CSCI-471 Professional Communications

Team Presentation
Day and Time Request Due October 3, 2014

1 The Assignment

This assignment will give you experience with working as a team to prepare and present a technical talk, as well as experience with critiquing other technical talks, in a friendly setting. The major goal of this assignment is to create and present to the rest of the class a cohesive team presentation on a technical topic.

Since many of your activities as a professional will be carried out as part of a team, it is not unreasonable to expect that many of your professional presentations will also be a team effort. There is a strong need for the material in a presentation to be logically organized, explained, and illustrated so that the audience can learn something from your presentation. However, when a presentation must be a team effort, additional time and planning is necessary so that ideas can be communicated and a consensus can be reached. More effort is needed to assign tasks, coordinate activities, and develop the final presentation for a team effort than for an individual effort.

1.1 Topics

The topic for this presentation should not be the same as the topic for your technical document. Recall that the technical document was targeted to freshmen computer science students, whereas the presentation will be targeted to your peers in this class. You may petition the instructor for the same topic, as long as your team prepares and submits a brief (one-half page) proposal outlining the justification for using the same topic; however, the instructor may refuse your request.

In addition to the time spent gathering information about the software and preparing the presentation, you will have to allocate time to meet with your team to develop and organize your presentation. When your team decides to have a meeting, try to create an agenda ahead of time, and keep notes during the meeting to keep track of important ideas. There is no official draft review of this assignment, however it is expected that individuals will review their plans and material with the other members of their team and offer constructive suggestions. It is also permissible for a team to help another team, for example, by providing technical assistance. Your team should strive to develop a common “framework” and approach so that each member can contribute their part seamlessly. The final presentation should be well-organized and cohesive; i.e., it should not look like a series of individual presentations strung together. Some class time might be set aside for teams to meet, discuss, and work on their presentation, but you should plan on meeting primarily as a team outside of class.
1.2 Scheduling and Approval

As a general rule, only one team may speak on a given topic, although some exceptions may be made. Your team’s day and time slot must be requested by email and will be approved on a first-come first-served basis. The request must be made on or before midnight of the due date given at the top of this assignment.

To request a time slot, your team must send an email message to your instructor on or before midnight of the due date. This email message is formal, not casual. Include in your subject line this course name and number and your section number, and clearly indicate the nature of your request. Indicate the name of your team, the names of each member of your team, and the team member who should receive the response from the message. Request several time slots in order of preference (each entry in the list should consist of a specific date and a specific time slot).

As time slots are approved, they will be posted to a schedule published on a web page. You are encouraged to view this schedule before submitting your request.

1.3 Content and Format

Target your presentation to last 25 minutes, including question/answer time, with each member of your team speaking an approximately equal amount of time. Team members must coordinate their efforts and develop strategies in the event that something unusual happens (for example, an overhead projector fails, a computer connection cannot be established, etc). You should also coordinate the transitions between speakers in your team so that the result is smooth and logical. Allow three minutes for questions and answers, but be prepared to talk about something else if there are no questions.

You will have access to the white board in the classroom, if you should need it. Your team may distribute handouts to the class, but handouts are not required. Include whatever visual aids you think are desirable (e.g., outlines, diagrams, screen shots, examples, etc.).

It is expected that the bulk of your presentation will consist of material that your team produces itself. In some cases, you may wish to show or distribute material that comes from other sources. That’s fine, but make sure you properly acknowledge all sources. While some examples developed by others will be acceptable, you should strive to develop your own examples as well.

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 as an email message, with the item you would like copied attached.
When it’s your team’s turn to present, take a moment to organize yourselves. Consider whether you need to adjust the lights or arrange anything else in the classroom. Arrange ahead of time roles for individuals so that initial set up and the distribution of materials is done efficiently. Factor in time to set up and take down equipment. Finally, make sure you begin your presentation by formally introducing each member of your team!

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 business presentation to clients. 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 business-like tone for the class. You should think of your presentation as a technical talk delivered to colleagues, some of whom may not be familiar with you or with the product you are talking about.

2 Evaluation

Each team 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 the day’s presentations based on the class schedule. As each presentation proceeds, fill in parts of the evaluation form and then complete it shortly after the presentation is finished. The evaluation must be turned in at the conclusion of class and is not accepted after that.

3 Grading

Each team will receive copies of the evaluations from the class and also the instructor’s comments. A team can earn a maximum score of 150 on their presentation. The score is based on the following grading rubric:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Criteria</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>visuals and handouts</td>
<td>0 - 25</td>
<td>format, content, accuracy, support for presentation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>presentation content</td>
<td>0 - 25</td>
<td>examples, explanations, accuracy, amount of information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>presentation organization</td>
<td>0 - 25</td>
<td>agenda, introduction, body, conclusion, use of time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>presentation style</td>
<td>0 - 25</td>
<td>pace, mannerisms, confidence, appearance, enthusiasm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>group aspects</td>
<td>0 - 25</td>
<td>coordinated effort, cohesive presentation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>overall assessment</td>
<td>0 - 25</td>
<td>integrated view of all presentation aspects</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In addition, a team 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 15 points towards your final grade for this course. Dividing the earned score by 10 results in the actual number of points awarded for this category.

The table above will be used to derive a team grade, and in the vast majority of cases, each student within the team will receive this same grade. In addition, each team member will also be given an opportunity to complete and submit a team self-evaluation after giving their presentation. This form contains further instructions as well as information on how the team self-evaluation contributes to each student’s individual grade. Information from this form as well as instructor observation can be used to adjust the team presentation grade and/or the team documentation grade for any individual, if necessary. Although the formal deadline for submitting this review form occurs after all presentations are given, students are encouraged to turn in their team self-evaluation no later than 24 hours after giving their team presentation.