

DEPARTMENT OF POPULATION MEDICINE

SEMINAR COURSE

Fall 2011

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Schedule:

1. Fri. Sept. 9, 4:00-5:20, Rm 1715, Learning Centre.
CONTEXT & SUBTEXT, PREPARATION & STRUCTURE
2. Mon. Sept. 12, 4:00-5:20, Rm 1715. Learning Centre.
DELIVERY - STYLE, DO'S AND DON'T'S
3. Wed. Sept. 14, 4:00-5:20, Rm 1715, Learning Centre.
USES AND ABUSES OF MEDIA & AUDIOVISUAL AIDS
4. Fri. Sept. 16, 1 4:00-5:20, Computer Lab, Rm 2500, Pop Med.
POWERPOINT, ETC...
5. Mon. Sept. 19, 4:00-5:20, Rm 1715, Learning Centre.
WRITING PAPERS, VS MAKING PRESENTATIONS
6. Wed. Sept. 21, 4:00-5:20, Rm 1715 Learning Centre.
VOICE WORKSHOP (WEAR YOUR GRUBBIES)
7. Fri. Sept 23, 4:00-5:20, Rm 1715, Learning Centre.
FIRST TAPED MINI SESSION.
8. Wed. Sept. 29, 4:00-5:20, Rm 1715, Learning Centre.
SECOND TAPED MINI SESSION.
9. Fri. Oct. 1, 4:00-5:20, Rm 1715, Learning Centre.
THIRD TAPED MINI SESSION.
10. Mon. Oct. 4, 4:00-5:20, Computer Lab, Rm 2500, Pop Med.
CITATION RETRIEVAL & MANAGEMENT

Departmental Seminar Series will be held in Room 1715 every Thursday at 3:30pm starting September 15th, 2011

COURSE OBJECTIVE:

To help participants develop skills in oral presentation and use of related technologies.

TEACHING STRATEGIES

Didactic sessions are discussions, not lectures - participants contribute to review of the topic. The course will include a hands-on PowerPoint session, videotaped mini sessions and a voice lab. Graduates taking the course for the second time (PhD, DVSc candidates), are encouraged to play an active role in course delivery. This includes coaching new grads as they prepare and deliver presentations.

WHO SHOULD REGISTER?

All current graduate students must register for this course in the Fall semester, if they have not already taken the course once (MSc students) or twice (DVSc & PhD students). The didactic component will only be offered once a year. Though all new students attend the introductory sessions taking place at the start of the Fall semester, some may not be scheduled to actually present their major seminar until the Winter semester. Students taking the course for the second time are not expected to attend all didactic sessions, *but everyone should attend the very first session on September 9th.*

WHY?

You'll make many presentations during your career. Your goal may be to transmit information, convert people to your point of view, or persuade someone to employ you. Regardless of the quality and importance of your data, success will in large part be determined by how effectively you communicate. Confidence, natural charm and charisma will help, but even if your audience find you a captivating speaker, you still need to have something useful to say. Equally, a charming, eloquent speaker with valuable information may still fail if the presentation is not organized. You will also fail if the audience can't hear you, or find themselves concentrating on some aspect of your appearance or style. Presentation of scientific data introduces additional challenges, where the need for accuracy and clarity may conflict with a need for brevity and a relaxed, yet authoritative and interesting style that holds audience attention. You can never be certain others share your interest in your material!

An effective presentation requires preparation, with the first step being to define presentation goals (the overall intent of the presentation), and objectives (the main points to be made). Anything that comes in the category "nice to say" can probably be left out.

Background information to introduce and support the presentation, orient the audience and support the arguments to be made needs to be identified. Always be aware of the **subtext** - all presentations have a subtext. For example, you may be making 'a lay presentation the goal of which is to advise clients on the role of a particular organism as a cause of mastitis in the cow' ('...' is context), but your subtext (possibly the main intent of the presentation) may be to influence producers' views on the significance of environmental contamination. Goals and context, objectives and subtext are not the same.

Goals are broad statements of intent, objectives are more specific and are often action-oriented.

You also have to decide on presentation method, i.e., where and when to use audiovisual aids. Slides, overheads, even a blackboard (in a small group session) can all help clarify complex concepts and improve economy of information transfer - a histogram or scatter plot may give the audience a far better idea of data structure than a statistical description. AV aids can guide the audience by providing an outline of the presentation and the relationship of the topics addressed, and can help keep you on track. We have become very dependent on visual aids, but they can sometimes be a mixed blessing. Crowded or illegible images

confuse and frustrate the audience. Pictures of your holiday are rarely relevant and are distracting. Gratuitous images may destroy the flow of information. Slides can sometimes constrain you on those occasions when you might be better speaking extemporaneously, responding dynamically to your audience's interest. Most speakers these days use "PowerPoint" or a similar package and make their presentations electronically, and most venues are equipped to support this approach, but beware!

SO WHAT HAPPENS?

