and verbal form. There needs to be a meta-academic aspect in terms of other literature/theories by scholars in the presentation, even if your original paper did not have this. So if your presentation shows how to analyze a movie scene, you would have to include references that contextualize what you are doing.
- ☐ Treat your slides like you would a paper in terms of references.
    - o If you mention an idea that is not yours -> reference it as an in-text reference, and in your final reference list. Check the UCM Style Guide for this (can be found via MyUCM).
    - o Quotes need quotation marks and page numbers.
    - o All images and tables need to be properly referenced. Check the UCM Style Guide for this.
    - o If you are using full-screen images you do not have to use an in-text reference! But remember to reference the image in the reference list.
- ☐ Make abstract concepts or topics concrete and visual, for example by using metaphors or analogies. You may also want to use a concrete noun as a subject in the sentence, visuals to reinforce a difficult point or concept. Make sure you don't overload the audience with difficult visuals though.
- ☐ Avoid informal language. Don't start your presentation with 'hey guys'.
- ☐ Think of your ending. Don't end with "and these are my reference… that's my presentation…", or in some other vague way. End on a strong note!
- ☐ Think about elegant and meaningful transitions between sections. Remember that your audience cannot flip back a few pages as readers would with your essays. The audience is even more reliant on your verbal guiding them.
- ☐ Make sure that your slides go along with your presentation and do not distract from but instead support what is being said.
- ☐ Refer to the slides. When using images or graphs, describe them to the audience first before drawing conclusions from them. If you deem it necessary to include quotes, make sure to read them out.
- ☐ Be explicit about the function of each section in answering your research question. That is, remind audience what your RQ/TS was, and try to explain how a particular section contributes towards it. Which means you should also-
- ☐ - repeat your research question, thesis statement (claim) frequently during the presentation.
- ☐ Make sure your outline is structured according the sample on StudentPortal.
- ☐ Remember to print out your outline and to hand it in before the presentation.

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Delivery:

☐ No notes.

☐ Don't use the slides as notes; that is to say, don't turn around repeatedly to use the notes to remind you where you are in the presentation. With practice, talking about a topic you are already familiar with is not too difficult. Look at your audience.

☐ Use your voice and intonation to emphasize your main points. Take a breath after you have made an important point. This gives the audience time to digest what you are saying, and makes for dramatic pauses that capture the audience's attention.

☐ Stay in your role as a presenter. Do not draw attention to things that do not go according to plan (transitions that fail, pictures that do not appear, loss of words etc.) by apologizing or pointing them out, unless absolutely necessary.

☐ Avoid technical issues by having your presentation set up and ready. Check audio before starting. Check clicker and point in the right direction.

☐ Keep energy levels up during the entire presentation. If you are enthusiastic and interested in your topic the audience will also be.

☐ Practice at least once infront of another student, preferably someone who is also taking presentation skills. Practicing infront of others is a very different experience than practicing infront of another person, and if you come to class without having done the latter you will find that you are underprepared.

Visuals:

☐ Where possible, use full-screen images.

☐ Refrain from using full sentences on slides

☐ Let text appear one point at a time.

☐ Use a "round" text (e.g. Calibri, Verdana, Arial) instead of a "new roman" front.

☐ Don't use text size smaller than 24.

☐ Don't stay too long on one slide without changing images/text. Your audience will lose interest or struggle to focus on what you are saying.

☐ When using graphs, images etc., keep them simple. Make sure that there is no unnecessary information on the slides that could distract the audience. If necessary, blot out non-important visual information.

☐ Do a final check for typos, spelling mistakes, misplaced spaces and dots on the slides.

☐ Make sure the stories you are telling verbally and visually are clearly linked.

☐ Consider contrast, readability and emotional meaning in your choice of colors for the slides.

☐ If you are not a visually inclined person (i.e., if you struggle to know which colors go together and couldn't care less about design) read books and blogs on how to design presentations. Presentation Zen by Garr Reynolds is a good start, for example. Don't get too worried about the very technical stuff – I've seen students get far with utilizing some simple tricks.

Audience:

☐ Do use an attention grabber. Most effective: an attention grabber that interacts with the audience (by asking a question), often in connection with a large visual. Time it right.

☐ A personal story should go beyond 'I wrote a paper on the topic' or 'I am interested in this topic' (explain what you find particularly interesting about the topic).

☐ Repeat question back to audience before answering it.
☐ Don't be afraid to use humor, even if it sounds contrived to you. Your audience will value a moment to connect.
☐ Make eye contact with everyone in the audience.
☐ Ensure that the content is relevant and understandable for your audience.

Improvement:
☐ Recall previous feedback and implement points of improvement.

Presentation Evaluation Criteria

Criteria and prompts	(+,+/-,-)	Comments:
Organization: - Presentation clearly structured and academic in nature - Points are clear and supported by explanations, statistics, examples - Ideas link together coherently - Points are balanced - Timing is accurate - Outline and slides handed in on time		
Delivery: - Voice: pace not too fast or too slow, clearly audible due to volume and enunciation - Body-language supports and does not distract from presentation - Structure and content delivered fluently; doesn't read from notes - Energy: varies tone, shows enthusiasm or interest in subject		
Visual Aids: - Supports and do not distract from the oral delivery - Easy to read/ understand - Effectively integrated into the presentation		
Audience: - Content is relevant and made interesting for audience - Engages audience: e.g., attention grabber, personal story, humor - Makes eye-contact - Responds well to questions		

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Improvement:		
- Took feedback into account and improved presentation based on this.		

Student Feedback Form

Name of presenter:
Name of student giving feedback:
Date:
Write at least 500 words in total. Make sure you cover every section.

Feedback:

Aspects of the presentation that went well:
Name at least three things the presenter did well and explain why you felt these were effective.

Points for improvement:
Name at least three things the presenter can improve on and make suggestions how he or she can improve them.

What did you (the person giving feedback) learn from this presentation?
Which elements are you going to use in your future presentations?
Reflection on how this presentation may be useful to you in the future