

**Cornell University**  
**Computing and Information Science**

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**CS 5150 Software Engineering**  
**24. Presentations**

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# Presentations

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**Presentations** are an important part of software projects. Here are some reasons:

- Marketing to potential clients.
- Reporting of progress to senior management.
- Reports and demonstrations to clients.
- Communication with colleagues on the development team.

If you are uncomfortable making presentations, take every opportunity to gain experience. It is difficult to achieve a leadership position in computing if you cannot make decent presentations.

**Not everybody is a great presenter, but everybody can be well-prepared.**

# The CS 5150 Presentations

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## CS 5150 Presentations

There are three presentations during the semester.

- Everybody must be the presenter for at least part of one presentation during the course.
- Inexperienced presenters are usually most comfortable describing material where they did the work.
- Avoid technical details that are not appropriate for the audience.

# Planning for a Presentation

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## Objectives

- What is the purpose of the presentation? What do you want to achieve?
- Who will be there?
- How much time will you have? How will you use the time?
- What room will you use? What equipment is available, e.g., computer and network for demonstrations?

## CS 5150 presentations

The presentations are to both the **client** and the **instructor**, with the teaching assistant as a secondary audience.

- Plan 45 minutes for the presentation, 15 minutes for questions.
- Expect interruptions.

# Topics for Software Presentations

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Every project is different, but here are some suggestions:

## General topics for every project

- A description of what you have agreed to deliver to your client (a shared definition of success).
- Summary of progress since last presentation or report.
- Test plan and test cases.
- Discussion of unexpected events and risks.
- Overview of plan to complete and deliver the project.

## Topics that apply to many projects

- Results of user testing (if usability is important).
- Technical issues (if you have a technical client).

## A demonstration is always welcome

If you have a mock-up, demonstration, prototype, etc., it is usually better to **show it first** before talking about it.

# Topics for the First CS 5150 Presentation

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## Client and team agreement on scope and goals

- Presentation of assumptions, decisions.

*"The project will be a success if..."*

## Progress to date

- Summary of requirements, preliminary designs, etc.

*"This is our understanding of your requirements..."*

- Mock-ups, prototypes, designs, etc.

## Schedule and plan

- What has been done since feasibility study? What has been learned?  
Changes in plans? Problems?

*"The main risks are..."*

# Planning for a Presentation

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## Visual aids

It is useful, but not essential to have visual aids, such as slides. Hints for preparing visual aids:

- Keep them simple. The aim is to convey information, not entertainment.
- They must be legible. Audience members may have poor eyesight.

Projection displays are not as good as your personal computer:

font no smaller than 20 point

light background, dark letters, and diagrams

If a diagram is too complex to be legible, show small parts on several slides.

- Avoid the common Microsoft templates.

## Handouts

If you wish to provide your audience with a handout, either deliver it a day before the presentation or at the end.

# Planning for a Presentation

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## Rehearsal

Have a rehearsal, check visual aids and demonstrations. **Then change nothing.**

## Presenters

When you have several presenters there are two options:

- One person acts as moderator and calls on the other members of the team.
- Each presenter introduces the next presenter.

## Equipment

Check out the equipment in the meeting room:

- The network that will you use (if any).
- Connection of a computer to a projector and a network.
- Firewalls.



# Demonstrations

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Demonstrations are always useful, but they need preparation and practice to do well.

## Technical

- Load and configure all software before the presentation, check it, and **then do not change anything**.
- If you need test data create it in advance.
- If you have to type complex commands to run a demonstration, do so before the the presentation.

## Script

Prepare a script that lists the preparation, the examples that will be shown, who will do which tasks, and how to clean up at the end for another demonstration.

**Tell the audience what they are seeing: operational system, mock-up with dummy stubs, etc.**

# During the Presentation

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The presenter should stand. Other people should sit.

## **Appoint a team member to take notes.**

- The first presenter should introduce everybody at each presentation.
- When asked a question:
  - > If the presenter knows the answer, answer it.
  - > Or the presenter may ask another team member to answer.
  - > Otherwise make a note and reply later.

## **Never interrupt your colleagues.**

If you have information to add, raise your hand and the presenter can decide whether to call on you.

# CS 5150 Final Presentation

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## What do you want to achieve?

- Personal and team satisfaction in handing over a good piece of work to the client
- Complete the course in good style with good grade
- A clean handover without loose ends

Perhaps: a good basis for future involvement with the client, team, or this project

# CS 5150 Final Presentation

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## Who is the audience? What do they want?

### Clients

The clients have invested effort in this project:

- Is it ready for production?
- Should they invest more effort to bring it into production?
- Should they abandon the project?

### Course team

- What has been accomplished? What has been learned?
- Is the client satisfied?
- Are you handing over a maintainable system?

# CS 5150 Final Presentation

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## How much can you cover?

Plan for 45 minutes presentation, 15 minutes for questions and discussion.

You should include:

## Demonstration of operational system:

- Show the system in operation
- Be honest about gaps, weaknesses, etc.

## Presentation:

- Brief review of goals
- Honest summary of achievements and gaps
- Summary of what is being delivered

## Time for discussion