

Grad Thesis SLAM

Preparation Series:

Slide Design & Presentation Skills

March 14, 2024



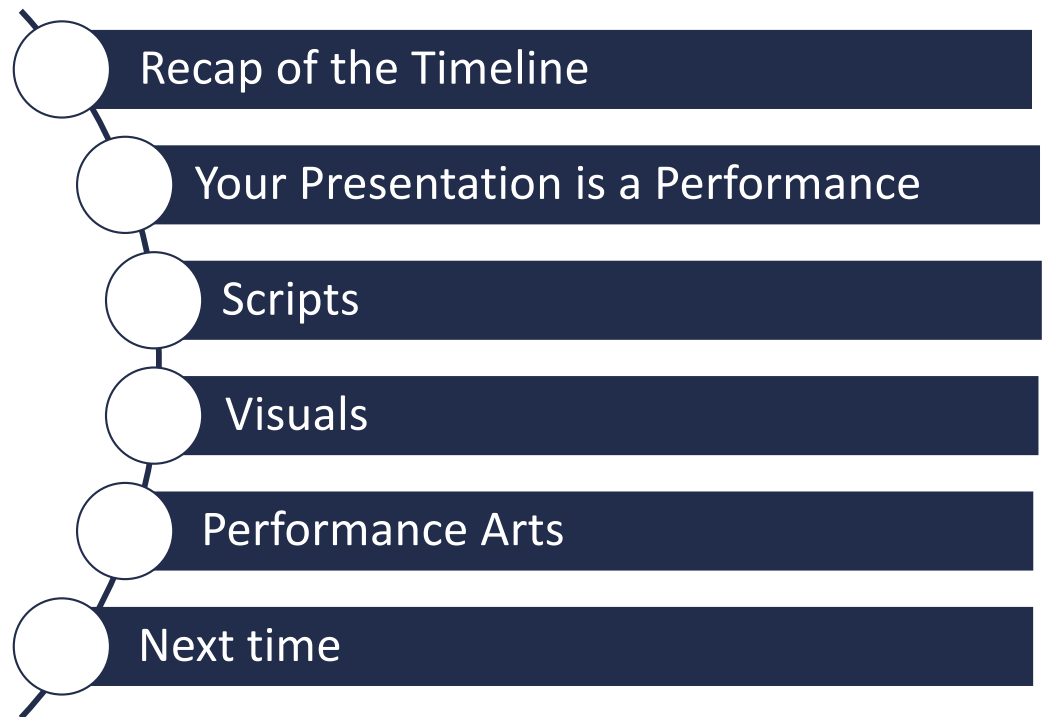
UNIVERSITY
of VIRGINIA

PhD**Plus**

Session Overview



PhD**Plus**



Timeline Recap

Session 3 | (Today)

- Outline your research story and draft a script.
 - Focus on your hook and takeaway message.
- Create or sketch out a rough of your slide.




Session 4 | (Mar. 21 or 22)

- Finalize your script and a solid draft of your slide.

Preliminary Competition | (Apr.1 – Apr. 5)

- Panels of judges will review presentations, provide constructive feedback to students, and select finalists.



| | | | | |
|-------------------------|--|----|--|--|
| 11 | 12 | 13 |  14 | 15 |
| 18 | 19 | 20 |  |  22 |
| 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 |
| Apr 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Preliminary Competition | | | | |
| 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 |
| 15 |  16 | 17 | 18 | 19 |

Timeline Recap

Good afternoon,


Thank you for registering for the [2024 Grad Thesis SLAM](#) and PhD Plus Preparation Series. We are writing to share the Preliminary Round competition sign-up—*completing the poll below is the next step for anyone who intends to compete in this year's competition.*

PRELIMINARY ROUND – SIGN UP NOW

The Preliminary Round will be held in person the week of April 1-5 in the New Cabell Hall French Conference Room (room 349). To sign up to compete, please complete the poll below. The cutoff deadline is Friday, March 22. However, we strongly encourage anyone planning to participate in this year's competition to fill out the **poll below by 12:00 noon on Tuesday, March 19.** We will begin matching participants with Preliminary Round sessions that afternoon. Completing the poll early will help ensure you get a presentation time that works well for your schedule.

