Tips for Creating Lecture Videos and Voice-Over PowerPoints

PowerPoint and Content

Content Organization
- Chunk your content into logical sections and spend no more than 2+/- minutes on a single slide
- Put your most important bullets on top of the list
- Use the 7x7 rule – no more than 7 bullets and 7 words per bullet
- Proofread your presentation: check spelling and grammar

Fonts:
- Use a sans serif font (Arial, Verdana, Tahoma, Calibri, etc.) and be consistent throughout
- Font size: Use a minimum of 24 points—small fonts can cause eye-strain and make reading difficult or impossible; too much text on a slide can also be difficult for students

Colors and contrast:
- Sometimes simple is best: Black text on a white background
- You need sufficient contrast between background and text or graphics so your content is easy to read and to avoid eye-strain
- Some color combinations make reading text and seeing images difficult, especially in a video (dark on dark; light/neon on light, red on black, red on purple, etc.)
- Test your slides: Select View -> select Grayscale or Black and White. Is it easy to read?

Images:
- Use quality graphics
- Size them large enough to see content clearly
- Include AltText descriptions of images and shapes

Avoid:
- Superfast flashing animations; patterned backgrounds; shadowed text
- Certain color combinations (dark text/dark background; red/green; orange (except as highlighting); overly subtle color schemes; large blocks of vividly colored text; red on black/black on red; neon colors

Building Your Slide
- Use the built-in Layouts of your PowerPoint template
- Check that slide items are in the correct order and hyperlinks are labeled with meaningful descriptions
- Font, size or color alone should not be used to convey information.
- Websites and video URLS: reference them on your slides and lecture, but also insert the URL directly into Blackboard so your students can click on the link. You do not have to watch a video with your students in your recording. Instead, explain why they're viewing it and what you hope they get from it.

Why?
- ➤ Using appropriate fonts, sizes, and colors can help those with visual impairments or issues as well as prevent eye-strain on those who view content only on their computer or mobile devices.

Length
- 5-15 minutes is ideal – but no longer than 20 minutes: be clear and concise
- Talk only about 2 minutes per slide
- One to two sections of content per video
- Better to have multiple short videos than one long video

Why?
- ➤ Short videos help those with short attention span of viewers. Long videos can take longer to download or stream. Shorter videos are easier for portability. Shorter

videos allow students to quickly go to exactly what they need for review

Transcripts & Captioning

- Videos must be captioned and, if they cannot be captioned, then you must provide an accurate transcript to accompany the video.
- There are some mechanical transcription options available to you – just ask your designer for options.

Tip:

- Type out your script or very detailed outline in advance of recording. Scripts can help you avoid filler words, like ah and um. It will also help you stay on track with your messages.

Why?

➢ Captioning is important for accessibility for those with hearing difficulties; it provides an alternative format for students who learn through reading; and English may not be your or your students' first language so captions or transcripts can help them understand the audio better. Captioning can help when someone is in a noisy place or if someone does not have access to headphones or speakers.

Recording Techniques for Quality

Preview your work early:

- Record for a few minutes then preview for quality before you continue—check lighting, appearance, camera angle, sounds, etc.

Physical Appearance (if you will appear in the video):

- Wear solid color clothes; try not to wear "trendy" clothes that will date your video; no distracting jewelry; combed hair

Voice (on camera or voice-over)

- Practice – then practice some more!
- Talk at a natural rate of speed

- Be personable and enthusiastic—sound energetic and use an animated voice: Record when you are awake and perky – tiredness comes across in your videos; *smile* before and during your presentation
- Avoid jargon or colloquial speech patterns
- Don't read slides word for word
- Tip: tape a picture of students above your camera and talk to the camera to envision talking to your class in person.

Entrance and Exit Transitions:

- SMILE before you start, pause between topics, use transitional phrases, pause for a few seconds at the start and end – in case you need to edit afterward

Background of recording location:

- Minimize distractions of your "set." Look at what is behind you if you appear in the videos; remove distracting backdrops, organize your office materials, straighten your books, remove anything personal behind you that you do not want others to see, etc.

Why?

➢ Students can easily become distracted and good on-camera and recording techniques can help them stay focused on your content and messages.

Need Help or Feedback?

Your instructional designers can help you plan out your recordings in advance and give you feedback on your presentation materials before you record. Call or email to setup an appointment.

Developed through input from the Instructional Designer's Community of Practice (June, 2016).