

CONFERENCE PROPOSALS AND PRESENTATIONS IN THE SOCIAL SCIENCES

Prepared by Anne Blackstock-Bernstein
UCLA Graduate Writing Center
2017



Workshop Outline

- What is a conference presentation?
- Preparing a conference proposal
- Structuring a presentation
- Designing a presentation
- Delivering a presentation



WHAT IS A CONFERENCE PRESENTATION?



Conference presentation basics

- *Purpose*: Present results (possibly preliminary)
- *Audience*: Sub-discipline experts
- *Mode of delivery*: Oral and visual
- *Appearance*: High visual-to-text ratio
- *Length*: Short (10-20 minutes)



Audience

- Target your audience

- Broad



AMERICAN
PSYCHOLOGICAL
ASSOCIATION

- Sub-discipline



Society for Research
in Child Development

- Specific topic



Format

- Consider the presentation format
 - Paper session
 - Symposium
 - Roundtable
 - Poster session



PREPARING A CONFERENCE PROPOSAL



Submission requirements

- Chosen division/topic
- Title
- Authors
- Abstract
 - 200-500 words
- Key words/phrases
- Submission type



Example of Rating System

- Objectives, Purposes/Aims or Goals
 - Insignificant → Critically Significant
- Theoretical and Prior Research Framework
 - Not articulated → Well articulated
- Methods or modes of inquiry
 - Not well executed → Well executed
- Data sources, evidence, objects or materials
 - Inappropriate → Appropriate
- Results, conclusions and/or expected results
 - Ungrounded → Well grounded
- Scholarly Significance of the Work
 - Routine → Highly original



STRUCTURING A PRESENTATION



Outlining your presentation

- Determine the focus of your presentation
 - Theory vs. methods vs. data
- In order of importance, write down all the points you want your viewer to understand
- Focus your presentation on the first three points
- Include sections similar to a typical journal article
 - SUMMARIZE!
- Aim for approximately 1 minute per slide
 - Usually 10-15 slides total



Outlining your presentation

- Include sections similar to a typical journal article
 - Title
 - Introduction
 - Methods
 - Results
 - Conclusions
 - References
 - Acknowledgements



Title

- Title of presentation
 - Should match your submission title
- Author names
- Author institutional affiliations
- *Optional*: Name and date of conference



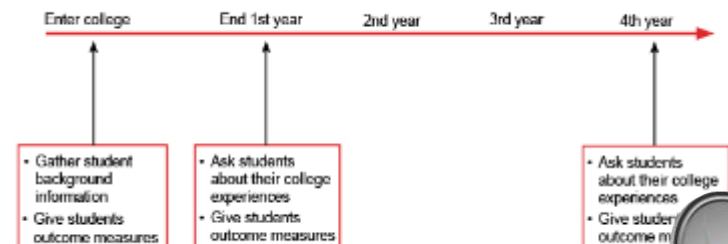
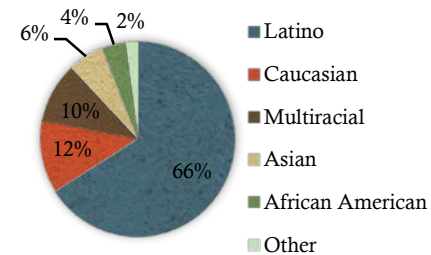
Introduction

- Pique your viewers' interest in the topic/problem
 - Use minimal background information/definitions
- Give quick, basic context of existing literature
- Propose your research questions (and hypotheses)
- Include photographs or illustrations, if appropriate
- *Optional:* Theoretical framework/positionality



Methods

- Description of sample
 - *Optional:* table or pie chart
- Summary of measures and materials
 - *Optional:* photograph or illustration
- Explanation of procedures
 - *Optional:* flow chart or diagram



Results

- Most important section
- Share relevant descriptive findings
- Answer your RQs
- Include figures
 - Easy to understand
 - Clearly labeled



Conclusions

- Summary of major result
 - Did you support your hypothesis, if applicable?
- Implications and recommendations
 - Policy
 - Practice
- Scholarly significance and future research/next steps