Part 1:- Instructional Component

The formal instructional component of the course will take place early in the Fall semester and will consist of 10 sessions, each of approximately 1½ hours. The first three will address some of the main concerns and pitfalls in making a presentation. The fourth session will be a "PowerPoint" lab to make sure everyone is comfortable using the technology - most presentations these days make use of computer methods and you ought to be aware of the options. Please, if you already have experience using this technology come to the session with the intention of helping the rest of us. We will spend a little time addressing use of PowerPoint to make posters, and a lot more time discussing graphic techniques in the presentation of data.

The fifth session will address writing scientific papers. This is relevant because you will all be writing papers and the process is very similar to that used in putting together a good presentation.

The sixth session will be a workshop on voice in which issues such as enunciation and voice projection will be addressed. This practical session is designed to improve the chance of your audience clearly hearing all you have worked so hard to prepare. Part of the lab involves delivering a small piece **of your own choice and in your native language.**

The next three sessions will be for the presentation of taped **mini seminars**. Each of you will make a presentation, **four minutes in length**, which will be videotaped for immediate replay after you have had a chance to comment on how *you* think you did. The presentation must have goals, structure, and a message, the intent of which must be clearly stated at the beginning, and the message must be clearly and effectively conveyed to the audience in the allotted time. After replaying the presentation there will be brief, **friendly** and **constructive** discussion of how effectively you achieved your objective, and of what worked and what did not. The topic chosen must have a start and an end, and must have sufficient structure for the speaker to have points to make, a message to convey, and some challenge in getting the points across, but the topic is otherwise wide open - you can talk on any subject you like, using good taste, of course! Emphasis will be on projection, presence, audibility, clarity of content, clarity of speech, style, and structure. More specific attention to presentation of scientific information will be an objective of the main seminar. Mini seminars are intended to be practice sessions during which you will have a chance to help each other identify strengths and weaknesses - be kind to each other!

The last session will address the use of reference management packages (*Procite, RefWorks, Bookends*) to build and manage your research bibliography databases, including downloading citations from the Internet, and how you use this software to insert citations in your documents (thesis, paper), and build citation lists. This technology can save you a huge amount of time and grief!

Part 2:- Seminar Presentation

Main seminars will be 15-20 minutes in length with 5-10 minutes for questions and answers (i.e., 20 minutes MAXIMUM), and will take place during the Population Medicine Departmental Seminar Series at 15.30 hrs on Thursdays. Since watching other speakers' presentation styles and offering constructive criticism to colleagues is part of the course, **it is expected you will attempt to attend every seminar in the series.** We have resolved most conflicts so you should be able to make all sessions. In the interests of ensuring you all

derive maximum benefit from the course, but acknowledging there will inevitably be circumstances that on occasion preclude your attending, we use a sign-up sheet for all graduates registered for the course. **An 80% overall attendance is required.**

Graduate student seminars will be interspersed with seminars by faculty and visiting speakers, and will be spread throughout the academic year. For first time graduate student seminars, two students will present at each session. Your presentation must be related to some aspect of your research so that those attending the seminars know what you're doing in the Department, but it should not be a comprehensive review of your research . . . that will come at your defence! **Second time course participants will have the entire session to themselves, and should present their research proposals.** All speakers (grads and guests) will be formally introduced by one of you - course participants will chair and moderate all sessions and moderation skills will be part of the material covered. Presentations will be evaluated according to the evaluation form attached.

After seminars presented by course registrants, and after the general audience has left, the moderators will lead a discussion of the presentation/s, using the assessment sheet as a guide. On grad student seminar days, therefore, be prepared to stay for an extra 20-30 min.

DO I GET MARKED?

The course is assessed on a pass/fail basis. Performance in the mini seminars is reviewed by group discussion. Seminar presentations are evaluated by the audience, in writing, and by registrants in writing and in discussion immediately after the presentation, and evaluations are then given to the speaker/s. An 80% attendance at seminars over the Fall and Winter semesters is required to pass the course. An incomplete grade will therefore be entered for the Fall semester for all participants.

SPECIAL CONSIDERATION

If you anticipate any difficulty in attending 80% of the seminars because of conflicts with other responsibilities related to your program (for example, research commitments off-campus or extensive conference commitments), you should complete the Seminar Special Consideration Form - you can get a copy from Julie Tremblay or Mary Elliott.

A FINAL NOTE!

I've found that some of the most valuable guidance you receive comes from the support you give each other as you prepare and work through your presentations. That's the main reason why I try to get you all through the structured part of the course together - so that you can develop some "esprit de corps" and get into the habit of evaluating all presentations critically. The quality of graduate presentations in this department is impressive, and I'd like to be able to take the credit. However, the truth is you do the work yourselves - I just provide "stimulation." I'm looking forward to getting together with you all!

SOME NOTES ON STRUCTURE/ORGANISATION/PLANNING FOR PRESENTATIONS.

Presence and energy are important attributes for effective teaching, but if you're not prepared, if you don't have something useful to say and a plan for how you're going to say it, the teaching exercise will likely be a wasted effort, so how do we get organised? There are three essential elements, goals and objectives, structure/organization, and practice, practice, practice - BE PREPARED!