Poll: <http://whenisgood.net/7zaye78>

Please note the deadline to fill out the poll and confirm your interest in participating in the Grad Thesis SLAM competition is 11:59 PM on Friday, March 22.

| | | | | |
|-------|--|----|--|--|
| 11 | 12 | 13 |  14 | 15 |
| 18 | 19 | 20 |  |  22 |
| 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 |
| Apr 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 |
| 15 |  16 | 17 | 18 | 19 |

How to Engage Your Audience

Reminders from last time.

1. Humans are curious by nature - engage that curiosity.
2. We remember and share experiences through stories.
3. It is easier to learn new information by building upon your current knowledge.
 - Connect what you do to the framework of knowledge and experiences of your audience.



From Last Session

- Brainstorm **story options** and other engaging **aspects** of your research (*your hook*) and test them with family or friends.
- Reflect on your **takeaway message**. What do you want the audience to walk away with?
- Refine your **outline**, applying story structure techniques discussed in Session 2.
- Start **drafting your slide**—bring your rough slide and ideas to share during Prep Series Session 3.



Performance

Remember that your Grad Thesis SLAM presentation is a combination of:

- Words (script & voice),
- Visuals (slide/prop), and
- Performance Arts (you/prop)

Think about how your words, slide, and physical actions all work together to tell your story.



Script



Two Different Approaches

Writing Out Your Speech

Impromptu Presentation

Make it engaging!
And PRACTICE!



Types of Jargon

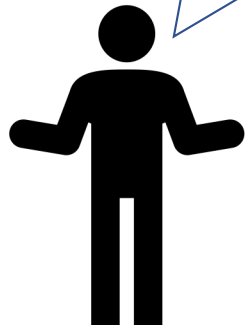
- Language specific to your field
- Common words with different meaning in context of your field
- Acronyms
- Technical terms (not "jargon," but use with caution)

Refers to a schema
your reader does
NOT share.

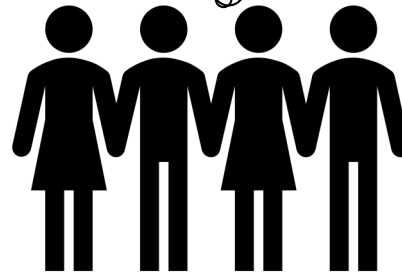


Jargon – The Problem

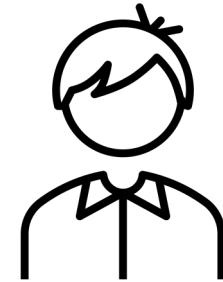
Parentheticals increase the spatial and textile volume of your prose, opening the breathing space for the reader and enlarging the referential sphere of your engagement with the material.



Ah yes,
well said!



Textile
volume?!



Written language and spoken language are different!

Hemingway Editor

[Hemingwayapp.com](https://hemingwayapp.com)

Hemingway App makes your writing bold and clear.

Shared decision making can help patients feel supported and empowered when deciding between healthcare options. Decision regret can be a meaningful measure of the quality of that encounter. However, in a patient-engaged research study examining shared decision making for breast cancer surgery, decision regret was a difficult construct to assess, and asking questions about decision regret caused the patient to experience that emotion upon reflection. In this article, we consider the complexity of decision regret, and discuss the difficulty of measuring that emotion through existing instruments. We call for clarity in definitions of decision regret and offer suggestions for developing a set of questions that can capture regret in a more meaningful way.

Hemingway Editor

Readability

Grade 15

Poor. Aim for 14.

Words: 129

Show More ▾

1 adverb, meeting the goal of 1 or fewer.

0 uses of passive voice. Nice work.

1 phrase has a simpler alternative.

0 of 7 sentences are hard to read.