References

- Follow standard citation format (e.g., APA)
- No more than 5-10 citations

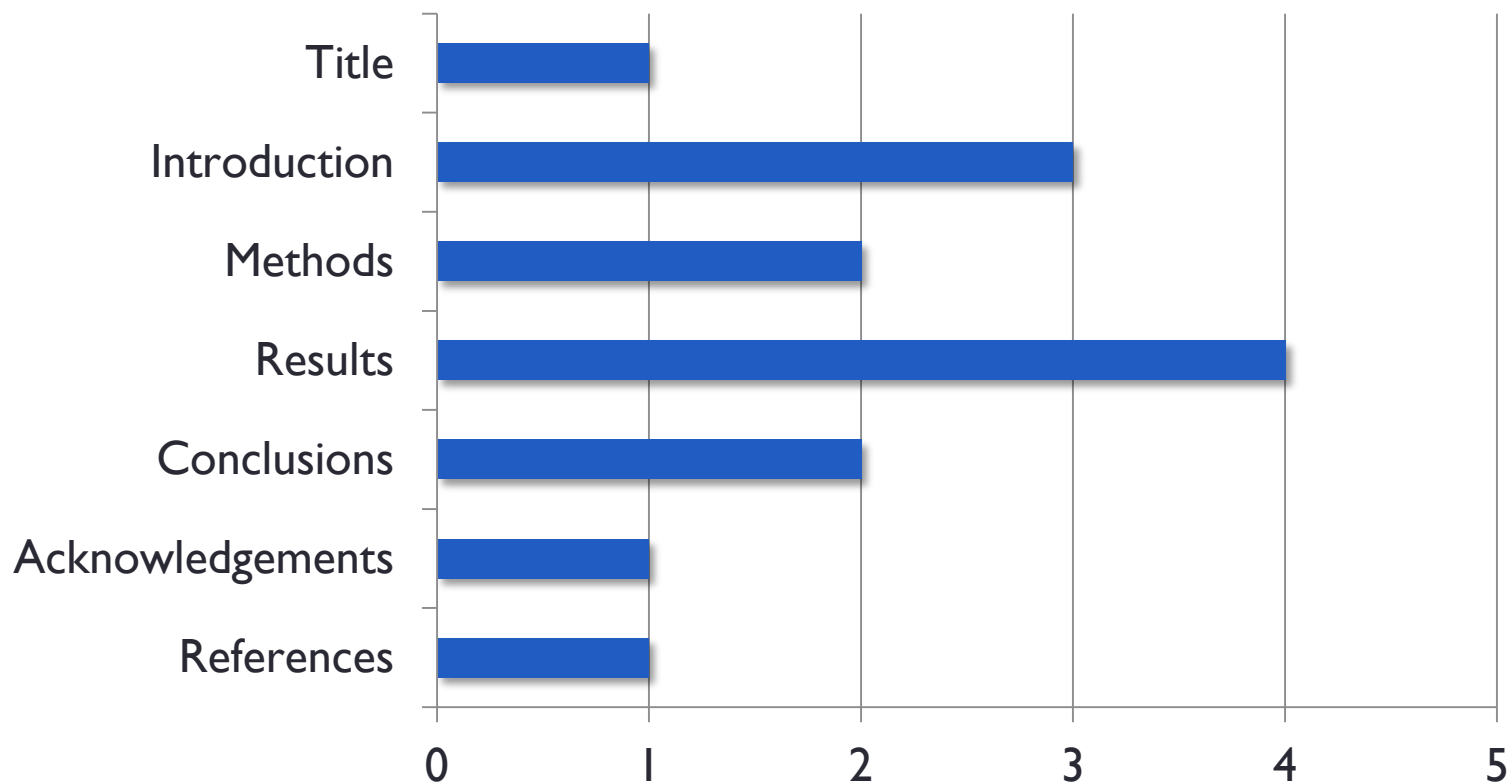


Acknowledgements

- Thank individuals for specific contributions
 - Participants/parents
 - Research assistants/transcribers/coders
 - Faculty advisor
- Mention your source of funding, if relevant
- Disclose any conflicts of interest
- Include contact information
 - Email address, website, etc.



