

Homework Assignment #4, “Elevator Speeches” & Nearly Final Poster

This assignment consists of two parts: (1) the oral introduction you will make when presenting your poster, tuned for two different viewers, and (2) the nearly final PPT or PDF file for your printed poster. Note that a **preliminary draft** of your poster is due by **Monday, September 28**, emailed to both instructors. We will provide feedback to you to incorporate in your nearly final version, which will be presented in class on October 2.

Part 1: Prepare *two* 2-min oral summaries that will explain your project as you point out elements of your poster. One summary should be understandable to a freshman physics major; the other summary should be appropriate for a physics faculty member in a research group different from your own.

Start out your presentation with a greeting to the poster viewer and a question that will elicit his or her level of expertise in your subject. (“Hi, I’m Celia. Thanks for stopping by. My project is about the use of the subjunctive mood in scientific writing. What do you know about technical writing?”).

Be prepared to explain your project to anyone—from somebody who doesn’t know anything about physics and is just there for the cookies to a professor who knows more than you do. Being nimble enough to adjust the level of detail so it’s appropriate for your listener is essential to good scientific communications and an invaluable skill to master.

You do not have to turn in written versions of these introductions; you will be graded on how you present them orally on October 2. Practice your speeches until you can give them fluently and naturally.

Part 2: Using PowerPoint (or equivalent software that will produce a print-quality PDF file), create a scientific poster (height = 28 in; width = 56 in) that presents your senior thesis research project. The poster should include an introduction/motivation, a brief description of the techniques and procedures or apparatus used, any results obtained, a summary of your conclusions and plans for future work (if any), and an acknowledgment section. Detailed instructions for making a scientific poster will be presented in class on September 11.

Bring your nearly final PPT or PDF poster file to class on a memory stick, or email it to Celia **by noon on Friday, October 2**. In class, we’ll project your poster on the screen, tell you who your audience is (freshman or professor), and give you 2 minutes to explain your poster in a way that’s engaging and meaningful to your viewer. Do not memorize what you’re going to say or rely on notes—practice until you can speak spontaneously and confidently about your project. During class, your colleagues and instructors will give you suggestions on how to improve the content of your poster and the effectiveness of your presentation.

Due: **Friday, October 2, 2:00 PM**. This assignment is not eligible for rewrite points, and you will receive 0 “presentation points” if you do not present your poster in class on October 2. Electronic poster files submitted after the deadline will be subject to a 5-points/day late penalty.

Total—100 points (not eligible for rewrite)
(50 points for the oral presentation; 50 points for the preliminary poster)