Guidelines for Oral Presentations for Capstone

Process:

1. Schedule your presentation. To find a date when all three readers can meet, select three different days and different times on your own. (If your client is very busy, you might first ask the client for times that will work for her/him.) Then, send these three dates and times by e-mail to all three readers asking them to let you know which ones will work for them. Typically, one of these dates will work for all three. If not, you can start again. Once all your committee members agree to a date and time, submit the online Schedule Request Form.

2. All three of your readers should receive a copy of your final paper in advance of your oral presentation to give them time to look it over again; check your syllabus for specific requirements. Make sure your client and second reader have received a copy of the rubric.

3. In order for us to keep your paper on file for other students in our library, the university lawyers require the client to sign the SPA License to Publish agreement. (We do not intend to publish your paper. This is the lawyer’s language for making it available to others.) Please complete it with information relevant to your paper (title, your name, date) and send it to your client explaining the purpose (to allow us to put it in the library or otherwise make available for students’ use).

Presentation:

1. Your presentation should be about 12-15 minutes, followed by a 20-minute question, answer, and discussion period; please check syllabus for specific parameters. The student then leaves the room while the readers discuss your Capstone. You will then receive final feedback.

   (Online students should refer to their syllabus and contact their Capstone instructor for presentation options.)

   (For those using Adobe Connect, be sure to see “Adobe Connect Presentation” instructions under “Presentation Support” on the Capstone web page.)

2. You should not simply summarize your paper. The primary focus of your oral presentation is on your results and the recommendations that emerge from those results. If you have tables that summarize quantitative or qualitative results, consider which you want to present and how to best summarize your key results. Closing slides should focus on your recommendations or conclusions.
3. Most students use power point slides to summarize their key points and/or to show tables or complex findings. It is recommended that you distribute handouts of tables or complex findings for us to look at as you present.

4. Occasionally, students are asked to make a revision after the oral presentation, but this is not typical. Such revisions occur if something emerges in the discussion between the client and other readers that is important, had not been clear to all readers before, and should be changed for accuracy.

**Presentation Tips:**

- Be early and be prepared.
- Check out your room, equipment and/or online technology in advance.
- If you are using technology, make sure your presentation loads up and is working before your committee and guests enter the room.
- Come professionally dressed, as if you were going to an interview or presenting to a client.
- Do not chew gum or have food in your mouth.

- Thank your committee. If your chair introduces you and your topic, you do not need to repeat what s/he has said. You can say, “Thank you for your introduction. Before I begin my presentation on X, I’d like to thank my client, Name, and my other committee members, Name and Name.”

- Slides are Guides!
  - If you provide slides or handouts, make sure that they are not cluttered! A few bullet points help focus the audience. You don’t want to lose the audience in the slide.
  - Do not read from your slides. Let the bullet points remind you of your next thought and help provide a presentation structure—That’s it.

- Practice, practice, practice—OUT LOUD, in the privacy of your own home. You will figure out quickly where you trip up and where you are smooth. Your presentation will be timed, and it is important for you to figure out what parts of your written presentation you need and don’t need to include in your oral presentation. Give your audience enough that it has a clear picture of what you’ve done, but save the nitty, gritty details for the written report and Q&A.

- Do not exceed the 12-15 minute time limit.

- As you present, be sure to make eye contact with everyone in the room.

- Be prepared for things to go slightly awry. Sometimes it happens that the projector goes dark (handouts are good backups), someone comes in the room mid-presentation (ignore them, or just nod), there’s noise in the hallway (ignore it), a committee member is late (just relax).

- Finally, be proud and confident in your presentation! You’ve worked hard for this and here’s a chance for you to show off your academic and professional assets.