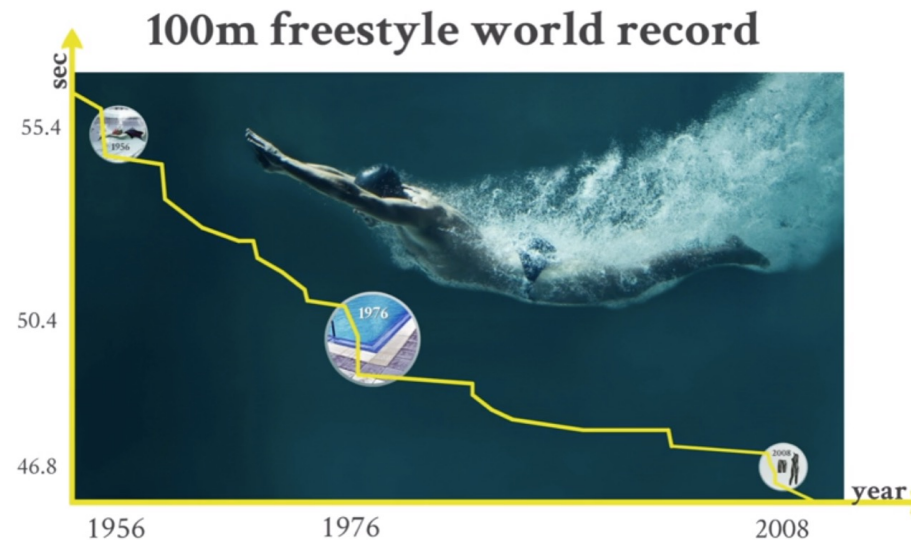
4 of 7 sentences are very hard to read.

A better way to create Visuals & Slides

Words paired with visuals can help improve retention.

But be careful...

- We can't multitask. Introduce new concepts sequentially, one at a time.
- Changing visuals is distracting. Give us time to process that information.



Reminder - Presentation Guidelines

Slides, Props & Media

- A single PowerPoint slide is permitted, but not absolutely required.
- Animations are allowed, but limited to those available in PowerPoint. (Use sparingly!)
- Video and audio are allowed, but must not exceed **15 seconds**.
- You can use props. However, it should be necessary to explain the research and must be approved in advance by event organizers.
- Each presentation starts with a title slide, which does not count toward your time limit (template will be provided).

<https://phdplus.virginia.edu/2023-grad-thesis-slam>

A Better Path to Slide Design

- Remember “hook” and takeaway message.
 - What 1 or 2 things (max) do you need to help tell your story?
- ONLY include what you need to tell story.
- Draft script and slide at the same time so they complement each other.





Slide Design Best Practices

- Make the *most important content* the *biggest*
- Use 5 objects or fewer on your slide
- Replace text with visuals (image, chart, table, etc.)
- Design the slide to support what you're saying, but "don't include the exact same text on the slide and then read directly off of the screen."
 - Use animation sparingly and strategically.

Meltem Yucel - 2020 UVA 3MT Finalist



Visual captures central point of the talk -
"fairness in childhood development
studies."


www.youtube.com/watch?v=f6qD0We7WZs

Rachelle Turiello – 2023 UVA 3MT Finalist




<https://youtu.be/d77Wggh2qY0>

Official DNA Sketch



Suspect



Actual Photo

Hair Color
Reddish (99.0% Confidence)

Age: ?

Skin Color

Sex: Male ♂

Photo gets attention and includes the presenter.

The font is large, but yellow text can be hard to read on a brown background.

Brynn Cook - 2018 UVA 3MT Finalist

2018 UVA Three Minute Thesis Finalist: Brynn Cook
Max Planck Institute for Chemical Ecology

Pollination and Pollution: does ozone degrade plant-pollinator communication?

Watch later Share

1. Production of floral signals and rewards

2. Floral Scent

3. Detection of scents on antenna

Ozone

Ozone

Ozone

Insect L

0:48

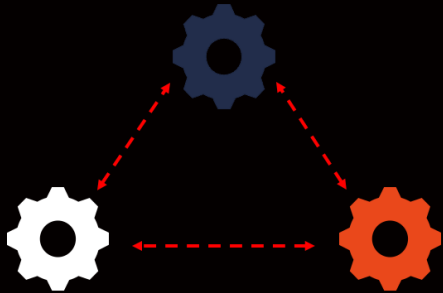
No clear focal point.

