THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT EL PASO

How to Present at an Academic Conference

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The Grad School’s “CareerPrep” initiative includes:

- Future Faculty programming
- Graduate Research EXPO
- Three Minute Thesis
- Apprentice Teacher Certificate
- NextGen Summer Seminar
- Support consultations & resources related to the job search, IDPs, skills development
In this session we will:

1. Review some general EXPO info
2. Discuss posters & explore related resources
3. Discuss best practices related to giving academic talks
4. Have Q&A
Nov. 8-9 @ Hilton Garden Inn
www.utep.edu/graduate/expo

- **Presenters must confirm your attendance before Oct. 25.**
- Posters must be size 32” x 40” (inches). Printing is available on the 3rd floor of the Library (and 2nd Floor Union W) for approximately $20.
- PPTs must be emailed to gradpd@utep.edu, subject line “EXPO PPT” by Nov. 1.
- Business casual attire is required. Please contact the Career Center to borrow professional clothing.
Time

• Poster Presentation Times: 2-4 mins. + Q&A

• Panel Presentation Times (1 hour, 15 min. total):
  3 participants  ~17 mins. each
  4 participants  ~13 mins. each
  5 participants  ~10 mins. each

Other notes

• Event is open to community members, especially Thursday’s networking reception & Friday’s roundtable & awards
• EXCEPTION: Friday’s Keynote lunch is for presenters, judges, mentors, and volunteers (in that order of priority).
Posters!
Best practices for academic talks:

- Professionalism (review)
- Preparation
- Effective Communication
- Other Notes
- Q&A
Professionalism (Review)

Poise, propriety, confidence, respect

• Personal Space
• Gender/Sexuality
• Academic Conferences & Performativity
• Grooming & Appearance
• Networking

What NOT to wear.

What to wear?
Preparation

Read & follow all instructions!

Deadlines:

• Do you need to confirm your attendance or register?
• When is your presentation due?

What are the check-in guidelines?

If you’re presenting a poster:

• What is the accepted size of the poster?
• When & where do you set up?
Preparation (con.)

Know your stuff, your goals, and your people!

Outline your presentation (or trim your text)
Remember: 100 words per minute; for a 13 minute talk, that’s 1300 words. Average reading time is 2 minutes per page (12 pt., double spaced).

Create:
- 1-page summary of main points and your contact information
- Business cards; it’s okay to create your own

Review:
- Overall professional goals for event
- Elevator Speech
- People you need to meet
Preparation (con.)

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Effective Communication

• Have clear goals & structure
• Vary your tone, pitch
• Use your body language
• Be respectful of & responsive to your audience & colleagues
Effective Communication (con.)

*In general...*

- Talk
- Stand
- Move
- Vary pitch
- Speak loudly, facing the audience
- Make eye contact
- Use outlines, images, & charts
- Finish within the time limit
- Rehearse

- Summarize main points at the beginning & end
- Notice your audience & respond to its needs
- Emulate excellent speakers

Bullets quoted from Paul N. Edwards, “How to Give an Academic Talk, v. 5.2”; http://pne.people.si.umich.edu/PDF/howtotalk.pdf
Effective Communication (con.)

What other PowerPoint strategies are also problematic?

Clip Art Is Evil!

Clipart & background info courtesy of Paul Caputo, “PowerPoint Poison”; Interpretation by Design. www.interpretationbydesign.com/?p=6179
• Murphy’s Law
• Dealing with Q&A
• Know yourself
• Practice, practice, practice

What has worked well for you in the past?

What are your professional development goals?
Q&A
@utepgradschool

utep.edu/graduate/pd
Thank you!

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