

ANTH 495—HONOURS ESSAY
PREPARING RESEARCH PRESENTATIONS

Dr. Maximilian C. Forte, Department of Sociology and Anthropology, Concordia University

Important Advice:

- ▣ Present the most significant ideas you want the audience to capture, and do not overwhelm them. Try to present no more than three of the most important ideas stemming from, pertaining to your research.
- ▣ Minimize details when highlighting the main ideas you want to transmit.
- ▣ State clearly in direct terms terms what the point of your research was, what you discovered, and what you think it means.
- ▣ Rehearse the presentation repeatedly, do not revise your presentation on the spot. There is no room for spontaneity or for any unplanned digressions and sidebars.
- ▣ As a general rule, a 10 minute presentation amounts to roughly 5 or 5.25 pages, typed, double-spaced, or roughly 1,400 words. Do not cram. Speak at a well measured pace, without hurrying through dense theoretical material and specialist jargon. No allowance will be made for extra time for you personally. There will be a very strict time keeper.
- ▣ *Anthropologists routinely read their papers. Why?* In part, this is due to the fact that the details of an ethnographic description can be too sensitive to leave up to an improvised, possibly nervous performance, and the theory is difficult enough that the choice of words is critical and memory is not always reliable.
- ▣ If you wish to read your paper, this is not a problem, but write it in a manner that when read aloud it resembles normal speech, not reading. Make eye contact with audience members. Speak in a clear and loud voice. Speak to the person at the far end of the room.
- ▣ To read your paper effectively, once it has been fully rehearsed and edited for time (do not aim for precisely 10 minutes, time keepers are notorious for losing track of your first minute), print it in 16 point font so you can see it very clearly, and print it double-spaced. Number the pages. Staple them together. You will have no time to flip through pages in frustrated confusion.
- ▣ Any supplemental materials should be printed on handouts, and you should make at least 25 copies. Distribute these in advance of your presentation so you do not lose time.
- ▣ If using Power Point slides, try to keep the text large and to a minimum number of words. Five slides will be abundant for a 10 minute presentation. Do not put information on the slides that is not directly integrated in your paper, that forces you to speak aside, or you will end up with two scripts and run overtime.

- ▣ Power Point presentations do not show up the same on all computers and screens. Therefore, use simply default type fonts that most computers have (Arial, Times New Roman), and stay well away from the margins. Load your presentation onto a CD, memory stick, a diskette for PCs, or upload it to a site online (write down the URL of course).

Structure and Content:

1. Indicate the core problem you addressed and what your main conclusion is. Think in terms of providing an "abstract".
2. Provide some background (what makes this problem a problem?)
3. Motivation: what attracted you to the problem and what did you want to do to address/remedy the problem?
4. How does your approach compare with related work?
5. Your key ideas, arguments, results, findings
6. Methodology: what were your methods for approaching the problem?
7. Conclusion:
 - ~problem restated
 - ~your key idea, argument
 - ~problems/questions this research has opened up