

BIOMS 5665: Presentation Tips

Check your jargon at the door.

- Show your presentation to roommates, friends, and parents that are not familiar with the topic. Have them scan for words that they do not know.
- Do not be afraid to reference a basic biology textbook for ways to present your material (and the order in which you present your work). Books like *Molecular Biology of the Cell* are available on NCBI.
- Oversimplify. Remember, 1/3 of Americans do not know what a molecule is.
- Start with the basics ("This is a cell") and then build up.

Create takeaways that the audience can take with them.

- Have no more than 2 key ideas/takeaways, with a clear rationale.
- Reiterate key ideas and concepts throughout presentation.
- Try to reiterate these ideas by using different approaches to explain the same thing (ie. visual descriptions vs. hands-on activity).
- Use metaphors, stories, and analogies that are clear and can describe your concepts accurately.
- Create your presentation as a story, and avoid using a collection of statistics/facts.

Adjust your lens.

- Approach your presentation from the audience's perspective. What is something that Ithaca residents might want to know more about?
- Try not to be the only speaker. Encourage discussion and questions from the audience by ***pausing (count to five)*** after a slide and looking around the room.
 - Ask specific questions of the audience.
- Be willing to say "I don't know" when there is a question you do not have an answer to. It is better not to know than to confuse your audience.
 - Ask the audience for assistance on the question if necessary—you never know when there might be an expert in the audience!
- Look for common misconceptions and contradictions in the topic you are presenting, and address these (Ex. Many people think that all genetic mutations are heritable).

General Guidelines.

- Use slides that are clear and help the audience understand the material you are presenting.
- Use presentation rubric on Blackboard to guide your presentation content and design.
- Stay away from the color red in presentations for color-blind audience members.
- Prepare no more than 12 slides for your presentation.
- Limit text in slides to no more than 3 bullet points per slide.
 - Avoid lengthy text and overly busy slides.
- Have one central idea per slide.
- Use concrete, descriptive language.