Senior Design Presentations

Overview and Suggestions

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Logistics

- There are 16 sessions, during which either 1 or 2 student teams will present.

- The 16 sessions are slotted into 4 parallel tracks, taking place at 4 locations in the science building.

- There are 4 morning tracks (2 sessions each) and 4 afternoon tracks.

- A small fraction of presentations will take place earlier than Friday.

- Each team member must participate!

- Give a practice presentation to your advisor and other interested people!

Timing and Audience

- Each project team will have a maximum of 25 minutes for the presentation.
- There will be approximately 5 minutes of questions by the faculty committee (the questioning can go longer if deemed necessary by the faculty)
- The faculty committee is made up of your project advisor and 2 other ME faculty members.
- The faculty committee will be filling out the Presentation Assessment Rubrics.

Timing and Audience

- **If you have an industry sponsored project, company representatives will also be in the audience.**

- **The company reps. are welcome to ask questions after the faculty committee is done asking questions.**

- **If time allows, students in the audience can ask questions after faculty and company reps. have asked questions (in my experience there usually isn't time for student questions)**

Timing and Audience

- **I strongly discourage you from inviting family members and friends to your presentation. You could schedule another time to give your presentation to family/friends if you wish.**

- **With family in the audience, the Q&A session can be awkward for students/faculty.**

- **In the interest of professionalism, the audience should be faculty, company reps., and other engineering students.**

Tips on giving technical presentations

- Avoid talking for too long without supporting visuals.
- All visuals/text should be easily legible from the back row of the room (rule of thumb, font size >= 28 on text)
- Do not pack too much content on one slide→divide it into multiple slides
- Refer directly to figures and plots when you discuss them (if you are discussing a figure or plot, make it clear to the audience, point to it!)

Tips on giving technical presentations

- You must show some very detailed aspects of your supporting analysis→the audience wants to see the "nitty gritty"

- As a rule for technical presentations, they should start general, move to specific, and finish with general. Most of the time should be spent on the specifics.

- It's OK if you lose some of the audience during the specific discussion.

- You want to "wow" the audience with your technical prowess→don't hold back!

More Tips

- You don't have time to show all the details of the entire project. Pick the details that you think are most relevant and technically impressive.

- Prepare extra slides that can be used to answer technical questions from the committee (put them at the end of your presentation and only show them if you are asked about that topic).

- Avoid showing peripheral information— every slide should include an integral point. (e.g. no need to show Gantt chart)

Closing Thoughts

- If you prepare well, your presentation will be fun→you get to show off what you've done and what you know!

- Your committee wants to see you succeed! They will be forgiving of your mistakes if it's clear you've given your best effort.

- Stress/nervousness keeps you sharp, but keep it in perspective. If you get too stressed, it will probably negatively impact your performance. Practicing and being prepared will reduce your stress level.

Questions?