COMP496/901: Academic Presentation and Writing Skills
Session 1:
Presentation and Writing: Basics You Need to Know

Robert Dale
Robert.Dale@mq.edu.au
Today’s Agenda

- Class Scheduling, Deadlines and Assignments
- Giving Presentations
- What's Next
## Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Class Deliverable</th>
<th>Related Deadline for Hons</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monday 4th August</td>
<td>Presentation and Writing 101: Basics You Need to Know</td>
<td></td>
<td>Project selection: Friday 8th August</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monday 11th August</td>
<td>Videoing of presentations</td>
<td>Your five minute presentation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monday 18th August</td>
<td>Writing Skills #1: Microstructure and Macrostructure</td>
<td>One-page project description</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monday 25th August</td>
<td>Viewing of recorded presentations</td>
<td>Three-page project description</td>
<td>Initial presentation: Thursday 28th August</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monday 1st September</td>
<td>Writing Skills #2: Common Problems</td>
<td></td>
<td>Proposal document: Tuesday 2nd September</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monday 8th September</td>
<td>Time Management</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Today’s Agenda

• Class Scheduling, Deadlines and Assignments
• Giving Presentations
• What's Next
Tips for Presentations

• The Structure of Your Presentation
• The Visible Content of Your Presentation
• Using Tools
• Your Speaking
• Your Interaction with the Audience
• Your Physical Presence
The Structure of Your Presentation

- Always have a separate title slide
- Make the aims of your talk clear at the outset
- Always have a concluding slide
- Repeat slides rather than navigating backwards and forwards
The Visible Content of Your Presentation #1

• Make sure you know what you are talking about!
• Make a story out of what you have to tell
• Use graphics and illustrations
• Use statistics and numbers
• Make your slides attractive
• Don't clutter your slides with too much information
• Always number your slides
The Visible Content of Your Presentation #2

• Think about the role of each of your slides in the presentation
• Don't use colours which are hard to see
• Choose your slide titles with careful thought
• Explain terms that might be unfamiliar to the audience
• Use examples
• Make sure your grammar and spelling are correct
• Check the syntax and punctuation of bulleted lists of items
• back up your claims by referring to the literature
Using Tools

• Make sure you are familiar with all the basic machinery in the presentation tool you use
• Explore all the functionalities that your presentation tool provides
• Make sure you are aware of all the different ways of advancing slides
Your Speaking #1

- Rehearse, rehearse, rehearse
- Make sure that your talk will not run over the allotted time
- Don't just read off the slides
- Make clear the relationship between what you say and what is on the slide
- Speak clearly and not too fast
Your Speaking #2

- Avoid speaking in a monotone
- Make sure that you are speaking at an appropriate volume
- Recap at the end of each major segment of your talk
- Watch out for distracting verbal behaviours
Your Interaction with the Audience

- Don't start your talk by apologizing for feeling nervous
- Always look at the audience
- Try to avoid using notes
- Try to develop a relaxed style
- Engage the audience by asking them a relevant question at the beginning
- Only use humour if you are confident it will work
Your Physical Presence

- Watch out for physical behaviours that the audience may find distracting
- Use your hands to add expression to your talk
- Point to things on the screen
Today’s Agenda

• Class Scheduling, Deadlines and Assignments
• Giving Presentations
• What's Next
What's Next

• Monday 11th August:
  – Everyone gives a five minute presentation on their project

• The Rules:
  – You must send me your slides as a PPT file (or, less preferably, as a PDF file) by 9am Monday 11th August
  – You must have rehearsed your presentation to make sure it fits in five minutes
  – You must be here at 6pm sharp so we can proceed without interruptions
Your Presentation

- Aim for 5 slides:
  - A title slide
  - A slide that states the problem you are intending to solve
  - A slide that gives an example to make the problem clear
  - A slide that summarises the way you will approach the outcome
  - A slide that indicates how you will evaluate the work or demonstrate that you have achieved the goal
- You may insert additional material on no more than 5 additional slides, for a max of 10
Don't Forget!

- Email rdale@ics.mq.edu.au NO LATER THAN 9AM MONDAY 11TH AUGUST your slides for your presentation