

## GUIDELINES FOR ORAL PRESENTATION AT THE ECOLOGY SYMPOSIUM

We will run the final lab session exactly as a symposium at the national meeting of the Ecological Society of America. Each group of students will present a Powerpoint presentation based on Student-Directed Project 2. Each student will individually submit an abstract prior to the symposium. The best abstract will be printed for all to read prior to the presentations.

The presentation is a shortened version of a scientific paper delivered as a simple story with a strong take-home message. It includes all parts of the paper but deemphasizes methods and highlights results. The story is set in context to other ecological studies at the beginning. The framework of the story is provided by an explicit hypothesis and prediction. The discussion is brief with emphasis on conclusions.

Points to consider:

1. Create a Powerpoint Presentation in Microsoft Word. First, look carefully at the **example** of one on the course website: <http://www.life.uiuc.edu/ib/203/> under Lab Schedule and Due Dates (look at link under Lab XIV Symposium).
2. Plan on about 1 minute per slide so have at most 12 slides.  
Include these slides:
  - a) title slide
  - b) question
  - c) hypothesis/prediction
  - d) methods/experimental design if complex
  - e) figures/tables
  - f) conclusions

DO NOT put too much information on one slide. Use an outline format, not complete sentences.

3. Give a spontaneous talk using the slides as your “props”. At most, prepare an index card to help with the introduction. Don’t read your talk from cards or from the slides on the screen.
4. Time limit is 12 minutes, followed by 3 minutes for questions from other students.
5. Orient the listener to each figure/table first pointing out the variables on each axis and any other legends. Then summarize the main pattern to the data.
6. Practice your talk repeatedly and give to a friendly reviewer who can offer suggestions for improvement.
7. After each talk, students in the audience will write down one biological question about the project and its results. You will also be expected to directly ask questions of the presenters.
8. Your grade will be determined by 1) presentation, 2) answers to questions and 3) questions asked after others’ talks.