

Presentation guidelines

Fall 2016

- Presentations are terse: they should take about 15–20 minutes.
- The object of your presentation is to lay out a problem for class discussion. I will use the class discussion as input to the grading. For class discussion to happen, you have to make it completely clear what the problem is, and put on the table everything the class needs in order to think and talk about it. (If you leave out something that you need, you can expect an awkward silence.)
- Use your problem as an inclusion and organization criterion. You have to pick out those elements in the reading that are needed to set up your problem. (For most presentations, there's far too much reading to present all of it.) Don't let the order of exposition in the reading determine the organization of your presentation: make the points you need (and only those), in the order required for your setup.
- Pay attention to the public speaking aspect of the presentation. Make sure to speak slowly and clearly, to make eye contact with your audience, and so on. (That's part of the grade as well.)
- Start preparing early. I suggest that you drop by my office hours after you've read and thought about the material, but well before your presentation date.