

COMP 492 Assignment 6: Final Presentation or Thesis Defense

Instructions

This assignment consists of a presentation describing your senior project. You have creative freedom in choosing the style and content of your presentation. The only absolute requirements are:

- For students not pursuing honors, the length of the presentation should be 20 minutes, plus or minus 5 minutes. Up to 10 minutes of questions from the audience will follow the main presentation. For students pursuing honors, a presentation of 30-35 minutes is a good guideline, but check with your thesis advisor who can provide more specific advice for your project.
- The target audience of the presentation is the computer science faculty. Thus, you may assume a general computer science background, but you may not assume any knowledge specific to your project.

In addition, here are some suggestions that will almost certainly help with the presentation:

- Many good presentations use a variety of media. For example, you might use a combination of prepared slides, writing on the whiteboard, and a live demo.
- It is essential to practice your presentation *in full, out loud, and timed*, more than once. Unless you are an unusually talented speaker, this is the only way to prepare a high-quality presentation.
- At least one of your run-throughs should be in the room where the final presentation will take place, using the exact technology (computers, laptops, whiteboards etc) that will be used in the final presentation itself. Familiarize yourself with all aspects of the environment, including how to control the lighting, move the whiteboards, and control the projector(s).
- Keep the number of words on a slide to a minimum. A reasonable guide is a maximum of 15 words in the heading and a maximum of 50 words in the rest of the slide.
- Absolutely everything that appears on a slide should be explained. Otherwise, leave it out. All formulas, axes on graphs, symbols, figures, diagrams, arrows etc. must be explained. Every piece of text or bullet point must be explained.
- Define all scientific terms before using them.

Grading

The presentation will be graded according to the following rubric.

Content (40%)	Level is perfect for target audience. Primarily deals with non-trivial computer science. No flaws in logic or factual material. All reasonable questions were answered correctly. Presentation demonstrates original research and/or describes the acquisition of new software engineering techniques. All terms are defined clearly before they are used.
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Structure (30%)	Objectives are clearly explained. Arguments or examples are well explained. Conclusion is obvious. The overall flow of the presentation is easy to comprehend.
Style (30%)	Audience is captivated during the talk. Flawless slides or other materials. Timing is appropriate. Speech is clear, confident, and fluent throughout.

Note: rubric adapted from Occidental College physics department; see <http://www.oxy.edu/x6660.xml>.