MSE 8200 | Georgia Institute of Technology | Fall 2020

Tue & Thu 12:30 - 13:45 | D. M. Smith 104 & Online (BlueJeans)

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Office: 255 Love | Office hours by appointment

Fall 2020 COVID-19 Addendum

Due to the pandemic, the course will combine in-class in-person learning with online meetings. The schedule indicates which days we will meet on campus and when we will meet online. Due to the unpredictability of the situation, both the locations of our meetings and the content of the course may need to be changed or modified.

Course Description

This course focuses on advanced presentation skills, which students will develop by speaking on topics related to their own research work. Students will gain experience with both delivering and evaluating presentations. Equal emphasis will be placed on achieving excellence in content, delivery, and slide design. Each presentation will have a stated objective, such as informing others of one's research (for example, at a professional conference), or explaining highly technical information to a general audience (both in a standard-length presentation and short form). Each presentation will be recorded so that students can evaluate their own presentations and assess their progress.

Course Requirements

Students will be responsible for delivering several individual presentations as well as evaluating their peers' presentations for content, delivery, and slide design. A standard evaluation sheet will be provided, and it must be handed in at the end of each class. Additionally, each student will be required to hand in a self-assessment write-up at the next class. Students have the option of scheduling individual conferences with me to discuss their presentations. Specifics about these papers will be discussed. Other more spontaneous professional speaking skills and practice will be included in the course. The course will also include a writing/revision of a two-page resume. There is no final exam.

Conference-style presentation with slides should be 15 minutes max: 10 minutes for the presentation itself and approx. 5 minutes of Q & A. In addition, each student will give a 1-1.5 minute elevator talk, which will be done without slides or any supporting material, and a 3-minute thesis (3MT) talk on their work, both for general audience.

Each presentation will be recorded so that students can critique their own performance for their self-assessment write-ups. Students need to bring their laptop to class on the day they present in order to download their video. (I will explain the process on the first day of class.)

Students must send me a copy of their slide presentation along with their self-assessment of the assignment.

Grading

All assignments are weighed equally. The peer evaluations will not be considered in my grading. Your participation score includes your self-evaluations, peer reviews (having done them), spontaneous speaking practice in class, and active participation in the workshops, including bringing a solid draft of your talk for the workshops.

Attendance

Attendance is required for all classes. Excused absences require documentation and a student may only have 2 excused absences during a semester. Students who know that they will miss a class to attend a conference or out of town professional interview must inform me well before the date. Each unexcused absence will lower a student's final grade by ½ a letter grade.

Electronic Devices in Class

This is a small, highly interactive class during which you will be expected to be fully engaged in discussion, activities, and actively observing presentations and filling out peer reviews. Only use your devices to take notes (and this will rarely be necessary), to take pictures of the white board, or for some other class activity that is requested. Please do not email, text, or otherwise engage in non-class activity on your devices. I expect that the majority of the time your devices will be stowed during class.

Academic Integrity

Georgia Tech aims to cultivate a community based on trust, academic integrity, and honor. Students are expected to act according to the highest ethical standards. For information on Georgia Tech's Academic Honor Code, please visit http://www.catalog.gatech.edu/policies/honor-code/ or http://www.catalog.gatech.edu/rules/18/.

Learning Accommodations

If needed, I will make classroom accommodations for students with documented disabilities. These accommodations must be arranged in advance and in accordance with the Office of Disability Services (http://disabilityservices.gatech.edu).

Schedule

Week 1
Tue, Aug. 18: Introduction to the course ONLINE
Thu, Aug. 20: Writing in science ONLINE
Read before class: "Writing in Science" & "Science Writing as Storytelling" (Schimel)

Week 2
Tue, Aug. 25: Communicating with non-technical audience 1 IN CLASS
Watch before class 3 TED talks (~35 min altogether) & take notes -- see the assignment.
Thu, Aug. 27: Communicating with non-technical audience 2 ONLINE
Read before class: read an excerpt from a technical article (available here) and an article on the same topic for non-technical audience (available here). Then do the following assignment.

Week 3
Tue, Sep. 1: 24/7 "lectures" -- see [assignment](#) IN CLASS
Guidelines for putting together an elevator pitch.
Thu, Sep. 3: Lecture on effective oral presentations ONLINE

Week 4
Tue, Sep. 8: Peer feedback workshop: elevator pitch ONLINE
Remember to [submit](#) your drafts before class.
Thu, Sep. 10: Elevator Pitch: all IN CLASS
Remember to (1) [submit](#) your revised drafts
    (2) bring to class sufficient number of peer evaluation sheets (available in [Modules](#))

Week 5
Tue, Sep. 15: Lecture on effective slide design IN CLASS
Guidelines for putting together a 3-minute thesis..
Thu, Sep. 17: Peer feedback workshop: 3MT ONLINE

Week 6
Tue, Sep. 22: 3MT Presentations: Group 1 IN CLASS
Remember bring to class sufficient number of peer evaluation sheets (available in [Modules](#))
Thu, Sep. 24: 3MT Presentations: Group 2 IN CLASS

Week 7: ONLINE
Tue, Sep. 29: Peer feedback workshop: presentations for non-technical audiences: session 1 ONLINE
Thu, Oct. 1: Peer feedback workshop: presentations for non-technical audiences: session 2 ONLINE

Week 8
Tue, Oct. 6: Presentations for non-technical audiences: Group 1 IN CLASS
Thu, Oct. 8: Presentations for non-technical audiences: Group 2 IN CLASS

Week 9
Tue, Oct. 13: Presentations for non-technical audiences: Group 3 IN CLASS
Thu, Oct. 15: Presentations for non-technical audiences: Group 4 IN CLASS

Week 10
Tue, Oct. 20: Peer feedback workshop: conference-style presentations: session 1 ONLINE
Thu, Oct. 22: Peer feedback workshop: conference-style presentations: session 2 ONLINE

Week 11

Tue, Oct. 27: Conference-style presentations: Group 1 IN CLASS
Thu, Oct. 29: Conference-style presentations: Group 2 IN CLASS

Week 12
Tue, Nov. 3: NO CLASS: Go vote or volunteer (e.g., as a poll worker)
Thu, Nov. 5: Conference-style presentations: Group 3 IN CLASS

Week 13
Tue, Nov. 10: Conference-style presentations: Group 4 IN CLASS
Thu, Nov. 12: Elevator pitch revisited: All present IN CLASS

Week 14
Thu, Nov. 17: AT HOME WORK: Resumes: reading day (no meeting)
Thu, Nov. 19: Resumes: peer feedback workshop ONLINE

Week 15
Tue, Nov. 24: Resumes: discussion IN CLASS