Conference presentations

Student Conference Course

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http://www8.cs.umu.se/kurser/5DV144/HT14/
Conference presentations

- At a conference each paper is presented by one of the authors
- The time limit is typically 25 minutes with 5 minutes reserved for questions
- The time limit is usually very HARD
  - The chairman often shows a sign when 1 minute remains, and interrupts when time is out
Overview of the lecture

- How to write a presentation
  - General suggestions
  - Structure
  - Layout
- Preparation for the talk
- When you are standing there...

This is not an exact science – people present in many different and sometimes personal ways
Matthew 23:2-3
“The teachers ... So you must obey them and do everything they tell you. But do not do what they do, for they do not practice what they preach.

Or
“Do as I say, not as I do”
You are advertising your paper!

**Be brief!**

- Simplify – sacrifice accuracy for comprehensibility
- Be selective – focus on the main points only
- Not too many slides
  - Keep extra material as hidden slides

- Use examples – as simple as possible
- Using the white board for some parts gives extra attention
● Consider following the structure of your well written abstract
  − Motivation
  − Research question or task
  − Earlier work
  − What did you do?
  − How did you do it?
  − What were the results?
  − What are the conclusions?

● Do not necessarily use the same structure as the paper
  − Readers can go back and forth, listeners cannot

● If you have interesting results, mention them as soon as possible
Less is more! Avoid:
- Too much on each slide, ONE topic per slide
- Chunks of text copied directly from the paper
- Long sentences (PRUNE!)
- Small font sizes
- Background graphics
- Colors with bad contrast such as light green and yellow
- Animations (unless they serve a clear purpose)
- Unmotivated and complex PowerPoint templates
- Slide transition effects
● Pictures and graphs are usually good to include
  - Watch out for too small letters, digits, and lines
  - Mathematics and graphics can be easily incorporated as screen shots from the pdf file

● Checklist for bullet lists
  - Are all items really related?
  - Which bullets belong together?
  - Which order is most logical?

● Number your slides
● Learn your material so you can speak freely
● Add something that is not written on the slide
  − Explain or exemplify
  − If needed, make notes for each slide
● Prepare the start extra carefully
  − Powerful sentences
  − Rehearse it several times
● Rehearse the whole talk several times
● Time your talk – remove slides if necessary
  (try not to cut down on introduction or earlier work
When you are standing there

- Be there in time
- Prepare and check the equipment before
- Switch off your WiFi!

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- Face the audience, not the screen
- Look at the whole audience, each person at least once during the presentation
- Do not speak too fast
- Do not just read from the slides (or your notes...)

When you are standing there

- Questions from the audience
  - Be humble and thank for remarks
  - It is ok not knowing the answers to everything
  - Avoid long discussions
When you are standing there

- Preparing and rehearsing well is one of the best medicine against stage fright
- Look at someone who looks friendly to get calm
- Remember that most people are busy being nervous for their own presentation
- Very many people are nervous, but it hardly ever shows (and you are not an exception!)

Good luck!