

Seminar presentation guide. Course SK2501

The seminar presentations will take place at the end of the course. A suitable schedule will be worked out together with the students.

Each student will present a summary of a scientific publication to the other students (and a teacher) in the form of a seminar. Each student will get a 10 + 5 minute timeslot: 10 minutes for seminar presentation and 5 minutes for questions from the audience (including time to clear the floor so that the next student can get started). The seminar presentations will be in a conference-like environment, including a chairperson (teacher). The role of the chairperson is to introduce the speakers, and see to it that they don't overrun their allotted time (unfortunately very common, but the chairperson will interfere forcefully in such cases!). After a presentation, persons in the audience who want to ask questions about the seminar should attract the attention of the chairperson who will or will not (depending on how much time is available) grant the right to ask a question. You are encouraged to ask questions about the other students' presentations! Remember that questions should be asked in a polite manner, and should be about the scientific content (not the presentation technique).

How to prepare the seminar:

Step 1: **Read the publication.** If necessary, seek more information if there are important points about the work you have not understood. (Sources: References cited in the publication, internet or teachers). If the publication contains lots of details about experimental protocols etc, it is not necessary to include this; you are supposed to give a summary presentation that describes basic principles only. After you have completed step 1 you should be able to describe the purpose of the work done, the basic principles of the methods used, and the results that were obtained.

Step2: **Prepare the seminar presentation.** When you prepare the seminar you should first decide what audio/visual aids you want to use. Nowadays PowerPoint presentations are the most common. Occasionally you may also want to write something down on a black (or white) board. (If you plan to use a board, it is a good idea to check first that one is available, including pens to write with.) Prepare the illustrations (text, pictures, curves etc.) that you want to use for your presentation. Make sure you don't include too much information in each illustration, and that the text font, curves etc. are large enough to be read at a distance. For more extensive guidelines concerning preparing and giving talks you are strongly recommended to look at this link:
<http://www.comm.utoronto.ca/frank/guide/guide0.html>
Even though it is a bit outdated concerning visual aids etc, the general guidelines are good. Also, see some basic rules below:

Some basic rules concerning seminar presentations:

- Clearly state which publication you are summarizing (title, where it was published, authors). It is not enough to say this, show it on the screen.
- Face the audience most of the time.
- Each time a new illustration is presented on the screen, look at it to see that it is properly displayed and that you don't block the view for the audience.
- Don't read from a manuscript, use your own words. You may write down some words on a piece of paper to help your memory, but it is usually better to use the illustrations you show for this purpose.
- Point at the screen when needed, so that the audience knows which curve etc. you are talking about.
- Don't try to impress the audience with complicated equations. Explain the basic principles and ideas with simple figures instead.
- Speak clearly and not too fast.
- If you are nervous, don't mention it. It will not kill you. Try to find some friendly faces in the audience to look at during your presentation.
- Rehearse your presentation under realistic conditions. This means you should stand up, speak loud, and check how long the presentation takes (usually longer than you expect). It is good if you have an audience (one or two persons will do), otherwise you should imagine that you have an audience (remember to look at the audience!).
- If you discover that your presentation takes longer than expected, DON'T speak faster. Skip some material instead.
- When you have finished your presentation, you may end it by saying something like "Thank you" or "Thank you for your attention". Then everybody knows that you have finished.
- If you get a really tough question after your presentation, it may be best to say that you will have to think about this (or look something up) and that you can continue the discussion privately after the seminar.

Feedback concerning your presentations will be given privately after all seminars have been completed.