Sample breakdown of slides



+ Title, Acknowledgements, and References slides

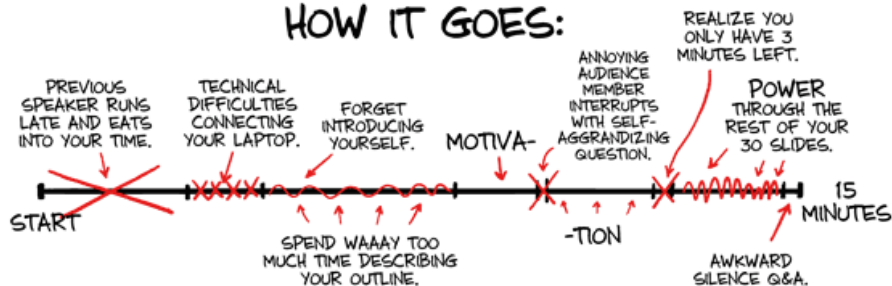


YOUR CONFERENCE PRESENTATION

HOW YOU PLANNED IT:



HOW IT GOES:



DESIGNING A PRESENTATION



Design Process

- Choose a software
- Pick a template
- Add text
- Design visuals and animations



Software Options



PowerPoint

- Easy to use
- Basic templates
- Compatible and ubiquitous



Keynote

- Easy to use
- Better animations/graphics
- Less compatibility



Prezi

Prezi

- Difficult to use
- Custom animations
- Less compatibility



Design Process

- Choose a software
- Pick a template
- Add text
- Design visuals and animations



Choosing a template

A good template should...

- Be readable
- Be simple
- Be professional
- Provide sufficient space



CHOOSING A TEMPLATE

A good template should...

- Be readable
- Be simple
- Be professional
- Provide sufficient space



Choosing a template

28

A good template should...

- Be readable
- Be simple
- Be professional
- Provide sufficient space



Choosing a template

A good template should...

- Be readable
- Be simple
- Be professional
- Provide sufficient space



Slide Title

Subject Line

- Bullet Point One

Sub Point

- Bullet Point Two

Sub Point

- Bullet Point Three

<http://brand.ucla.edu/brand/print/templates/>



Choosing a template

A good template

- Be readable
- Be simple
- Be professional
- Provide sufficient



Choosing a template

A good template

- Be readable
- Be simple
- Be professional
- Provide sufficient



Choosing a template

A good template

- * Be readable
- * Be simple
- * Be professional
- * Provide a clear structure



Choosing a template

A good template

- Be readable
- Be simple
- Be professional
- Provide sufficient space



Design Process

- Choose a software
- Pick a template
- Add text
- Design visuals and animations



Adding text – Headings

- Clear, concise headings
- Section – Sub-section
 - Background – Emotion Regulation
 - Methods – Sample
 - Results – Reaction Times
- Main point
 - Impact of Emotion Regulation



Adding text – Font choice

- Easy to read
- Consistent (two fonts at most)
- Some recommendations

- Helvetica
 - Calibri
 - Gill Sans
 - Verdana
- Sans-serif**
- Georgia
 - Rockwell
 - Garamond
- Serif**



Adding text – Font size

- **Large!**

- This is 12 point font
- This is 14 point font
- This is 18 point font
- This is 20 point font
- This is 22 point font
- This is 24 point font
- This is 28 point font
- This is 30 point font

Stick to 22 or above



Adding text – Slide layout

- Sparse text
 - 5-8 lines of text is ideal
 - Never more than 10 lines of text
- Use bullets
 - Aim for one line of text per bullet
 - No need for complete sentences (or periods)
- Text should be redundant to spoken presentation
- Use **boldface** to emphasize points



Adding text – Sample background slide

- There is an impact of **language on math performance** (Abedi & Gándara, 2006; Reardon & Galindo, 2009; Wright & Li, 2008)
- We do not know the impact of **math on language** performance in the classroom
- Math procedures vary in **complexity** (Siegler & Jenkins, 1989)
 - Some math procedures may be easier to articulate (Ginsburg et al, 1983)
 - Some involve more working memory (Ashcraft & Krause, 2007; Ayres, 2001)



