CSCI-471 Professional Communications

Research Presentation
Day and Time Request Due November 7, 2014

1 The Assignment

This assignment will give you some experience preparing and presenting an analysis of a research-oriented publication in the area of computer science. It will also give you experience with critiquing other analyses, in a friendly setting. In addition, this assignment will introduce you to many other areas of computing research that you may not be able to investigate thoroughly yourself.

1.1 Topics

The topic for this presentation will most likely be the same as the topic for your research paper assignment. You may petition the instructor for a different topic, as long as you prepare and submit a brief (one-half page) proposal outlining the reason for the change as well as all pertinent information describing the proposed paper. You should select one of the papers from the three you selected as your topic, and present a summary of that paper along with a critique of that paper.

Make sure you schedule enough time to prepare and practice your presentation. Preparation also includes time needed to prepare handouts and transparencies or slides. We’ll go over in class general guidelines and elements that make presentations effective and you’ll come to realize that there are a number of details that you have to deal with in order to produce an effective presentation.

Certainly, using a laptop may be an effective way to present your material or to demonstrate the product. Find out exactly how to set up your equipment in the classroom we are using. Find out whether you can access the campus network properly. Find out whether the response time that you get is adequate for your needs. Find out if the slides are visible from all parts of the room. Most importantly, have a contingency plan in case something does not function properly on the day of your talk.

There is no official peer review for this assignment. It is a good idea, however, to review your plans, your materials, and other aspects of your presentation with the members of your team. You should also consider practicing your presentation in front of your team or others to help you gain confidence and generate ideas for improving your talk.

1.2 Scheduling and Approval

Each day of presentations will have several time slots scheduled. Your request for a specific day and time slot must be sent to your instructor via an email message by the due date given at the top of this document. Time slots will be scheduled on a first-come first-served basis. The email request must be formal, not casual. Include in your subject line
your course number and your section number, as well as a clear indication of the nature of your message. In the body of your message, list in order of preference several day/time slots (each entry in the list should consist of a specific date and a specific time). As topics and time slots are approved, they will be posted on a web page. You may wish to consult this schedule before making your request.

1.3 Content and Format

Your time is limited to no more than 15 minutes. Your presentation should last ten to twelve minutes, allowing three to five additional minutes for questions from the audience. Be prepared, however, if there are no questions, by having a little extra material that you could elaborate on (think of a question you might want to ask, and then answer it yourself!) You will also have access to the white board in the classroom, if you need it. Include in your presentation whatever visual aids you think are desirable (e.g., outlines, diagrams, tables, charts, etc.) to help get the message across that you would like to convey. You may copy/paste charts or figures from the research paper that you are reviewing into your presentation, but if you do so, be sure to include a reference to the paper near the chart or figure, along with the page number in the original document where the chart or figure can be found.

If you would like me to copy handouts for you, you must give them to me at least 48 hours before you’re scheduled to talk. Along with your handouts, include a message (in the body of an email message or in a separate document) that formalizes your request and includes any specific copying instructions (for example, single-sided, double-sided, stapled, etc.). You may either give this request directly to me, leave it in the mailbox outside of my office, or send it to me via an email message, with the material you would like copied attached.

When it’s your turn to present, take a moment to organize yourself. Consider whether you need to adjust the lights or arrange anything else in the classroom. Consider how best to distribute handouts if you have any (make sure I get a copy). Factor in time to set up and take down equipment.

1.4 Attire

The purpose of this assignment is to give you as realistic an experience as possible within a class setting. This includes dressing as you would for a formal presentation at a computer science conference. Men should wear a tie, slacks, reasonable shoes and optionally, a sport coat or suit. Women should wear a dress, a “dressy” blouse and skirt, a blouse and slacks, or a business suit. This will help set a formal tone for the class. You should think of your presentation as a research talk delivered to colleagues, some of whom may not be familiar with you or with the research you are talking about.

2 Evaluation
Each speaker will be critiqued by the rest of the class. The critique will cover both technical content and style. A significant portion of your in-class participation grade will be based on your critique of everyone else’s presentation, so you need to be there both mentally and physically. Your attendance at all presentations is required!

You should pick up a packet of evaluation forms at the start of every class. Fill in your name and the identifying information for each talk (from the class schedule) before the talks begin. As each talk proceeds, fill in parts of the evaluation form and then complete each one shortly after each talk is finished. Evaluations must be turned in at the conclusion of class and are not accepted after that.

3 Grading

Each presenter will receive copies of the evaluations from the class and also the instructor’s comments. A student may have their earned score reduced by up to 10% for not following the correct procedure for submitting a request for a day and time slot.

This assignment is worth a maximum of 10 points toward your final grade for this course.