

BIOT 952 Scientific and Technical Communication in Biotechnology

Summer 2017

Instructors: Patricia Lynne and John Wing

TR 6:00 pm – 9:20 pm

Individual Oral Presentation of Rhetorical Analysis

Assignment: Prepare and deliver an oral presentation highlighting the most important rhetorical aspects of your assigned research article

Audience: Classmates and professors

Draft Due: June 13th for work in class

Final Due: June 15th for presentation in class; slides/Prezi due by the start of class

Length: 8-10 minutes

You have been working on a rhetorical analysis of a research article, which focuses on how that article works rather than what it says. In this assignment, you'll use your findings from that written assignment to develop and present the most important points to an audience of your classmates.

Using Your Analysis

In your rhetorical analysis, you have been focusing on key characteristics: IMRAD structural conventions, logical argumentation, and specific language use. By this point, you should have determined which specific characteristics are most important for understanding how your article does its job. For this presentation, you will need to select the parts that are most significant or interesting to an audience of scholars who are also exploring how scientific discourse works.

You will almost certainly not be able to present everything that you have discussed in your rhetorical analysis -- nor should you try to. Instead, choose one or two points that you believe are key to understanding how this article works and prepare to explain them in detail. These are your “findings” for the rhetorical analysis, and you should place the same emphasis on them as you would if you were presenting scientific research findings.

Because oral presentations are, in part, visual, you will should think about what you can present on slides (or a Prezi) that will help your audience notice the same things you have found in your analysis. Select examples that help you make your case and decide how you might best display those examples.

Preparing Your Presentation

By the time we get to the oral presentations, everyone in class will have a general sense of the research in many of the other assigned articles. This means that you do not need to spend much time summarizing the content of your article. You will need enough summary to provide a context for your analysis, but not so much that it takes time away from the primary purpose of your presentation. Remember that everyone else is reading articles from the same journal and that all of the articles have similar methodologies. Don't waste time presenting what your audience already knows.

In class, we have discussed and will continue to discuss the organization of oral presentations. To develop a strong presentation, you should use the guidelines provided by Audrey Kali, discussed in class, and outlined in our textbook. In particular, your presentation should have a clear introduction, body,

and conclusion so that your reader can follow your organization.

You will need to present with slides or a Prezi. You may use notes, but you may not read directly from notes and you may not read your presentation in its entirety. You also should not read from your slides directly except for quotations from the original article, which may need to be read for your reader to see your point. You should design and use slides per the guidelines on pages 163-165 of the textbook.

Your presentation should be between 8 and 10 minutes long. Presentations that respect the audience and other presenters run neither long nor short. Only cover as much as you can cover in the given timeframe. Presentations that are under or over the allotted time will be penalized, and presentations that run longer than 12 minutes will be stopped. Part of learning to function in a professional community is learning to respect the time and space allotted for your work.

Practice is crucial. Your audience is interested in hearing you, and they want to be engaged with your presentation. You will have time to practice with peers in small groups in class on June 13th, and we recommend that you bring a way to record yourself that day so that you can analyze your own performance between the rehearsal and your formal presentation. If you do not have a way to record yourself and would like to do so, please let us know by June 11th so that we can find an alternative for you.

Evaluation

When we evaluate your oral presentation, we will be looking for two elements in particular: (1) how well you are able to make and support your claims about the significant rhetorical features you have chosen for your presentation, and (2) how clearly organized and polished your presentation is, per the guidelines we have discussed in class.