



During your college career, you may be asked to present your academic work in the classroom, at conferences, or at special events. Two types of talks are common in academia: presentations in the classroom (including Honors Thesis presentations) and conference presentations. Both formats can be challenging because they may require you to condense a much longer paper into a 15 to 20 minute presentation. However, learning to present your work is an important academic exercise because it allows you to share your research, ideas, and arguments with a wider audience. It also invites critical engagement with your work, which in turn enables you to improve your writing and thinking. Because many presentations include visual elements (e.g. Power Point), this handout offers guidelines for converting a written paper into a talk and creating visual material that is appropriate for your topic.

General tips

Many classes in college require a lengthy research paper, and you may be asked to present your research to your classmates before you have to turn in your final paper. This is a great opportunity to receive feedback and to polish your argument for the final submission. However, the following question usually arises: How do I summarize a 10 to 15-page paper for a 15 to 20-minute talk? Below are some tips and guidelines to help you through this process.

Types of Delivery

Typically, there are two ways of presenting: you are either using notes to guide you through your presentation, or you read your paper.

- **TALKING WITH NOTES:** This can be tricky, as you may find yourself expanding on certain points more than others, along with losing track of the order of your argument. It is imperative that you create a document that clearly and equally divides your introduction and thesis, your main points of evidence, and your conclusion. The only way to avoid going over time (and/or losing track of the order of your argument) is to practice your talk. Moreover, it means that you will have to pick major points instead of incorporating everything you have written.