Guidelines for Proposal Presentation

Schedule: Apr. 13–May 04, 11:15 a.m.–1:30 p.m. (plus 15-minute buffer at the end for unforeseen delays.) See class web page for individual time slots.

In this phase, which is the culmination of the work that you have been doing in CSci 8001–8002, you will make an in-class presentation of your research proposal. Your target audience will be primarily your classmates and yours truly. However, your advisor and/or other faculty members may also be present. (A invitation to attend the presentations will be sent to the faculty in early April.)

The goal of your presentation should be to describe the key elements of your research proposal in a way that is accessible and interesting to your audience. Your audience will consist of individuals with varying levels of knowledge about the area of your proposal, ranging from novice to expert, so your presentation should strive to find the sweet spot between being too high-level and overly technical. Keep in mind that you do not have to present every last detail from your proposal; focus on what is important and interesting.

You should structure your presentation (more or less) along the lines of your proposal, i.e., Introduction, Current status of knowledge, Proposed work, Timeline, and Conclusion. (If you cite any references, then incorporate them in an abbreviated fashion, directly into the above sections, not in a separate section; e.g., as [J. Doe et al., JACM 2017].)

Here are some additional points to keep in mind:

- Presentations should be made via computer only (not the whiteboard).

- Time limits: 12 minutes for the presentation plus 3 minutes for questions and transition between speakers. Please adhere to these limits so that the presentations stay on schedule. (For the same reason, audience questions will be held till the end.)

- Use pictures/diagrams to illustrate key ideas (“A picture is worth ...”). Be sparing with text; wherever possible, use key phrases, rather than full sentences, to paint a mental picture of the concept or idea you wish to convey. In particular, do not simply cut and paste chunks of text from your proposal and read these out in class. This is a sure path to a low score. Remember that your slides should reinforce what you say; they should not be a substitute for what you should be saying.

- As a rule of thumb, plan (roughly) on 1 slide for every 1-1.5 minutes, so a total of about 8-10 slides. Your mileage may vary, but at any rate you should not have so many slides that you have to rush through them (or worse, skip slides) to finish your presentation.

- Use fonts that are sized reasonably and are readable at a distance (typically, 28- to 32-point font for body-text, 36- to 40-point font for headings).

- Barring valid reasons (e.g., class/TA duties), everyone is expected to attend all presentations and participate actively.

Evaluation: The presentation is worth 10% of the grade. It will be evaluated for content, knowledge of subject matter, organization, clarity, conformance to time limits, and how questions are handled.