Paper Presentations

# Overview

For each paper presentation, you will find a relevant paper and present it to the class using two slides as visuals.

## Rationale

The goals of these presentations are to provide you with experience related to (a) reading publications and distilling them into their key points, (b) thinking about how to most effectively communicate using slides, and (c) presenting in front of your peers. These presentations also provide a way for us all to be exposed to research we might otherwise not have come across.

## Assignment Format

You will prepare two slides and a short (5 minutes max) presentation. The first slide should use graphics made by the student that explain what was done in the study. The second slide should highlight the critical finding(s) of the paper, and should include (but isn’t necessarily limited to) results figures from the publication. Your presentation should use these slides to explain what the paper was investigating and what they found. All students will prepare their slides using GoogleSlides, where we will have a single file that all students add to (this saves us from having to load separate files for each student). The Google Slides file for each paper presentation will be sent out prior to the assignment due date. For students who wish to get started earlier, note that you can create your own Google Slides document and paste the slides into the shared set of slides later.

## Grading

Students will be graded on the overall quality of their presentation, including how well the slides capture the selected publication and on how well the student presented the background and findings. Slides should feature minimal text and the graphics made by the student should help convey key information (for example, hypotheses or methodology). Due to the short format of the assignment, students must find a good balance between including enough detail that we understand why the study was carried out and what the authors found, while also being focused and concise enough to convey the information within the allotted time. Points will be deducted for presentations that are excessively long, so it is important to make sure you’re within the allotted length of time.

*Grade Breakdown:*

* Graphics made by student help convey key information 20%
* Minimal text 20%
* Overall slide quality 10%
* Understanding and explanation of the chosen paper 20%
* Focus on key findings 20%
* Overall presentation quality 10%

# Paper Presentation 1: Diversity Patterns

For the first paper presentation of the semester, students should select a paper that is focused on diversity patterns that are relevant for their study system (or a study system of their choice). For example, someone who works with introduced reptiles might choose a paper related to reptile diversity along some ecological gradient (e.g., temperature, elevation), or might instead choose a paper that tests whether there is a relationship between some aspect of diversity (e.g., species richness, trait diversity, phylogenetic diversity) and introduction success. I suggest selecting a paper that can also be used in Project 1, but that isn’t required.

# Paper Presentation 2: Community Assembly

For the second paper presentation of the semester, students should select a paper that investigates a community assembly mechanism in their study system (or a study system of their choice). For example, a student interested in plant conservation might choose a paper looking at the role of temperature in determining community membership or might instead focus on a paper about whether similar (e.g., phenotypically or phylogenetically) species tend to co-occur more or less than we might expect by chance. As before, this can be a paper you’re already planning to read for another assignment (e.g., Project 3), but that isn’t required.