Difficult to decipher slide and listen to talk simultaneously.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-fTIJNfxn-Q>

Abigail Graham – 2023 UVA 3MT Finalist

1 in 6



1 in 600



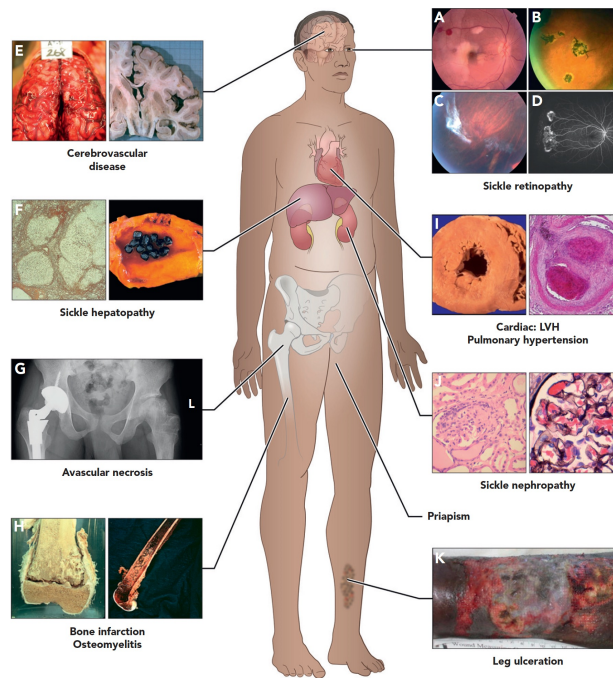
Large “statistics” that visually communicate takeaway message (changing 1 in 6 to 1 in 600).

Gears represent complex biological processes occurring in the brain.

https://youtu.be/5_f_sPlw-dA

What about these images?

Some images may unconsciously make your audience uncomfortable.





