

MPE Final Presentation Guide

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Length of Presentation

- For 10-12 minutes (ideally no more than 8 slides).
- You should estimate that you should spend an average of 1 to 2 minutes per slide, so if you have 40 slides for 10 minutes presentation you probably are doing something wrong.

Suggested slide order

- Title slide
 - This slide should include the title of your research proposal, your name, and the name of your institution.
 - Tip: remember this is a useful slide. Spend ~0.5-1 min here saying who you are and mentioning the topic of your presentation. Do not jump immediately to the next slide.
- Introduction
 - This slide should provide an overview of your research topic, including its significance and relevance.
 - You should also state your research questions.
 - Tip: You can use one motivating image, graph, etc. on this slide. Once you use it to explain the problem you can introduce your RQs.
- Literature Review and Theory
 - This slide should review the relevant literature on your research topic.
 - You should discuss the findings of previous research, and how they relate to your own research questions.
 - End this slide with your hypotheses or create a new slide with your hypotheses and verbally state them.
 - Tip: we know you have read A LOT but... this is a relatively brief presentation so please do not share with us all that you have read. Share with us the most important and necessary elements of literature so that the audience can understand where your work fits.
- Research Design
 - This slide should describe your research design, including your methods and procedures.
 - You should also discuss how you will collect and analyze your data.
 - Tip: Be precise! Saying “qualitative methods” or “quantitative methods” is not enough. Explain what you mean in detail.

- Tip: If you are using real data make sure to share the unit of analysis and the source of the data.
- Analysis & Preliminary Findings
 - If you have had the opportunity to begin collecting and analyzing your data feel free to include 1-2 slides summarizing your preliminary findings
 - Tip: Ideally you should be able to visualize your results. Visualization is generally better than more text.
- Conclusion/Future Research Directions
 - This slide can touch upon the future implications of your research and how it might relate to other research questions/topics you hope to explore later on.
- Thank you slide: DO NOT HAVE A STAND-ALONE THANK YOU SLIDE. Instead, add a line at the end of the final slide saying “Thank you” with your email listed below.
 - Why? It is not useful to have the screen with a huge thank you when you could instead have a Q&A slide that invites people to ask questions. This allows you to give your final remarks and discuss future steps and helps people not forget what your work was about.

Presentation Best Practices:

Slides & the ideal number of words

- KISS (keep it simple stupid). Your slides should be easy to understand and follow. Use clear and concise language, and it is very important **to avoid overloading your slides with too much text**.
- As a point of reference, you should do your best to avoid having bullet points with text longer than one line.
- Also, the maximum number of bullet points you should have on each slide is 4-5 points. No bullet point should be more than one line.
- You should spend roughly 1.5-2 min speaking about each slide.
 - Therefore, don't put too many things on one slide.

Visualization and formatting

- Use visuals. Charts, graphs, and images can help to break up your text and make your presentation more visually appealing.
 - You can use visuals to show results but also to motivate the research question at the beginning. Depending on the context, a graph can be better than text.
- Be consistent. Use a consistent theme and font throughout your presentation. This will help to create a professional and polished look.
- Colors: Stick with white or light beige on a dark background or black (or otherwise very dark color) on a light background. Your slides will have a more professional appearance as a result. Stay away from gradients in text unless the words are large and intended to be primarily decorative in nature.

- You can use a color to highlight some words.
- Results: If you have empirical results avoid including descriptive tables, or regression tables. Instead use bar plots, coef plots, etc.
 - If you include a figure make sure you label it appropriately.
 - Also, you should clearly explain it when presenting it on a slide.
- Regarding the results, do your best to prioritize your findings. DO NOT share ALL OF YOUR RESULTS. Be smart, prioritize. When you are doing presentations, less is more. If you overwhelm the audience with hundreds of data or visualizations, they will miss the point. Think about what story you are telling and the best way to show what you have done. If you are unsure about which things to prioritize, speak with your mentors and they can help you make decisions.

Tools

- I like to use Latex beamer for my presentation. More tips [here](#). Find a template that feels comfortable for you.

Script and practice

- If you are worried about rambling, write out a script and practice it. Make sure you identify items you want to cover, but NEVER NEVER read your script nor your slides.
- Speak clearly and slowly. Make sure your audience can understand what you are saying.
- Use eye contact. Look at your audience as you speak, and make sure you are making eye contact with everyone in the room.
- Ask your mentor to help you practice the Q&A part of your presentation. Have them think with you about what kinds of questions people might ask and discuss how you might respond.
- **Practice, practice and practice more.** The more you practice, the more confident you will be when you deliver your presentation.
- Are you prepared? A good rule of thumb is to be able to close your eyes and know your presentation so well that you know what comes next without seeing the next slide. One way to get prepared is to practice the presentation a few times without slides so that you know exactly what to say without having the slides in front of you as prompts.

Bad Practices

- If you have hundreds of slides, and you skip them while presenting it shows that you did not plan accordingly.
- Spend more time than the one assigned.
- If you start the slide saying “I am not sure if you can see this table” if you are saying that is because you know it is a bad slide, then do not include it.
- Incorporating too many details so that you lose your audience.