Lecture 6: Presenting Academic Research
Lecture Topics

- Why do we present research?
- What aspects of presenting should you focus on?
Why?

- Communication is a universal skill
- Coding along has a ceiling
- Researchers must present their work
- If you can't tell anyone about your work, why should they care?
How?

- Tell 'em what you're gunna tell 'em
- Tell 'em
- Tell 'em what you told 'em
The preparation...

• Have a defined message
  – I had a neat approach to using Ajax in my chat tool

• Know your audience
  – These are my peers
  – Master's-level computer scientists

• Understand:
  – Material
  – Talk roadmap
  – Implications of your work
The Structure...

• Introduction
  – Stories help! Captures attention.
  – Problem statements here, preferably with examples

• Approach
  – How did you go about solving the thing?

• Results
  – Figures, diagrams, stats, etc.

• Analysis, conclusions, next steps
The Questions...

- No questions == no one cares
- Be prepared to answer questions
- It's acceptable to not know, but explain why!
- Questions aren't traps
  - Flattering – I liked your talk so much that I thought about it and decided to continue this conversation
Extracurriculars

- Be fun, engaging, etc.
- Use slide numbers
- Use common punctuation
- Reading slides == terrible presentation
- Minimize text
- Slides are presentation *tools* to aid the presenter's *soundtrack*
Focus areas for research

• Motivation for the research
  – Includes any bio, background, and related works
  – Goal is to make audience agree that this is important stuff!

• Methodology
  – How did they do it?
  – Was that the right way?
  – Is there a way to improve it?

• Findings and recommendations
  – Pictures and graphs are essential
  – What did the authors tell us we should learn?

• Conclusions
  – What can we take away?
  – What should future researchers use this paper to do?
For this course...

- 1-2 slides -- Introductory bio
- 2-4 slides -- Introduce the topic area (includes common myths and associated truths)
- 1-2 slides -- Introduce the paper (including motivation)
- 1-2 slides -- Background and related works
- 4-5 slides -- Research methodology (include experimental design, metrics, data sets, etc.)
- 1-2 slides -- Findings & conclusions (include relevant graphs)
- 1-2 slides -- Issues and recommendations with the paper
- 1-2 slides -- Recommendations for research in the topic area

Presentations should range from 15-20 slides and last for 30-45 minutes with 15-30 minutes for Q&A and discussion