

Student Guideline and Assessment Rubrics

SCPY 596 - 600 Seminar in Physics I - V

DOs and DON'Ts

There are certain things that we are looking for when grading your presentation, and there are certain things that we think you should not do while giving a talk. These are things that we think are important in the talk. You should use this list as a guideline to prepare for your talk.

DOs: Things you should do.

1. You should select a topic about which you are excited and which you understand very well. Most likely, it will be about your research. At the same time, it should interest your peers. Most importantly, it HAS to be about physics.
2. Assume that your audiences do not know anything about your talk, and give a proper introduction to the topic before going into any details.
3. Make eye contact with your audiences. If you are afraid of looking into their eyes, focus on their noses. Try to look around the room, move around, and make use of hand gestures and body language.
4. Try to relax. Your audiences love you.
5. Try to speak understandable and grammatically correct English.
6. Use spell check!!!
7. Use easy-to-read fonts, and choose background and font colors that make your slides easy to read.
8. Rehearse your talk in front of friends several times.
9. When being asked a question, make sure that you understand the question. Prepare to say, "I don't know." However, saying just "I don't know" is not good enough. So be thoughtful.

DON'Ts:

1. Don't choose a topic that you don't understand. You might be able to present it by memorizing the content, but when it is time for questions, you most likely won't be able to answer them. Try to avoid some complicated derivations and technical details that would bore your audiences. If some of them are interested in the technical details, they will ask you at the end.
2. Don't speak monotonically. It will make your audiences feel asleep.
3. Don't write the whole sentence and try to avoid reading from your slide.
4. Don't talk for longer than your allowed time.
5. Don't pause for too long after being asked a question. You can buy some time by repeating the question back to your audience, making sure that you understand it correctly.
6. Don't say anything that is not relevant to questions that you are asked.

There are many more things, but we think these DOs and DON'Ts will serve as guidelines for preparing for your talk. You will probably come up with a better list of things for yourself after you have some experience.

Student Name: A: _____ B: _____

Date: _____

COMPONENT	4 – Excellent		3 – Good		2 – Fair		1 – Poor	
Performance	Student makes use of direct eye contact, body movements, clear voice and intonation, and looks self-confident, with no mistakes.		Some use of direct eye contact with audience and body language; displays little or no tension, makes minor mistakes.		Minimal eye contact and little movement; mild tension, trouble recovering from mistakes; or shows negativity toward topic.		No body language or interaction with audience at all, obvious nervousness, or shows no interest in topic presented.	
Content	Topic is relevant for a Physics audience, motivation is clear, concepts are well organized, seminar results interesting.		Topic is well defined, seminar is mostly easy to follow and includes enough Physics.		Seminar lacks organization, main ideas are not clearly identified, or topic is not about Physics.		No focus at all, topic is dubious, or sequence of information confusing, seminar is not understood by most people.	
Language	Student uses correct English, with proper pronunciation and no grammar or spelling mistakes.		Student speaks and writes correctly except for some mispronunciations, typos, or minor mistakes.		Student makes frequent mistakes in either oral or written English, but most people can understand it.		Mispronunciations, typos, and bad sentence structures make the seminar hard to understand.	
Visual Aids	Text and equations are perfectly readable, with well chosen fonts and colors, graphics are clear and professional looking.		Slides are mostly readable, clear, and professional looking, although there is some room for improvement.		Many problems with readability, clarity, and/or professionalism of visual aids, e.g., fonts are too small, graphics lack labels...		Whole presentation is unreadable, unclear, and/or unprofessional.	
Question & Answer	Speaker expands upon previous statements. Cites additional examples to answer question.		Thoughtful, concise responses. Conveys knowledge of subject.		Responses not clear or do not add to comprehension of the listener.		Could not answer questions or answers are irrelevant.	