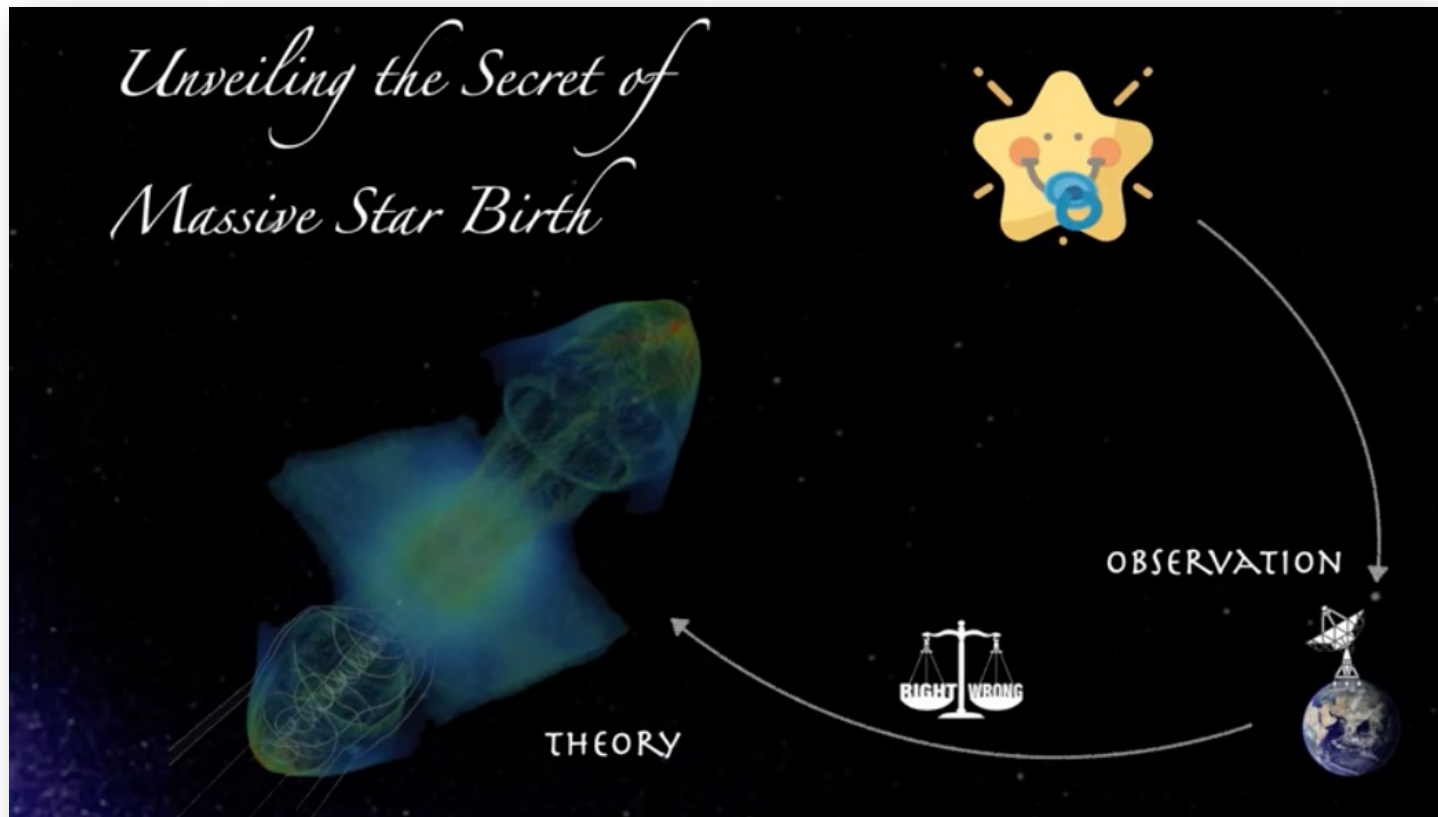
Focal Point

Anchi Tsuei – 2019 UVA 3MT Finalist

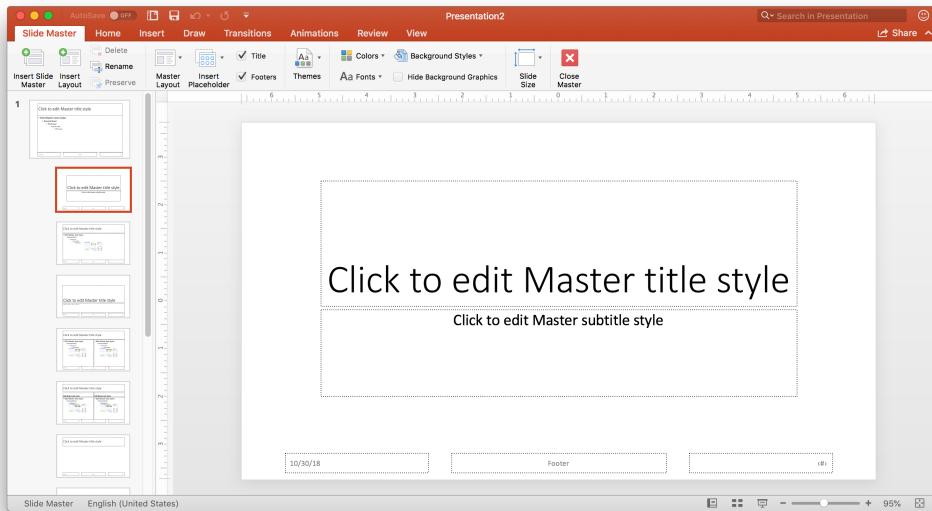


https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_cV8iFH5BDU

Mengyao Liu – 2019 UVA 3MT Finalist



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XEJnk2rU5ql>



Arial
Avenir
Calibri
Helvetica
Myriad
Verdana

Color, Font and Style Matter

- Easy to read 40pt
- Sans-serif fonts
- Use compatible colors
- Consistent look and feel

Accessibility Considerations

PowerPoint's closed captions will be on during presentations.

Reminder – Judging Criteria Includes:

- Were all elements accessible to a broad audience?
- Were all graphics, props, and text easy to view and interpret?
- If used, were sound elements clearly audible and video clearly visible?



Using Animations

- Have a purpose.
- Remember that animations are distracting.
- Call our attention to new information.
- Animations that basically create a whole new slide are not allowed.





How do we plan for climate change with the intention of environmental justice?

Consider...

1. Urban Heat
2. Historical Inequities
3. Gentrification



2050
sea level

2030
sea level

Performance



Stage Fright

Physiological responses to fear or anticipation

It can manifest as:

- Rapid heart rate
- Nervous fidgeting or not moving
- Forgetting your lines
- Shakey voice and/or hands
- Feeling tense
- Sweating
- Lightheadedness
- etc.