Adding text – Sample RQ slide

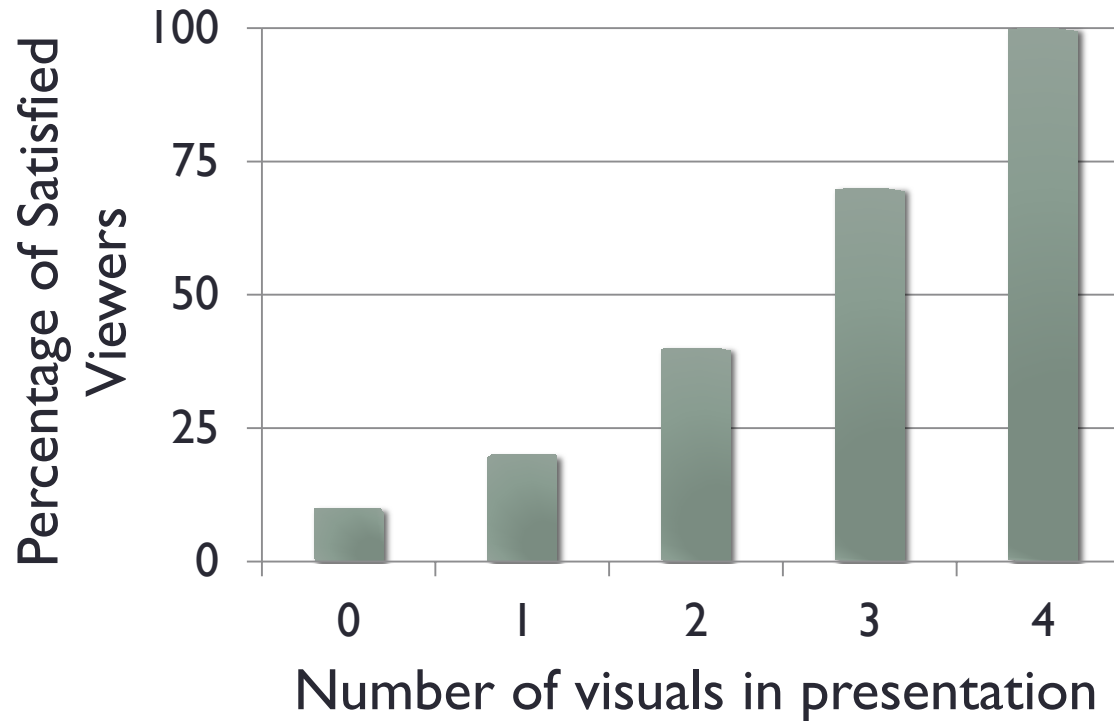
RQ1. To what extent does numbering your research questions help the viewer recall the questions when you later present your results?

RQ2. If you have two similar research questions, in what ways does bolding a key word help the viewer **pay attention to** what you are saying?

RQ3. If you have two similar research questions, in what ways does bolding a key word help the viewer **remember** what you are saying?



Adding text – Sample results slide



It is better to present results using visuals



Adding text – Back-up slides

- Save any extra slides you create
- If a slide does not fit your main narrative but...
 - ...is still interesting
 - ...or addresses potential questions

Place the slide at the end of your presentation
as a “just-in-case” slide



Design Process

- Choose a software
- Pick a template
- Add text
- Design visuals and animations



Designing Visuals

- Self-explanatory and simple
 - No additional/unnecessary information
- Title should convey the main point of the figure
- Types of figures
 - Use diagrams and flowcharts for theory and methods
 - Use bar graphs, scatterplots, regression plots, and other graphs for findings



Designing Visuals

- Be mindful of color sensitivities
 - Avoid using red and green together
 - Use symbols and line patterns to differentiate data groups
- Label data directly, and avoid complex legends
- Display data in 2-D, without shadows or other effects
- Use high contrast and thick, clear lines



