



**The Weissman Center for Leadership and the Liberal Arts
The Speaking, Arguing, and Writing Program
122 Porter Hall**

Multimedia Presentations

Multimedia presentations should only be used if there are compelling reasons to do so. If the media enable you to explain something that you cannot explain without visual or auditory assistance, use them. Do not use multimedia as a substitute or a distraction from your own interaction with the audience. Use multimedia aids to:

- Attract your audience.
- Organize, simplify, and illustrate your main points.
- Aid in audience memory.
- Convey something that cannot effectively be verbally described.

Images/Text

- Choose visuals (e.g., slides, pod-casts, photographs, paintings, graphs) that will reproduce sharply.
- Make sure the visuals are large enough to be clearly visible to your audience.
- Font size should be readable from a distance (44-50-point for titles; 30-34-point for subheads).
- Use bulleted or numbered points rather than paragraph style text.
- Citations should be listed on one slide at the end of the presentation.

Color/Appearance

- Create a clear contrast between any print text/illustration and the background.
- Use color as a cue to guide the eye to important information or to make correlations in a chart or graph.
- Use animation to highlight or demonstrate a process.

Delivery Tips

- Talk to your audience rather than to the media; don't turn your back to the audience.
- Concentrate on maintaining eye contact with your audience.
- Avoid placing the media aids directly behind you; instead place them to one side of you.
- Display the aid only when you are ready to discuss it.
- Use presentation software, such as PowerPoint®, for illustrating your talking points; do not read the text of the slides to your audience.
- Know your equipment; view your multimedia in the room in which you will be giving the speech to make sure all technology is working properly.
- Practice your presentation with your multimedia aids. The speaker should be able to effectively and smoothly interact with the aid to minimize distractions.

Sources:

MHC Professor Sean Decatur, Senior Symposium Workshop, March 14, 2006.

Lunsford, Andrea. *The St. Martin's Handbook*. 5th ed. Boston: St. Martin's, 2003.

O'Hair, Dan, Rob Stewart, and Hannah Rubenstein. *A Speaker's Guidebook: Text and Reference*. 2nd ed. Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's Press, 2004.

<http://www.mtholyoke.edu/go/saw>

For an appointment, call x2651