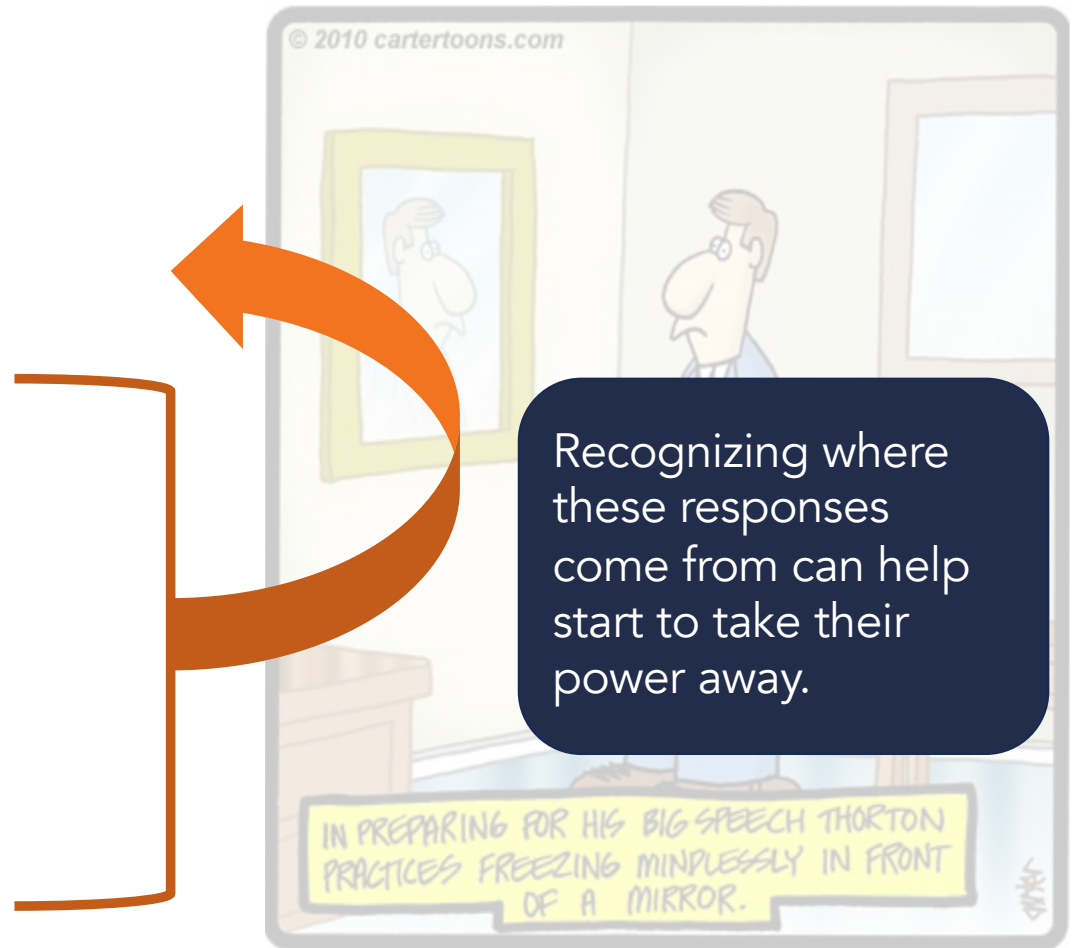


Stage Fright

Physiological responses to fear or anticipation

It can manifest as:

- Rapid heart rate
- Nervous fidgeting or not moving
- Forgetting your lines
- Shakey voice and/or hands
- Feeling tense
- Sweating
- Lightheadedness
- etc.



Stage Fright

- Practice = *Awareness*
- Awareness = *Control*
- Control = *Confidence*



Overcoming Stage Fright

- Recognize and acknowledge your physiological responses
- Take a few deep breaths and focus on a slow breathing pace
- Smile, talk to people beforehand
- Find a champion in the audience
- PRACTICE! PRACTICE! PRACTICE AGAIN!