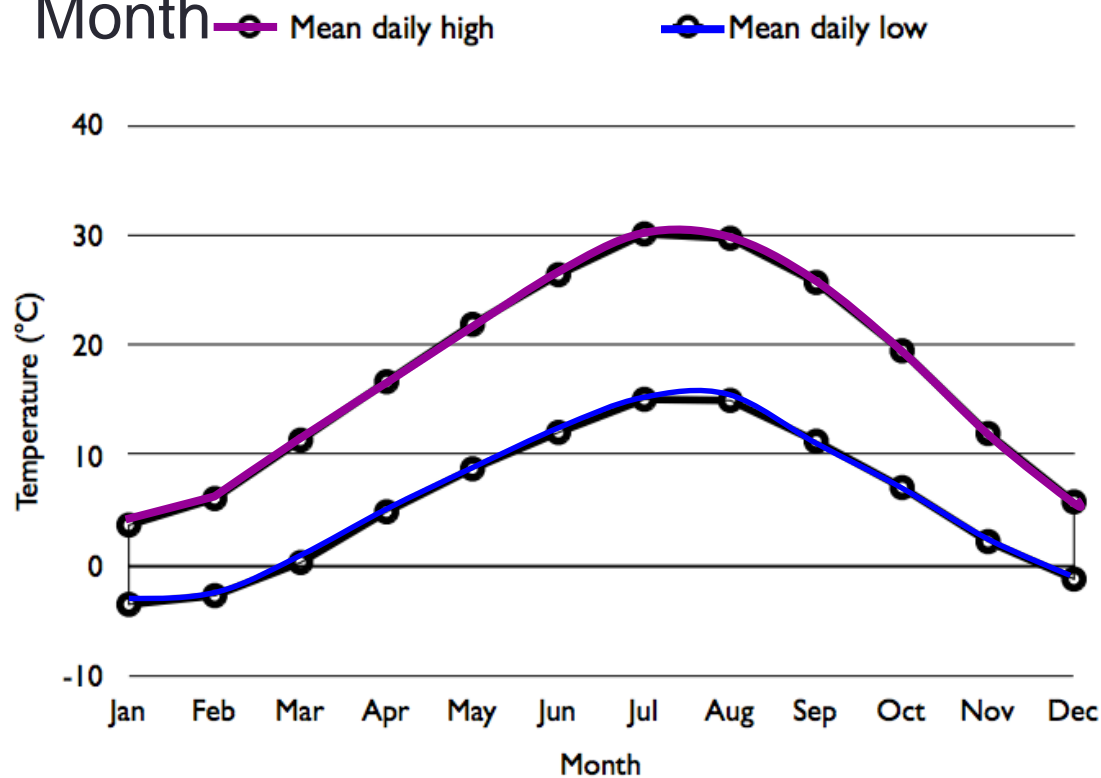
Avoid tables

Temp °C	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Mean daily temp (°C)	-0.2	1.3	5.4	10.6	15.4	19.7	23.2	22.7	18.4	12.7	6.4	1.9
Mean daily high (°C)	3.7	6.1	11.4	16.7	21.9	26.4	30.1	29.7	25.7	19.5	12.0	5.8
Mean daily low (°C)	-3.5	-2.7	0.3	4.9	8.8	12.1	15.1	15.0	11.3	7.1	2.2	-1.2



Use simple, customized charts

Temperature Varies Substantially by Month



Data from Polatlı Meteoroloji İstasyonu

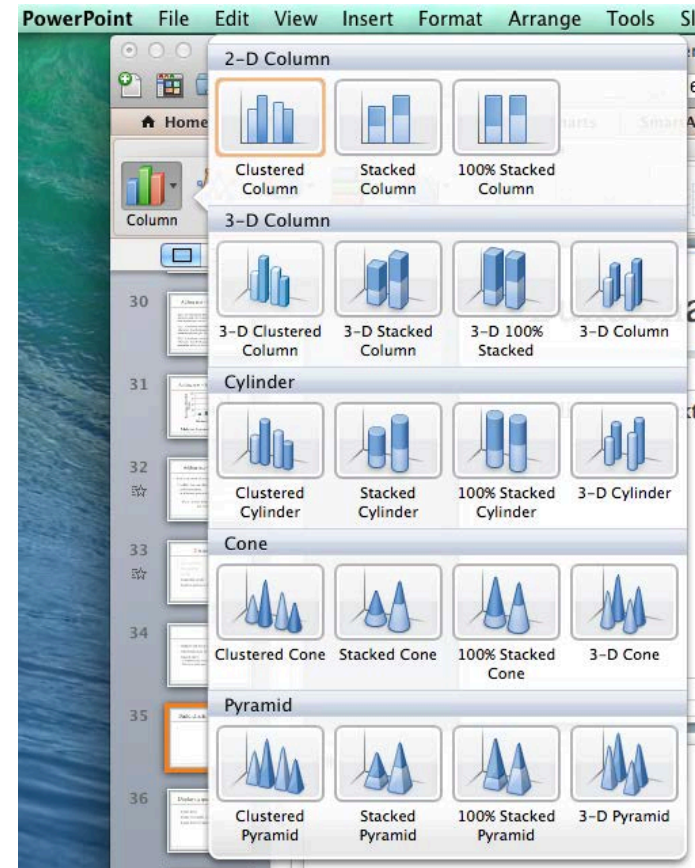
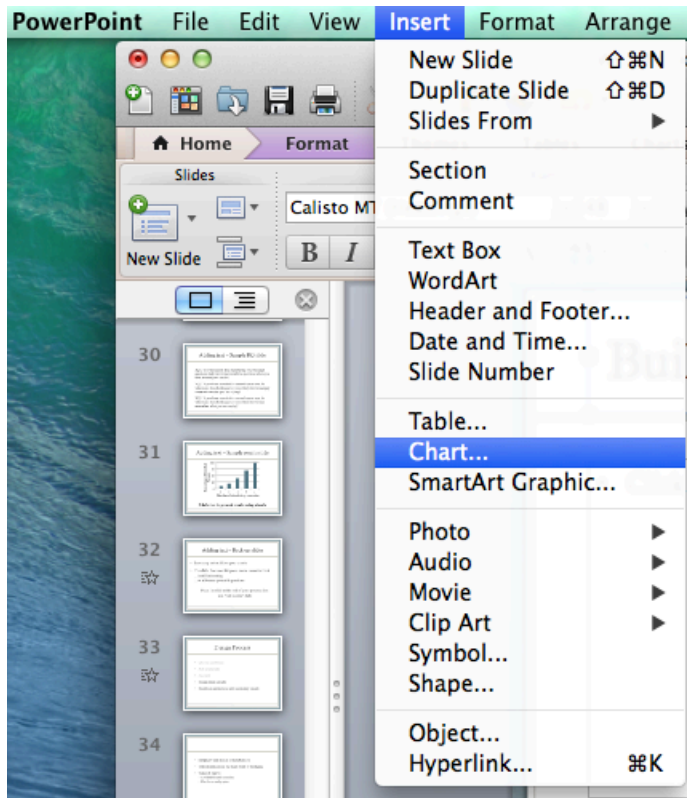


