Giving a Presentation

Checklist for the PR Seminar

General Criteria for a Good Talk

A good talk ...

- ... is well structured, with a clear beginning, middle, and end.
- ... is clearly explained and provides a strong motivation for the topic.
- ... is engaging and enables effective knowledge transfer.
- ... is supported by relevant examples and illustrations.
- ... is appropriate for the audience and makes suitable use of their prior knowledge.
- ... respects the given time limit and allocates time appropriately across sections.

A good presenter ...

- ... uses gestures, facial expressions, and posture effectively.
- ... moves appropriately and purposefully.
- ... shows enthusiasm and self-confidence.
- ... varies pitch, tempo, and volume to maintain attention.
- ... uses precise wording and clear, concise language.
- ... uses few or no filler words.
- ... responds to questions clearly and honestly.
- ... acknowledges limitations or open issues.

What to Avoid

- Avoid spelling mistakes on your slides (someone *will* notice them).
- Avoid small fonts and overcrowded slides; slides must be readable from the back of the room.
- Avoid outline slides. If an outline slide is truly necessary, do not start the presentation with it. First introduce the problem, explain its relevance, and then provide an overview of the talk.
- Avoid showing complex diagrams all at once. If a diagram consists of multiple components, build it up step by step.
- Avoid overly fancy animations. Simple animations for the appearance and disappearance of elements are sufficient.
- Avoid turning your back to the audience. Look at the audience (not only your supervisor) and avoid being glued to your laptop.
- Avoid red/green or blue/violet color combinations to distinguish elements, as these are not accessible to people with color vision deficiencies.
- Avoid presentation tools that do not meet academic standards for reproducibility and citation (e.g., Powerpoint); use LaTeX or an equivalent text-based system.

What Not to Forget

- Always bear in mind the audience (i.e. interested computer science students).
- Include slide numbers, as they help to reference specific slides during discussions.
- Cite the sources of images, figures, tables, etc. (e.g. as footnotes).
- Five to seven bullet points per slide are acceptable; more than that makes slides crowded.
- Choose slide titles carefully, as they guide the interpretation of the slide content.
- Explain tables and figures carefully.
- Practice your presentation thoroughly. Rehearse multiple times to refine timing, flow, and delivery.

Structure and Content

The exact structure and content of the presentation depend on your project and topic. We recommend the following structure:

1. Motivate your research project by explaining which problem is addressed and why it is relevant and worth investigating.
2. Embed your research question in a broader context by introducing the main research area, relevant sub-areas, and key publications.
3. Outline the roadmap of your project by describing the planned or implemented steps.
4. Formally describe your approach and solution (e.g. algorithms, models, formulas, theorems). Support the explanation with didactic examples and illustrations. If applicable, present your own implementation and illustrate its main processes.
5. Present and discuss empirical results obtained so far, or describe the planned experimental setup and evaluation strategy.
6. Discuss assumptions, limitations, and potential weaknesses of the approach.
7. Draw conclusions and clearly state the main take-home messages.
8. Discuss possible future research directions and next steps.
9. Prepare one slide with at least two thought-provoking questions to stimulate discussion if needed.
10. Include one slide listing the cited references.