**Visual Presentation (PowerPoint) Guidelines**

When people give oral presentations, they always highlight their talk with visuals. Visual presentations help to add another layer of information to your material as well. They also help to engage your audience so that they are focused on you and your topic for a longer period of time.

There are many different ways and many different programs out there to help you create a visual presentation for your oral presentation. PowerPoint, Prezi, Keynote, Powtoons, or Google Slides are just a few programs that give students access to high quality presentation software.

However, to create a great visual presentation, you can’t just copy and paste parts of your essay onto a few slides. There are some rules you can follow that will bump up your level of presentation creation.

1. **Avoid Huge Blocks of Text** – Paragraphs are for essays, not presentations. Don’t put in your presentation what you plan to say. Your audience can read, after all, and it’s a waste of time to make a presentation that really is just your script.

2. **Don’t Use Bullets** – Or, at least use them sparingly. Presentations are to add visuals, charts, graphs, pictures, etc…not words. The words should come from your mouth, not the slide. The visual on the screen should highlight what’s being said, not cue or substitute what’s being said.

**3. Always remember you are on stage** – Look at your audience. Use great eye contact, and don’t be lured in to look at your own presentation.

4. **Practice, Practice, Practice** – Don’t have the first time you are in front of the class be the actual first time you have run through your presentation. Make sure you are memorized and you have practiced enough to know your approximate times. Also, test all technology before your deadline so that you can troubleshoot if necessary.

**5. Use the programs to their best advantage** – If there are animation techniques to help your text or images move, why not use them? Don’t rely too heavily on this, however. After all, it’s meant to engage your audience and act as a visual highlighter. But your presentation should reflect what you know about using the program. For instance, if you are using Prezi, make sure that you have an image that captures the main idea of your topic as the “bigger picture” image that is made up of all your own slides along the Prezi path. For Keynote, there are tons of things to play with, but make sure you use them sparingly. Don’t explode every slide!

**6. Use tons of different kinds of visuals** – There are so many ways you can highlight your main topic or your evidence. You can display charts, graphs, and data. You can have quotes from polling results fly in. You can insert short videos. The list is endless. Don’t be trapped to mere text.

**6. Get feedback before your final presentation** – Present in front of family. Present in front of friends. Most importantly, present in front of yourself. Record yourself doing your presentation. Watch it and make note of what you want to improve when you are in front of the class.