Highlight important information

Temp °C	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Mean daily temp (°C)	-0.2	1.3	5.4	10.6	15.4	19.7	23.2	22.7	18.4	12.7	6.4	1.9
Mean daily high (°C)	3.7	6.1	11.4	16.7	21.9	26.4	30.1	29.7	25.7	19.5	12.0	5.8
Mean daily low (°C)	-3.5	-2.7	0.3	4.9	8.8	12.1	15.1	15.0	11.3	7.1	2.2	-1.2



Building charts in PowerPoint



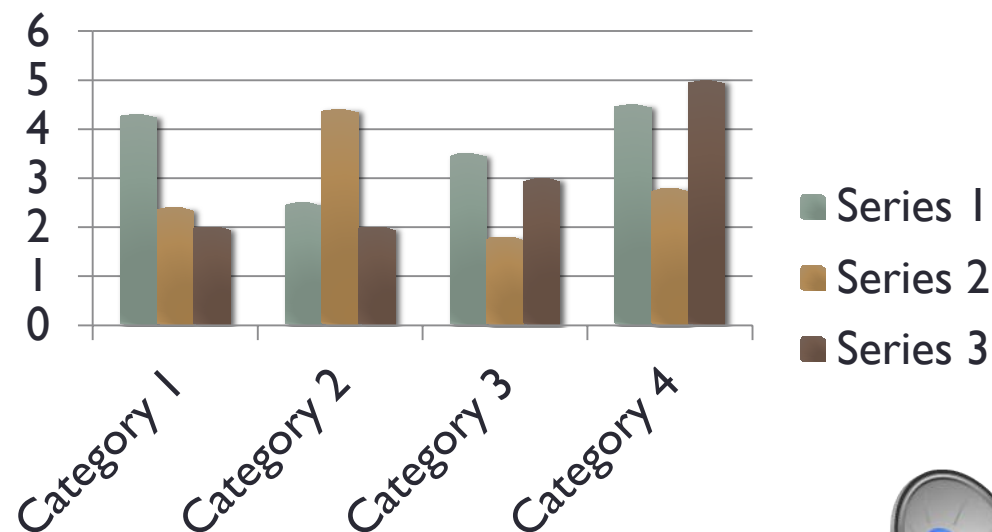
Building charts in PowerPoint

	A	B	C	D
1		Series 1	Series 2	Series 3
2	Category 1	4.3	2.4	2
3	Category 2	2.5	4.4	2
4	Category 3	3.5	1.8	3
5	Category 4	4.5	2.8	5

Automatically creates an Excel file...