Aspects of Performance

Body Language

- Stance
- Hand Gestures
- Eye Contact

Vocal Quality

- Speaking Pace and Pauses
- Articulation
- Volume

Confidence and Energy

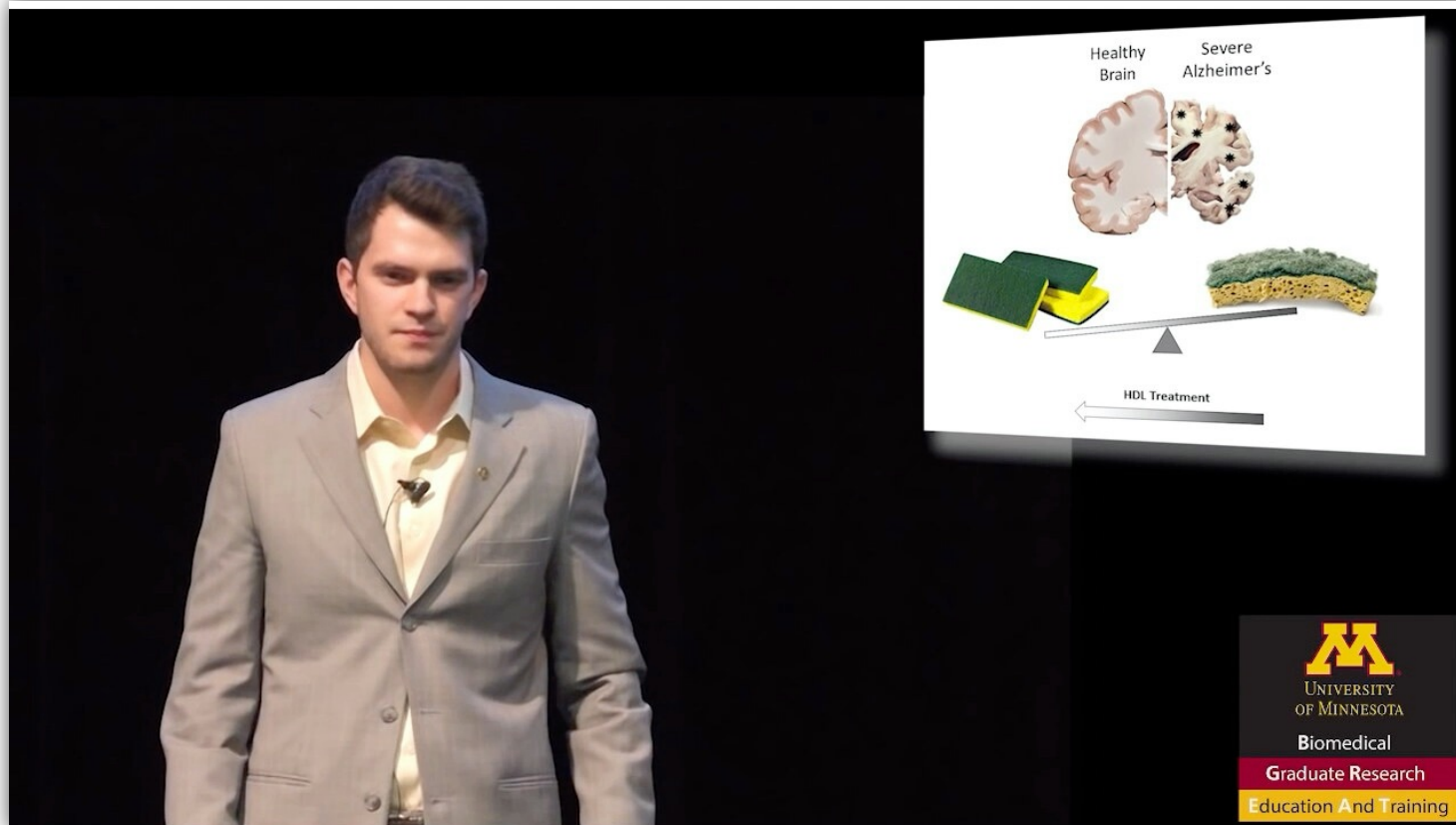


Stance

- Open
- Good Posture
- Grounded



Hand Gestures and Eye Contact



Vocal Quality

- Speaking Pace and Pauses
- Articulation
- Volume



PRACTICE(!) & Record Yourself

Pay attention to your:

Body Language

- Stance
- Hand Gestures
- Eye Contact

Vocal Quality

- Speaking Pace and Pauses
- Articulation
- Volume

Confidence and Energy



Questions?

Before Next Time

- Finalize your story—connect your “hook” to your takeaway message.
- Finish designing your slide, and any videos, audio, animations, or props.
 - Email us your request to use a prop, if you are planning to do so during the competition.
- Practice your presentation. You should have a solid 75% version and be close to 3 mins.

SIGN UP FOR THE COMPETITION TODAY!

