SPEECH PREPARATION

Step 1: What are you going to talk about? Answer the following questions. Referring to the Project pages previously completed might help.

1. How do your paper and project connect?

2. What emotions did you experience as you worked through the paper and project? (anger, excitement, pride, frustration)

3. What problems did you encounter? (money, time management, skill) Explain.

4. What personal growth did you gain from the paper and project?

5. What self-knowledge did you gain?

6. What knowledge of your topic did you gain?

7. How did the project affect your plans for your future? Explain.

8. What project advice would you pass on to next year's seniors?

Step 2: How am I going to say this? Use the answers to the questions above as references.

1. Organization – jot down your ideas on separate 3x5 cards and arrange them into an order that is logical and pleasing.

2. Slip blank cards into spaces where a visual aid is needed or would be appropriate.

3. Add blank cards for the introduction and conclusion.

4. If you have a project that can be displayed, jot down your ideas for that display on another card, i.e. photographs.

5. Plan your introduction. The introduction should:

   a. grab the audience's attention
   b. make the topic thesis clear (be sure to mention both paper and project)
   c. take no more than 60 seconds

   **Consider using quotations, readings, dramatics, jokes, surveys, or other audience participation sets, games, audio-visual devices, demonstrations, or questions.

6. Plan your conclusion. A good conclusion should:

   a. restate topic/thesis
   b. leave the audience thinking
   c. take no more than 30 seconds

7. Plan the display of your project. Will it be an on-going, integral part of your speech, such as a slide show? Part of your introduction? Happen after your conclusion? Will you wear it? Sit on it? Serve up samples?

   ***Avoid passing items during your speech – this causes too much distraction.

8. Plan your visual aids.

9. Make sure your advisor knows what equipment you will need.

10. Look at each idea card and fill in details, colorful anecdotes, and factual information.

11. Place all cards back in order and begin practicing your speech.

Step 3: Speech techniques to remember:

1. Eye contact – This is extremely important. Practice often enough so that you rarely need to look at your cards. Remember this is a friendly audience. Your peers and your Senior Project Review Board are pulling for you. You need the reinforcement that their encouraging expressions will give you. Look at them. True communication happens with the eyes. A speech without eye contact is only half a speech.

2. Posture – Stand proud. You have a right to be. You have accomplished a great deal.
   Avoid:
   a. Gripping the podium – white knuckles are unattractive.
   b. Locking your knees – you've come too far to faint now.
   c. Twitching, wiggling, shaking.
   You want your audience to pay attention to what you are saying.

3. Voice – your voice needs to :
   a. Be loud enough to be heard.
   b. Vary appropriately in pitch and tone.

4. Gesture – Use your hands to help make your point. Gestures should be natural and spontaneous, not choreographed and mechanical.

5. Props – Plan and practice using any props you will need.

Step 4: Prepare for questions. Of course, there is no way to know for sure what the panel members will ask you, but you can make some educated guesses and that process will provide you with the confidence and clear-headedness to take on any queries. Answer the following brainstorm questions:

1. If you were a judge listening to your speech, what would you want to know?

2. What would you like people to ask?

3. What unusual qualities does your project have that might spark interest?

4. What part of your paper might make people curious?

5. What controversial topics, if any, do you touch on?

6. What possessed you to choose this topic?

7. Who helped?

8. How did you finance it?

9. How much time did you spend?

10. Does the project double as credit for another class?