...which populates a chart in your slide



Using photographs

- Ensure the resolution is sufficient
- Check that they will be visible on presenting computer
- Add a thin gray or black border around images
- Use original photographs or those in public domain
 - Provide the source for any public domain images
- Otherwise, secure permission from the copyright owner and include a credit



Using video

- Secure permission from people featured in the video
- Upload the source video to the presenting computer
- Check with conference organizers to ensure that speakers will be available during your presentation



Secondary visuals – Symbols and shapes

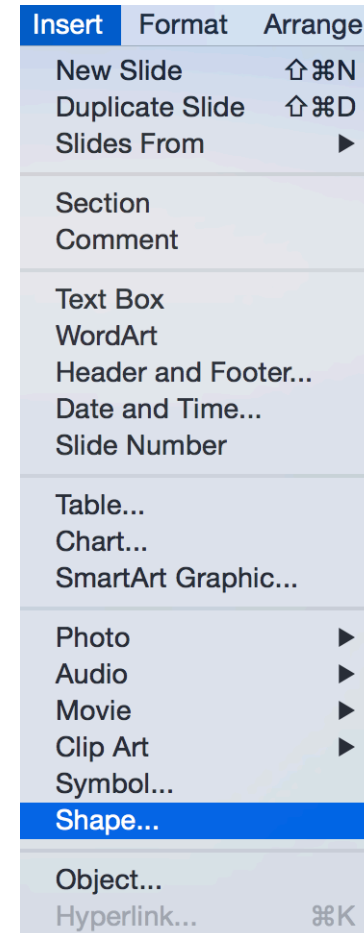
- Tools to provide emphasis

→ • Arrows

• Boxes

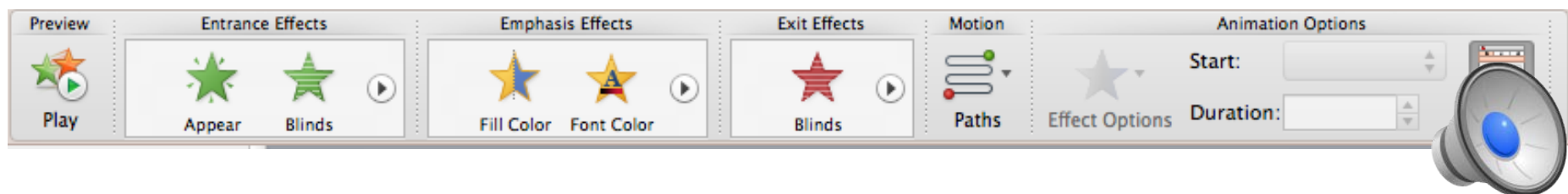
• Font colors

- Images, clip art, and logos

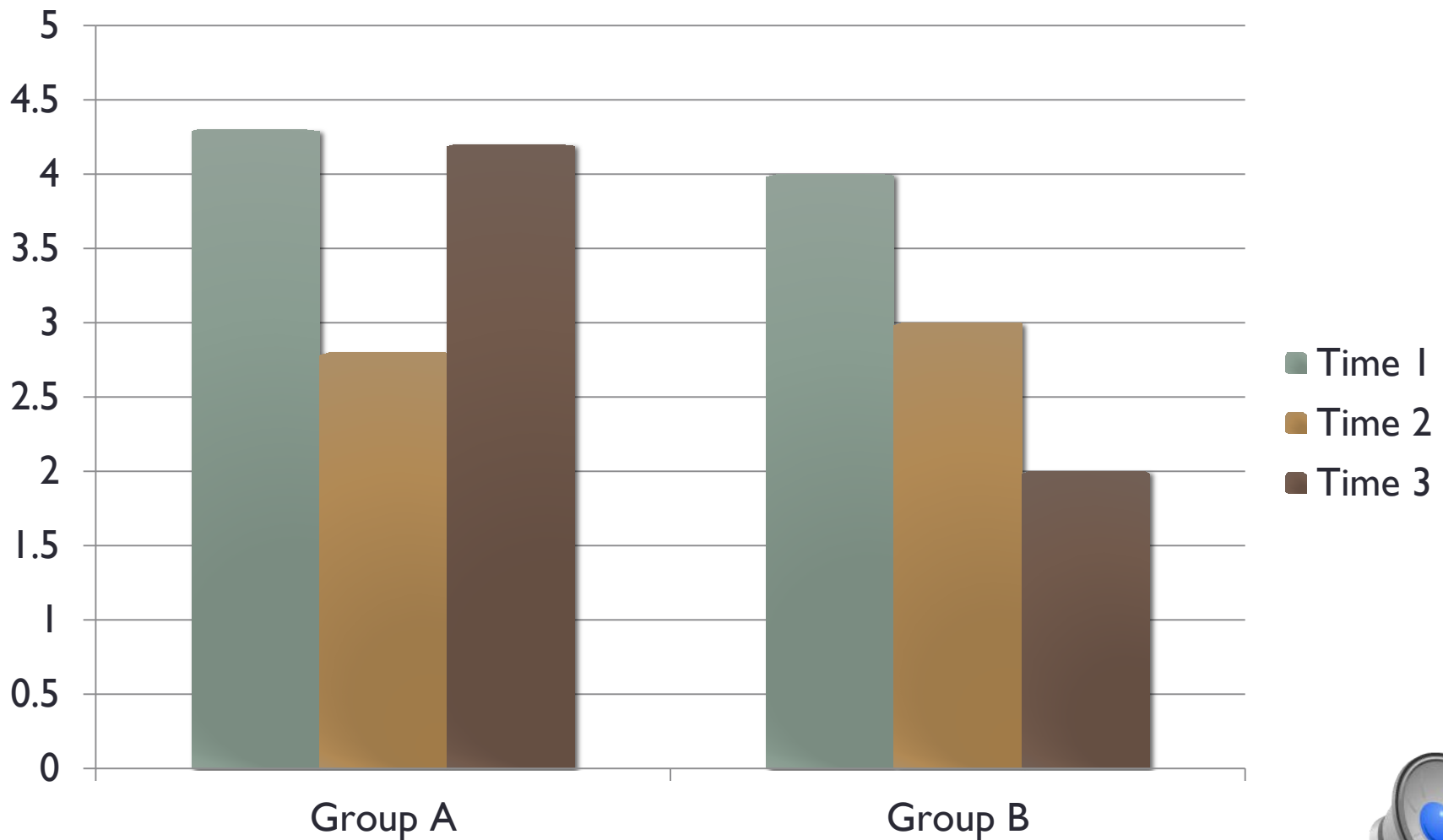


Secondary visuals – Animations

- Animate bullet points to help guide yourself and your audience
 - Avoid distracting or overly dramatic animations
 - Avoid slow, drawn-out animations
- Use animations for dramatic effect
 - Emphasize material with underline or boldface
 - Minimize material with dimming



Animate data separately



DELIVERING A PRESENTATION



Presenter view

The screenshot shows a presentation software interface in 'Presenter view' mode. The top left corner displays the time '6:03 PM'. The top right corner shows the slide number '58 / 63' and three icons: a folder icon, a question mark icon labeled 'Tips', and a close icon labeled 'Exit Show'. The main area is split into two windows. The left window, titled '58', displays a slide with the text 'DELIVERING A PRESENTATION' and a horizontal line below it. The right window, titled '59', displays a smaller