Presentation and Speaking Skills

INITIAL PLANNING
- Carefully consider the purpose, the prof’s expectations, your audience, any time limits, and the evaluation criteria.
- For a group presentation, it’s good to have a group leader and to clearly establish who is responsible for which aspects of the research and the presentation.

RESEARCHING THE TOPIC
- Be sure to narrow the focus appropriately.

ORGANIZING THE TALK
- Intro – get your audience’s attention; state your purpose; give a road map; communicate your key messages
- Body – arrange your points in the most logical order; prepare pauses and smooth transitions; organize any examples and data
- Conclusion – summarize main points; refer to your stated purpose; invite questions

PROBLEMS TO WATCH OUT FOR!
- Too many full sentences on slides.
- Spelling errors.
- Too many points in bulleted lists.
- Overly complicated charts.
- Useful website: www.slideshare.net (this site contains examples of effective slides).

VISUAL AIDS
- If using audio-visual aids, have a back-up plan, such as on overhead or handouts.
- With handouts, think carefully about what to include and when to distribute them.

DELIVERY
- For a group presentation, think about where to stand or sit.
- Decide how dependent you’ll be on notes.
- Clarify any pronunciation ahead of time.
- Your voice, posture, gestures and eye contact are important.
- Decide if you’ll take questions during or at the end of your presentation. Anticipate possible questions.

REHEARSE!
- To ensure it goes smoothly, practice your presentation three times.
- Get adequate rest the night before.
- Dress appropriately.
- Arrive early to set up equipment and calm any nervousness.
- Taking a few deep breaths should calm you down.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES
- SpeakEasy, a program offered by Counseling Services
- Toastmasters – www.toastmasters.org -- Dal has a branch.