Effective Multimodal Presentations

Multimodal refers to the integration of multiple modes of communication and expression, which can be perceived by senses such as sight, hearing, and touch. Using multiple modes of communication is helpful for conveying information to your audience.

Planning and Drafting
Options for multimodal presentations include: slide-based (ex: PowerPoint or Prezi), video, artwork, interactive website, or performance. Each option has its pros and cons, so be sure to evaluate which would best suit the assignment and/or instructor expectations.

Readability
- Include the most important or significant elements of your research.
- Limit the amount of information per slide to avoid overwhelming your viewer.
- Sans serif fonts are easier to read onscreen, while serif fonts are easier to read on paper. Whichever you choose to use, be consistent with your font.
- Consider using color(s), but maintain a balance between professionalism and appeal by using complementary or analogous color combinations. Remember that color can covey meaning to the audience and influence their attitudes/feelings.

Engaging Your Audience
Visuals such as photos, videos, graphs, and charts can enhance your presentation and engage your audience.

Images
- Simplify or crop images as needed. Caption and cite your images with a title, brief description, and retrieval information or citation.
- Finding images can be challenging, but be sure to avoid copyrighted or licensed material. Consider using free image galleries such as: Pixabay, Pexels, Gratisography, and Compfight.

Video
- Limit the length of the video clip(s).
- Embed the video file(s) when possible to ensure more seamless transitions throughout your presentation and avoid any technological issues that may arise from linked videos.

Sound
- Sound or music can also anchor your presentation, but be sure to consider the appropriateness of any sounds or music you choose to include.
- Embed audio file(s) rather than using external links.

Oral Presentations and Guiding Your Audience
Effective oral presentations involve three main components…
- Verbal: what you say
- Vocal: how you say it
- Visual: everything the audience can see.

Outline your major points, explain your major points, then review your major points. Use transitions and keywords to guide your audience (ex: "Consequently," "The next point I would like to discuss," "On the contrary," or "To revisit what I mentioned earlier").

Write your own future!

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Group Presentations
- *All* members of the group must rehearse and familiarize themselves with the content so that each member can effectively transition between slides/sections.
- Balance and distribute sections or slides of the presentation among team members.
- Each group member should have an equal contribution to the creation and delivery of the presentation.

Pro-Tips
- Create notes for your presentation. Avoid reading directly from the slides or a script.
- Practice and rehearse. Familiarizing yourself with the basic outline of your presentation will help you feel more comfortable and confident when presenting.
- Nervousness is normal, but preparing and rehearsing can help relieve this.
- Speak extemporaneous from your main points.
- Seek feedback from others (including Writing Consultants, classmates, or your professor).
- Make eye contact with your audience and sweep the room. Speak *to* your audience rather than *at* them.
- Use your voice. Vary your tone, pace, and volume to emphasize your major points. Be confident and avoid apologizing, even if you make a mistake.
- Use your body language. Maintain a stable and confident position. After all, you are presenting as an authority on your content.
- Pause and take a moment when needed, instead of using filler words (ah, um, uh, ok, sort of, you know…etc.).
- Dress professionally. Avoid any distracting clothing that may influence your audience's attitude toward you.
- Visualize what you want to *achieve*, rather than what you want to avoid.

The information for this handout was compiled from the following sources:
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    writing? In Writing about Writing (2nd ed., pp. 683-689). Boston, MA: Bedford/St. Martin's.

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