OLLI AT DUKE
TEACHING BEST PRACTICES GUIDE

Topic	Creating Effective Slide Presentations

Applies To	Lecture (plus Questions)	In-Person & Online

Source	Mike Bahnaman, mikebahnaman@aol.com

Background	Presentation graphics, like PowerPoint and Keynote, are used in many in-person and online OLLI classes, especially those that use a lecture format. Although these applications are relatively easy to learn, crafting an interesting and compelling slide presentation is a skill that eludes many. The purpose of this Best Practices Guide is to share some tips that have proved effective in many of OLLI's in-person and online classes.
Benefits	A well-crafted PowerPoint presentation can be a powerful tool in OLLI classes. They can enhance student learning and ensure that the instructor covers the material in an organized, methodical fashion.
Key Elements	1. **Keep It Simple (Limit Text and Bullet Points)** – Your slides should include <u>key</u> points, but not the entire text of your remarks. Many experts recommend no more than 4 – 5 bullet points per slide and 4 – 5 words per bullet point. 2. **Use Large Type** – Use a font size that can be easily read on a computer screen or from the back row of your classroom. The minimum font size will vary with the size of your assigned classroom, but it is usually a good idea to use at least 24 point. 3. **Use a Font That is Easy to Read** – PowerPoint offers many fonts, but most are not suitable for presentations. Some studies have shown that the easiest fonts for your students to read are Times New Roman, Bookman Oldstyle or Arial. <u>Avoid</u> highly stylized fonts that are difficult to read (like *Freestyle Script* or 𝔒𝔩𝔡 𝔈𝔫𝔤𝔩𝔦𝔰𝔥 𝔗𝔢𝔵𝔱). Do not use more than one or two fonts in a presentation. 4. **Use High Quality Graphics** – Photographs can add interest to your slides, illustrate key points, and help students retain information more readily. If your slides are too "text heavy," it will be difficult for your students to maintain their interest. 5. **Use Animation Sparingly** – Animation can be a useful tool when used <u>sparingly</u>. Over use can be distracting. If you do decide to use animation, limit the types of animation used in a given presentation 6. **Use Color for Emphasis** – Color can be an effective way to draw attention. Bold colors can draw the students' eyes to key points.

	7. **Translate Data into Charts** – Simple charts can illustrate trends or make it easier for your students to understand comparisons. Use charts rather than large tables of data, if possible.
	8. **Use "Signpost Slides" when appropriate** – "Signpost Slides" can be an effective way of letting your students know where you are in your presentation and what comes next (see "Using Signpost Slides" Best Practices Guide).
References & Examples	A simple google search of "Effective PowerPoint Presentations" will reveal dozens, if not hundreds, of websites with tips for effective PowerPoint presentations. Not all of these tips apply to OLLI at Duke and many contradict each other.
	Nonetheless. several seem to have helpful ideas:
	1. "Top Ten Slide Tips," Garr Reynolds.
	2. "Tips for Making Effective PowerPoint Presentations," National Conference of State Legislatures.
	3. "Life After Death by PowerPoint," Don McMillen.