Group Presentations

Working as a Group

- Choose a subject together - narrow it down to a manageable size- and support each other throughout the work.

- Decide on group roles early in the process. It helps to have one person who keeps notes and checks in with other members to keep them on task. Utilize the strengths of each person in the group. For example, if you have someone who is good with technology, you might want to assign the visual aids to them. Your strongest writers might be most effective in getting the presentation outline together.

- Set clear goals that include the purpose of the group, a strategy, and the resources needed to fulfill the goal. “Why am I here? Why is the audience here?”

- Develop a group presentation outline that everyone can agree on and that clearly states what will be covered. Allocate topics and time amongst each other. Proofread all material ahead of time. If anything goes wrong, you should have a back-up plan.

- Create a consistent presentation. As a group, decide whether the presentation is formal or informal. Dress similarly (not the same) and speak similarly.

Preparing the Presentation

If you are presenting a paper, make sure you look at the “Presenting a Paper” handout for tips on the transformation from written to oral.

- Know the area/room in which you will be presenting. Be comfortable there and arrive early.

- Analyze the audience and come to a group consensus of what the audience needs to hear. Tailor your topic to the audience’s interests. Show the audience how the topic’s content is relevant and important for them to hear.

- Determine what each member will do during the presentation. Assign one person to run the visual aid until he/she speaks. Choose the most confident and energetic speaker to open and close the presentation. Decide how you will split up the body of the speech. Keep to the time schedule. Do not improvise! Have a clear plan.
Creating an outline will help you remember how each section of the presentation will fit together.

Practice introductions and transitions when moving from group member to group member. To make sure the presentation flows smoothly, make sure each transition finishes one segment and introduces the new speaker or idea. Reference things the other speakers have said.

If introductions are necessary, decide whether each member will introduce themselves at the beginning of the presentation, or immediately before they speak.

Rehearse the speech at least three times, as a group and individually, to work out any bugs beforehand. Use discrete hand signals to indicate when a speaker is speaking too quickly or slowly and too quietly or loudly, as well as to show them how much time they have left.

Come to the Speaking and Writing Center as a group.

**While Giving the Presentation**
(see the delivery handout for more tips)

- Talk clearly, and avoid speaking too loudly or quickly. Make sure the ends of sentences don’t drop off.
- Talk to the audience, not AT them.
- Maintain eye contact. Use hand gestures and have good posture. Move occasionally and face the audience at all times.
- Be enthusiastic, and be sure to smile!