

Criteria for Evaluating Longer Presentations

In evaluating an oral presentation in the sciences, an audience or instructor typically considers criteria like the following.

Technical content

An “A” presentation does the following:

- ⇒ Shows an awareness of the literature
 - Synthesizes ideas
 - Covers all key points
 - Has depth
 - Includes references
- ⇒ Presents key ideas clearly
- ⇒ Discusses all major areas related to the purpose or assignment
 - Explains ideas clearly, using figures / equations / tables, where appropriate
 - Uses statistics and other evidence to support findings and their significance
 - Justifies assumptions
 - Asks and answers questions / objections
- ⇒ Is concise
 - Uses time efficiently to emphasize important points
 - Skips unimportant points (narrative explanations, discussion of mistakes)

Slide design

An “A” presentation:

- ⇒ Begins with an overview: explains purpose and organization of presentation (or chunks)
 - Divides ideas into major chunks
 - Helps audience see how one slide or section is related to the next
 - Numbers all slides
 - Uses transitions to help readers move from one main section to the next
 - Uses “running heads” to help audience see the section in which a slide belongs
- ⇒ Makes the main point of each slide clear
 - Whenever possible, uses a “talking headline” or “take-away” box to highlight the key point of a slide
 - Integrates text, tables, graphics, and equations
 - Makes it easy to move from the headline to the body of the slide
- ⇒ Keeps slide design simple
 - Avoids busy backgrounds
 - Minimizes text on the slide
 - Uses ample white space
 - Avoids tick lines, 3-D, and legends on graphs (minimizes ink)
 - Uses a large enough font to be seen throughout the room
 - Avoids the use of all capital letters
- ⇒ Uses correct grammar, spelling, and punctuation
 - Uses parallel construction in lists
- ⇒ Is consistent regarding numerical significance

Teamwork (if relevant)

A good presentation:

- ⇒ Involves each team member; participation is roughly equal
- ⇒ Shows evidence of planning
- ⇒ Has smooth transitions

Oral presenting skills

In a good presentation:

- ⇒ Volume is good; speakers can be heard at back of room
- ⇒ Speakers know material well; appear confident
- ⇒ Speakers maintain good eye contact
 - Involve whole audience
 - Look at audience while speaking rather than at computer or slides
- ⇒ Pace is slow enough to be understood
- ⇒ Delivery is clear; minimal number of “uhm’s”
- ⇒ Stance is calm; no rocking back and forth
- ⇒ Hand gestures are purposeful (no hands covering face, no wringing of hands, hands not in pockets)

Grading checklist – oral presentations

Needs improvement: 1

Satisfactory: 3

Excellent: 5

Group # _____	
Technical content <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Awareness of the literature ▪ Presentation of proposed model ▪ Discussion ▪ Q & A ▪ Conciseness; efficient use of time 	1 2 3 4 5
Slide design <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Introduction ▪ Overall organization ▪ Point clear on each slide ▪ Effective design of individual slides ▪ Effective graphics ▪ Professionalism and correctness 	1 2 3 4 5
Teamwork <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Equal participation ▪ Smooth transitions ▪ Evidence of practice 	1 2 3 4 5
Oral presenting skills <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Volume and pace ▪ Eye contact ▪ Gestures ▪ Overall confidence 	1 2 3 4 5
Other	1 2 3 4 5
Overall evaluation and comments	1 2 3 4 5