How to Prepare for a Platform Presentation

Overview

Platform Presentations allow students to share research, creative projects, or scholarly work through a structured, speaker-led presentation delivered live and in person. This format is well suited for projects that benefit from explanation, demonstration, performance excerpts, or guided discussion. Platform Presentations are sometimes referred to as podium or oral presentations.

Session Expectations

- Platform Presentations are delivered live and in person during scheduled sessions.
- Presenters will share their work with faculty, staff, students, and guests.
- Each presentation includes audience questions and discussion.
- Presentation times will be strictly observed to keep sessions on schedule.

Timing & Structure

- Presentation length: up to 20 minutes
- Question & Answer: up to 10 minutes
- Total session time: 30 minutes

Presenters should plan content carefully and practice with a timer to stay within the limit.

Preparing Your Presentation

- Design your presentation for a general academic audience, including those outside your discipline.
- Clearly introduce your topic and define key terms.
- Focus on the most important ideas rather than covering everything.
- Organize your talk with a clear beginning, middle, and conclusion.
- Scholarly projects often include background, purpose, methods/process, results, and significance.
- Creative projects should establish context, present the work, and conclude with a clear takeaway.
- Be prepared to explain why your work matters.

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Slides & Visual Support

- Slides or media may be used to support your presentation.
- Slides should emphasize key points, not replace your spoken explanation.
- A helpful guideline is no more than one slide per minute.
- Use large, legible fonts and strong color contrast.
- Avoid dense text or overly complex visuals.

Technology & File Preparation

- Presentation computers will use Windows/PC software.
- Presentations should be created in PowerPoint.
- Bring your file on a USB flash drive.
- If creating slides on a Mac, test animations carefully; some effects may not display properly on a PC.

Delivery Tips

- Practice and time your presentation.
- Speak clearly and confidently; avoid reading from slides.
- Use eye contact and natural pauses.
- Anticipate likely questions.
- Acknowledge collaborators, mentors, or funding sources as appropriate.

Avoid These Common Pitfalls:

- Trying to cover too much material
- Exceeding the time limit
- Text-heavy or hard-to-read slides
- Reading directly from slides
- Failing to clearly explain the significance of the work