version of the presentation software interface, including a slide thumbnail, a timer showing '0:00:00', and a 'Click to add meeting notes' button. Below the windows is a control bar with a play button, a refresh button, and a timer labeled 'Elapsed' showing '0:00:00'. At the bottom, there are two text input areas. The left area contains the text 'These are my notes to help me keep track of what I want to say while I present this slide.' The right area contains the text 'Click to add meeting notes'. A speaker icon is located in the bottom right corner.

6:03 PM

58 / 63

DELIVERING A PRESENTATION

Presenter view

10:58

DELIVERING A PRESENTATION

0:00:00

Click to add meeting notes

Elapsed

0:00:00

A These are my notes to help me keep track of what I want to say while I present this slide.

Click to add meeting notes

Presenting – Looking good

- Speak to audience—do not read from slides
- Text should be redundant to spoken presentation
- Make eye contact
- Use gestures
- Wear business/business casual attire
- Maintain good posture and minimize fidgeting

PRACTICE!



Presenting – Sounding good

- Volume
- Keep a steady pace
 - Slow down!
- Take pauses
- Inflection
- Clarity
- Brevity – short sentences
- Word choice – avoid jargon



Taking Questions

- Listen carefully
- Repeat and summarize question
- Answer thoroughly, but briefly
- Anticipate questions ahead of time
 - Deflect back as a possible direction for future research
- If you don't know the answer, admit it!



Want More Advice?

- UCLA Graduate Writing Center (GWC)
 - <http://gsrc.ucla.edu/gwc/>
 - Located in the Graduate Student Resource Center
 - Room B1 I, Student Activities Center
- GWC Writing and Research Workshops
 - <http://gsrc.ucla.edu/gwc/workshops/>