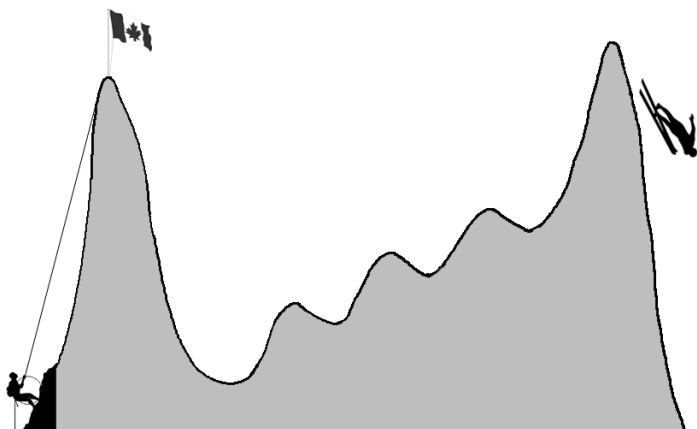
1. Goals and Context, Objectives and Subtext

- * **Goals** are broad statements of intent, and reflect the overall intent of the course. For a lecture/presentation, they relate most closely to the actual title.
- * **Context** is everything to do with why you're officially there and with where you are - a lay presentation at a producers' meeting on issues of interest to the industry, or a scientific "bellringer" lasting 10 minutes to a room filled with researchers to present your findings at a scientific conference.
- * **Objectives** are more specific than goals and are action-oriented - they reflect the specifics of what you are trying to achieve *within* a presentation - the steps on the way.
- * **Subtext** is what's going on behind the scenes, and agenda you may have and that's not in the title, possibly the "real" reason you are there.

Goals and objectives relate to the structure of the presentation. Make sure the objectives are clear and enunciate these clearly as you go, perhaps by the use of segues - they will guide you and they will guide your audience.

2. Structure

Your presentation needs structure. This may be relatively "loose" for a tutorial/discussion session, and may be limited to a list of objectives, but in a lecture the structure needs to be much more obvious. It is this organization that helps you achieve your goal/s for the session. The audience needs to know what you are trying to achieve (the goal), and how you intend to get there (the objectives), i.e., the structure of the presentation must be EXPLICIT and CLEAR - they need a MAP. The best speaking style may be extemporaneous - spontaneous and loosely structured (as opposed to 'read' from a script or overly rehearsed) - whereby the audience can concentrate on the content and have the structure "flow over" them. Extemporaneous speaking allows for spontaneity and creativity, and stimulates excitement, enthusiasm, curiosity and THOUGHT in the audience. It can also very effectively convey the speaker's enthusiasm for the subject, BUT, there MUST be an underlying structure, there MUST be clear objectives.



If you're not fully confident of your material and yourself, if you're not yet a fluent speaker, you'll need to make explicit statements during your presentation about structure (see below). If you're a strong extemporaneous speaker, then the underlying structure may not need to be so clearly emphasized because you will carry your audience through the material as though you are telling a very interesting and coherent story, but the structure will still be there.

WHY a map? A map allows all components of the material to be linked together in a logical manner, and keeps the audience and YOU on the right track. It allows an audience member who skips a beat to catch

up, allows the audience to balance, prioritize and appreciate the material contextually, and allows them to understand where the material you are giving them fits into the overall volume of current knowledge on the subject. It also reduces the chance of you drifting off topic or missing out critical information.

How do we create this map? There are any number of approaches to defining the structure of a presentation, but the one I like best is the journey analogy. Imagine a mountain above a deep valley. On the other side of the valley there's a series of hills and valleys, each successive hill getting larger until you reach a final mountain. This topology represents the structure of your presentation. The first mountain represents your presentation's start, when you state where we are now (the current state of our knowledge of the subject at hand), where you are going (the destination), and how you're going to get there (the itinerary). The last mountain is the destination, it's where you want to get to (the overall goal of the presentation). The smaller

hills on the way represent the discrete or specific objectives by which the presentation will build toward the final goal, and represent the itinerary or map. The "places" you pass through on the way, the tops of the smaller hills, are each objectives.

***"Tell 'em what you're going to tell
'em,
tell 'em,
then tell 'em what you told 'em."***

As you set out on your journey, you stop at the top of each hill, looking back and forward, recapping the journey so far and linking that to the next step. When you get to your

destination, the final mountain, you recap the whole journey, restating your starting point and your overall goal, i.e., you make sure the audience realizes you have reached your destination and understands how you got there. If you have any trouble remembering this approach to structure, just remember the much more succinct Aussie equivalent - "Tell 'em what you're going to tell 'em, tell 'em, then tell 'em what you told 'em."

3. Practice

Now that you've built the presentation, PRACTICE it and be prepared to cut out some material! Use cue cards, your overheads or slides to prompt you so you stay on track. Make sure you can deliver the presentation well within the allotted time, allowing some time for interaction with the class and questions. Try not to make the presentation "wooden" and stiff by sticking pedantically to the structure - just *reading* a paper can be boring in the extreme for the audience - but DO use the structure as an anchor to keep yourself AND your audience on track.

A well-prepared and effectively delivered presentation can be both enjoyable AND informative for your audience - there's no excuse for making a presentation boring. Have fun!