

Tips for Effective Online Presentations (UW-La Crosse Public Speaking Center)

Creating presentations for online environments can present challenges and opportunities that are not present in the face to face classroom environment. Here are some suggestions for creating effective online presentations.

Familiarize yourself with the software you will use

- Get comfortable with the software and how it will work for your presentation
- Spend time working through the presentational software prior to class
- If possible, do a test run of your presentation prior to uploading it for a grade

Minimize distractions

- Pay attention to your appearance in the frame of the camera
 - If possible, speak in front of a wall that is a neutral color or limits other distractions
 - Be aware of natural light and other elements which might create problems with the on-camera images
 - Be attentive to your appearance that is in frame (such as your shirt)
- If possible, silence or limit other noises
 - Turn off other web pages that might have autoplay videos (Netflix; YouTube)
 - Disable notifications on social media, texting, and email; these noises will be amplified during your presentation
 - Try to limit background noises (other people in your home, traffic)
- If you can, find a room where you can close the door to minimize household sounds

Microphone & sound

- If possible, use earbuds or headset for good balance of sound
- Project your voice appropriately for your device
 - Use conversational volume and tone
 - If using an internal microphone, make sure that you are using the appropriate level of volume for the device (where it will be positioned when you are recording)

Posture & position for speaking

- Prop up recording device
 - Set up the best angle for recording
 - Use books, dressers, or other stable items to set up for recording
 - If possible, prop up the device with books or other objects instead of holding it in your hand; this will ensure the smoothest and steadiest visual
- Position your body as you would for a speech in class
 - Discuss with your professor whether they have requirements for sitting or standing during a recorded speech
 - If you stand, stand for the entire presentation
 - Make sure that your notes/notecard are not blocking the screen
 - If sitting, make sure you use good posture as you would during a standing presentation
 - If sitting, do your best to keep movement as small as you can (e.g, don't shift your body during the speech)
- Limit big gestures and movement
 - Unlike a classroom speech, you are operating in a much smaller space, especially with only a small video frame for your audience to see
 - Gestures on video may seem more distracting than they would in a large classroom, so keep gestures simple and within the frame
 - No gestures can be off-putting, so make sure that you consider what would be engaging and inviting
- Look at camera for most consistent eye contact
 - Instead of looking at yourself on the screen while speaking, look at the camera on your computer or device; this will ensure the audience knows you're talking to them and not to yourself
 - If using virtual meetings, the same rule should apply—look at the camera, not at yourself or the images of others on the screen
 - Consider using your conference partners' names when addressing them since eye contact will be less visible

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