



As the spring semester draws to a close, things are slowing down a bit. However, Tracy tells me that we have EIGHTEEN majors in Chemistry and Geography graduating at the end the Spring Semester. To my knowledge, this is a record high number. Congratulations to everyone.

I do want to point out, again, the informational meeting concerning government jobs. Please make certain that all students are aware of this and encourage them to attend. Mr. Epik has been extremely successful working for the federal government and he wants to share his methods of success with our students.

Finally, I want to point out the Travel Rules (below). Tracy put this simple list together after having to cope with several travelers who seemed to be unaware of the rules. It is a lot of extra paperwork and effort on everyone from Dr. Turner to Tracy when the rules are not followed. The Dean is about ready to let individuals not be reimbursed when they do not follow the rules. Tracy will be handing this list out to anyone who travels. Following the rules makes her job a lot easier - and you get reimbursed faster!



Happy Easter!
-Lou

Department News

Spring Preview Days 14 April

On Saturday, 14 April from 9:00 until 11:00 AM is Spring Preview Days. Please see Joe Morgan and let him know that you can help "man" the booth. Parents and prospective students drive here from far and wide. They are looking to talk to Faculty members about JSU and the different majors. Please make an effort to attend. It is not fair to these families when we are not in attendance to answer questions.

Out-of-State Travel Rules (updated):

- Travel authorization must be filled in and signed before you pay for anything - conference fee, flight, hotel, etc. Fill out the travel authorization as soon as you think about submitting an abstract to a meeting.
- Travel dates need to include ALL travel. Consider adding extra days if you are not certain what day your presentation will be scheduled for.
- All expenses (even for expenses under \$25) require a receipt, including hotel, air fare, car rental, Registration/conference fees, parking or taxi fare.
- Food receipts are also required and are to be itemized. What you eat/drink **MUST** be listed on the receipt. (A credit card receipt is not enough.)
- Don't offer to pay for anyone else's meal. Each person is authorized to travel will be reimbursed for their own meals. You will not be reimbursed for paying for someone else's meal.
- No reimbursement for alcohol. Alcohol may be purchased and can be crossed off your itemized receipt at the time of reimbursement.
- No reimbursements for souvenirs, t-shirts, etc.
- You will not be reimbursed for meals that the conference provides.
- Bring back the conference brochure.
- Map quest from JSU (700 Pelham Rd. - not your home) to your destination and/or airport must be turned in.

Student News

Government Jobs!

The federal government is a major employer and is looking for individuals with science and technology skills. However, landing a government job is difficult if you are not aware of the process. Often, resumes and cover letters are scanned and sorted by computers. Therefore, the exact words and where you place those words on your resume and cover letter are crucial to the process. Mr. James Epik, a JSU grad has been very successful in working for the Federal Government. He is willing to talk to students about opportunities to work for the federal government and how to apply for the positions. He will be at **335 Ayers Hall on Wednesday, 11 April at 1:00**. I recommend that you write up a resume and attend to learn what sorts of jobs are available and how you will have to tweak your resume to land the job. This is open to ALL students. All juniors and seniors are urged, as strongly as possible, to attend.

Student Travel Grants

We have funding from Sam Kinsaul to support student travel to present research work at conferences. Applications are due by 30 April 2012. See **Lou** or **Tracy** if you need an application. Requests up to \$500 can be made.

Department Seminars

ALL Seminars are on Mondays at 12:30 PM in Room 202 Martin Hall

Everyone is ENCOURAGED to attend. Students are more than welcome. If you want to present, please contact **Dr. Jan Gryko**.

Monday 9 April: Investigating the Effectiveness of the Surfactant Dioctyl Sulfosuccinate to Disperse Oil in a Changing Marine Environment by George Kiplagat

And Plant Resources as an Alternate to Beef Heart for the Extraction of LDH in Undergraduate Biochemistry Labs. by Lauren Collins



University News

JSU Celebrates International Week 8-14 April

Jacksonville State University will celebrate International Week April 8-14. Please plan to join us for these great activities:

Sunday, April 8- Soccer at the intramural field at 3 p.m.

Monday, April 9- Silent Auction at the International House 7 a.m.- 5 p.m.

Tuesday, April 10- Silent Auction at the International House 7 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Tuesday, April 10- Movie Night at the International House basement 7 p.m.

Wednesday, April 11- Zumba at the International House basement 7 p.m.

Thursday, April 12- The Vibe Party at the Alumni House 8 - 12 p.m.

Friday, April 13- Water Balloon at the International House at 2:00 p.m.

Saturday, April 14- Taster's Fair at Leone Cole Auditorium from 5 -7 p.m.



Top Ten List

10 Most Common Presentation Mistakes

As long as we are having weekly presentations in the Department, we should spend some time discussing what works and what does not work for a presentation. Here are some suggestions from:

http://presentationsoft.about.com/od/presentationmistakes/tp/080722_presentation_mistakes.htm

1. Presentation Mistake #1 - You Don't Know Your Topic!

You memorized the content (and it shows, by the way). Someone has a question. Panic sets in. You never prepared for questions and all you know about this topic is what is written on the slides.

