HOW TO DO A DIGITAL PRESENTATION: SOME GUIDELINES

What to do:

- Use a 4:3 format, NOT 16:9 (which is the default in Microsoft Powerpoint). Change this default to 4:3. You are not showing a cinemascope movie, and long lines are hard to read.

- Use font sizes no smaller than 20 pt

- Use sans serif fonts (such as Arial or Tahoma or Verdana)

- Make your slides as plain as possible (all extra stuff needs to be processed by your audience and is likely to be distracting)

- Animate your text such that each point you want to make appears on the screen only upon your pressing a button and stating it.

- Formulate questions, and give the answers.

- Embed your fonts, so that the presentation can run on any computer without garbling your symbols.

- Two strategies for using text on slides:

  - Either you use full sentences on your slides, then read them out.

  - Or you use catchwords, simplified phrases and incomplete sentences, then tell your story without reading or paraphrasing what is on the screen.

The catchword approach is usually better for you and for your audience.

- Talk to your audience or to the computer screen, not to the wall!

- End your talk by thanking your audience.

- Practise and time your talk. If it takes too much time, chuck out less important things. Make sure that you know exactly what to say when a new point appears on the screen.

- If there is more than one speaker, only one speaker at a time presents standing up while the other(s) sit down in the background. Swapping speakers means swapping positions.

What NOT to do:

- Do not apologize at the beginning of your talk.

- Do not use any extra sheets or index cards while giving your presentation. Everything that is important should be on your slides, and everything else you want to tell emerges naturally from what you have on your slides (and in your head).

- Do not talk to the wall.

- Do not give an overview if your talk is short.

- If your talk is long (e.g. more than half an hour) give an overview **only after** you have sufficiently introduced the main questions you want to address in your talk.

- For further info, go to http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lpvgfmEU2Ck