

# BIS 491: Senior Project Presentation

Spring 2011, Section 2

Professor: Cynthia Lehman

## Overview

This course provides a forum for preparing and presenting your BIS 490 Senior Project. Although you may have done presentations before or taken a public speaking class, this course will help you prepare a proper presentation of your research project that is worthy of a professional academic association gathering. BIS 491 runs concurrent with your enrollment in BIS 490. Completion of BIS 390, *The Research Process*, is a prerequisite for enrollment in both courses. Your overall course grade will rely upon (1) a formal presentation of your work and (2) class participation and exercises as described in this syllabus. Class sessions provide the opportunity to discuss each week's content and your presentation topic. In every class, we will be practicing presentation delivery skills and discussing each student's topic. Thus, it is very important that you attend class and work consistently throughout the term. You are responsible for knowing PowerPoint or a comparable program, and any other skills needed to create effective slides. Assistance and tutoring are available from the STAR Center in the Johnson Center.

## Learning Objectives

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

- understand the elements of an effective formal presentation;
- demonstrate the ability to construct, frame, and communicate a focused research topic;
- make a balanced and reasoned argument using a variety of sources appropriate to academic research;
- incorporate effective visual aids to complement, enhance, and support the content of your presentation;
- demonstrate a sophisticated understanding of interdisciplinarity as it relates to your concentration and senior project;
- provide appropriate and constructive feedback on classmates' projects;
- demonstrate the ability to be self-reflective and self-evaluative; and
- deliver an appropriate academic presentation to an audience of professors and peers.

## Required Materials

O'Hair, D., Rubenstein, H., and Stewart, R. (2005). *A pocket guide to public speaking*. Boston, MA: Bedford/St. Martin's.

## Course Schedule

**Week 1: February 1**

1. **Course overview and introductions**
2. **Understanding Elements of an Effective Presentation**

**Week 2: February 15** (February 8 – *Last Day to Drop with no penalty*)

#### **Qualities of a Good Presentation**

1. **Analyzing Your Audience**
2. **Organizing Your Presentation**

**Assignment Due:** Bring for submission a succinct statement of your main thesis (i.e., one paragraph) and a one-page description of your senior project including disciplines, faculty advisor/reader and their departments and professional affiliations, and your timeline for completion. Be prepared to present a 2-3 minute overview of your BIS 490 project.

**Reading:** O’Hair, et al. – Skim Chapters 1 – 6; read Chapters 7 and 8.

**Week 3: March 1**

#### **Content**

1. **Crafting Introductions and Conclusions**
2. **Citing Evidence to Support Your Thesis**
3. **Using Language Effectively**

**Assignment Due:** Will be handed out in class.

**Reading:** O’Hair, et al. - Read Chapters 15 – 16.

***SPRING BREAK : March 14 – March 20***

**Week 4: March 29**

#### **Visual Aids**

1. **Choosing a Style and Formatting Slides Clearly and Effectively**
2. **Assessing the Use of PowerPoint (or an alternative)**

**Assignment Due:** Will be handed out in class.

**Reading:** O’Hair, et al. - Read Chapters 20 – 22.

**Week 5: April 12**

#### **Delivery Skills**

1. **Use of the Voice -- Volume, Articulation, Pitch, etc.**
2. **Facial Expressions, Gestures, and Other Body Language**

**Assignment Due:** Will be handed out in class.

**Reading:** O'Hair, et al. - Read Chapters 17 (focus on pp. 107-108), 18, and 19.

## **Week 6: April 26**

### **Rehearsals (introduction and transition)**

**Assignment Due:** Bring a CD or flash memory stick (thumb drive) to class with a copy of your draft presentation, and e-mail a copy to your GMU e-mail address. Be prepared to present your introduction and transition to the main body of your presentation to the class (3-4 minutes maximum) and receive feedback.

### **Saturday Optional Practice Session - (Date and location TBA)**

Clinic to help refine your final presentation

## **Week 7: Final Presentations (Date and location TBA) 4 - 8 PM**

Bring a flash memory stick or CD with your PowerPoint and e-mail a copy to your GMU e-mail address. Also, bring a hardcopy of your PowerPoint for the evaluator (three slides to a page). Attendance is required for the whole session. Guests are welcome. A reception will follow the presentations.

## **Specific Steps for Developing Your Senior Presentation**

1. Understand the components of a high-quality presentation and the criteria for evaluation.
2. Create a PowerPoint (or similar electronic) presentation, incorporating visual and graphic images.
3. Present to the class (and submit to your professor) a draft of your PowerPoint introduction for feedback from the professor and your classmates.
4. Finalize your PowerPoint presentation and supporting work (talking notes, other aids, handouts, etc.)
5. Deliver your final presentation to BIS faculty, fellow students, and others at the BIS 491 Presentations. Be sure to bring a hardcopy of your presentation (3 slides per page) for the evaluator.