A better scenario

Know your material *so well*, that you could easily do the presentation without an electronic enhancement such as PowerPoint. Nothing will ruin your credibility as a presenter faster, than not knowing everything about your topic. Use key words and phrases and include only essential information to keep the audience focused and interested. Be prepared for questions and **know the answers**.

2. Presentation Mistake #2 - The Slides Are NOT Your Presentation

An audience member says that she can't read the slides. You graciously tell her you will be reading them and proceed to do so, while looking up at the screen. Each of your slides is filled with the text of your speech. Why do they need you?

A better scenario

Always remember that **you** are the presentation. The [slide show](#) should only be used as an *accompaniment* to your talk. Simplify the content, by using [bullet points](#) for key information. Keep the most important points near the top of the slide for easy reading in the back rows. Focus on a single topic area for this presentation and use no more than four bullets per slide. **Speak to the audience**, not to the screen.

3. Presentation Mistake #3 - T. M. I. (Too Much Information)

You know *so much* about the topic, that you jump from here to there and back again talking about everything there is to know about your brand new widget, and no one can follow the thread of the presentation.

A better scenario

Use the K.I.S.S. principle (Keep It Simple Silly) when designing a presentation. Stick to three, or at the most, four points about your topic and expound on them. The audience will be more likely to retain the information.

4. Presentation Mistake #4 - Poorly Chosen Design Template or Design Theme

You heard blue was a good color for a [design template](#) or [design theme](#). You found a really cool template/theme on the internet, with a beach scene. Water is blue, right? Unfortunately, your presentation is about some nifty new tools to show at a Woodcarvers' convention.

A better scenario

Choose a design that is appropriate for the audience. A clean, straightforward layout is best for [business presentations](#). Young children respond to presentations that are full of color and contain a variety of shapes.

5. Presentation Mistake #5 - Electrifying Color Choices

Audiences don't like unusual color combinations. Some are unsettling and red and green combos can't be differentiated by those with color blindness.

A better scenario

Good contrast with the background is essential to make your text easy to read.

Dark text on a light background is best. Off white or light beige is easier on the eyes than the typical white. Dark backgrounds are very effective, if the text is light for easy reading.

Patterned or textured backgrounds make text hard to read.

Keep the color scheme consistent.

6. Presentation Mistake #6 - Poor Font Choices

Small, script type fonts might look great when you are sitting 18 inches away from the monitor. You didn't consider the lady sitting 200 feet away from the screen who can't read them.

A better scenario

Stick to [easy to read fonts](#) such as Arial or Times New Roman. Avoid script type fonts which are hard to read on screen. Use no more than two different fonts - one for headings, another for content and no less than a 30 pt font so that people at the back of the room can read them easily.

7. Presentation Mistake #7 - Extraneous Photos and Graphs

You figured no one will notice that you didn't do much research on your topic if you add lots of photos and complicated looking graphs.

A better scenario

"Time is Money" is really true in today's world. No one wants to waste their time sitting through a presentation with no substance. Use photos, [charts](#) and diagrams *only* to emphasize key points of your presentation. They add a nice break to the material, and when used correctly, can only enhance your oral presentation. Illustrate, don't decorate.

8. Presentation Mistake #8 - W-A-Y Too Many Slides

Your vacation cruise was so fantastic that you took 500 photos, and put them all in a [digital photo album](#) to impress your friends. After the first 100 slides, snores were heard in the room.

A better scenario

Ensure your audience stays focused by keeping the number of slides to a minimum. 10 to 12 is plenty. Some concessions can be made for a photo album, since most pictures will be on screen for only a short time. Be kind though. Think how much *you* enjoy everyone else's vacation pictures!

9. Presentation Mistake #9 - Different Animations on Every Slide

You found all the really cool [animations](#) and sounds and used 85% of them in your presentation, to impress everyone with your flair. Except -- the audience doesn't know where to look, and have totally lost the message of your presentation.

A better scenario

Animations and [sounds](#), used well, can heighten interest, but don't distract the audience with too much of a good thing. Design your presentation with the "less is more" philosophy. Don't let your audience suffer from animation overload.

10. Presentation Mistake #10 - Hardware Malfunctions

The audience is settled. You are all set to start your presentation and - guess what? The projector doesn't work. You didn't bother to check it out earlier.

A better scenario

Check **all** the equipment and rehearse your presentation, using *this* projector long before your time to present. Carry an extra projector bulb. If possible, check the lighting in the room you will be presenting in, prior to your time in the limelight. Make sure you know how to dim the lights if the room is too bright.

Contact Details

If you have items of news or interest that you would like included in the Department of Physical and Earth Sciences newsletter, then contact **Tracy Casey** before noon on Thursdays at: tscasey@jsu.edu or phone (256) 782-5232.