## **Notes**

If you need digital photographs, you can check out a camera from STAR (Student Technology Assistance and Resource Center), Johnson Center 229. The STAR lab is a state-of-the-art student technology

learning facility. It is staffed with student consultants who have technical expertise in analog/digital video editing and production, and multimedia computing technologies. They can provide assistance to students in the development and production on their projects.

Students can work on their projects in the NCC/BIS computer lab in Enterprise Hall, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor; the academic lab in Innovation Hall, room 301; or the STAR lab. Computers have a USB port for a flash drive, CD-RW drive, and a zip drive.

## Grading and Expectations

### **Class Participation: 40%**

- Attendance
- Contributions to class discussions
- Participation in class activities
- Completion of assignments on time
- Feedback to colleagues on their draft presentations
- Attendance at final presentations. (**You will be docked 10 points for failing to attend your classmates' presentations.**)

### **Final Presentation: 60%**

- See BIS 491: Senior Project Presentation – Evaluation Criteria (Attachment B)

You are responsible for explaining BIS 491 and the presentation component to your faculty advisor and committee member(s) and inviting them to the presentation. Ideally, your faculty advisor and committee member will attend the final presentation. Their attendance or absence, however, will not affect your course grade.

**Note: If you miss a class, it is your responsibility to e-mail it to me or put the assignment in my mailbox in Enterprise 352 and find out what you missed from your classmates.**

## Academic Honesty

GMU has an Honor Code with clear guidelines regarding academic integrity. Three fundamental principles must be followed at all times: 1) all work submitted should be your own; 2) when using the work or ideas of others, including fellow students, give full credit through accurate citations; and 3) if you are uncertain about what is appropriate for a particular assignment, *ask for clarification*. No grade is important enough to justify academic misconduct. Plagiarism means using someone else's words, opinions, or factual information without giving the person credit. It is the equivalent of intellectual robbery and **will not be tolerated**. Any student caught writing a paper for someone else or copying from another source will be reported and disciplined under the University's regulations.

## Grading Expectations

The grading scale goes from A to F. **What this means in practical terms is that not everyone earns an A or B.** These marks are reserved for excellent or good work--i.e. work which

demonstrates not only an acceptable grasp of the material, but also shows a high degree of complexity, originality, and independence of thought. As with all BIS courses, a C signals an acceptable but not impressive, critical, and/or creative grasp of the subject matter. Presentations that demonstrate only a rudimentary grasp of the material or that show serious weaknesses in both the complexity of the analysis and the ability to present ideas, will receive a below-average grade (i.e. a D or F).

## **Description of Grades**

A(+/-) indicates excellent performance with clear evidence of:

- a comprehensive knowledge of the subject matter and principles treated in the course;
- a high degree of originality and independence of thought;
- a superior ability to organize and analyze ideas; and
- an outstanding ability to communicate these ideas in a presentation.

B(+/-) indicates good performance with evidence of:

- a substantial knowledge of the subject matter;
- a moderate degree of originality and independence of thought;
- a good ability to organize and analyze ideas; and
- an ability to communicate clearly.

C(+/-) indicates satisfactory performance with evidence of:

- an acceptable grasp of the subject matter;
- an acceptable ability to organize and analyze ideas; and
- an ability to communicate adequately.

D indicates minimally acceptable performance with evidence of:

- rudimentary knowledge of the subject matter;
- some evidence that organizational and analytical skills have been developed, but with significant weaknesses in some areas; and
- significant weakness in the ability to communicate ideas.

F indicates failing performance with evidence of:

- an inadequate knowledge of the subject matter;
- failure to complete required work; and
- inability to organize, compose, or communicate ideas.

### Attachment A

General Outline for BIS 490 Paper

**I. Investigative project**

- a. Overview and introduction
- b. Context which links the project content to the core concentration
- c. Statement of the research questions[s]; main focus and significance of the project
- d. Methodology: demonstrate a clear connection to the research question[s]
- e. Findings: results and answers to the research question[s]
- f. Challenges and lessons learned
- g. Conclusion
- h. Bibliography

**II. Creative project**

- a. Overview and introduction
- b. Context which links the project content to the core concentration
- c. Clear statement regarding the projects significance: the project is important because of XYZ
- d. Explanation of the creative piece
- e. Methodology: statement of the learning objectives [what you wanted to learn] and how the creative project helped you reach the learning objectives
- f. Connections to theory outlined in your field of study: how did practice “doing” relate and connect to theory “literature-research” in the field
- g. Challenges and lessons learned
- h. Conclusion
- i. Bibliography

Attachment B  
Student Information Sheet

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Name I want to be called in class: \_\_\_\_\_

Concentration: \_\_\_\_\_

Have you taken a Public Speaking course? \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

Academic Interests: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Avocational Interests: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Plans after graduation: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Things I hope to accomplish in this course: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Concerns about the course: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Any special needs? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_