

## **Autism Seminar – Guide to building a presentation**

You will be asked to present a scientific paper in each semester. Your goal is to summarize the main findings and/or ideas presented in the paper as clearly as possible in 30 minutes. This requires finding the right balance between 1) giving enough background and information so that students will understand the main points in the paper, and 2) not getting lost in too many details.

The talk and slides can be in Hebrew or English.

When you build your presentation focus on the following issues:

- 1) Start with general statements – Why is the paper interesting? What is the main goal of the authors? What is the focus of the paper? What are they trying to prove? How will this help autism research?
- 2) If the paper uses a certain methodology (e.g., DTI, genetic sequencing), spend a few minutes explaining the methodology in general terms. Do not get lost in the details, but try to explain the advantages and weaknesses of the methodology. For example, does the methodology they are using require a lot of subjects? Why? Is it expensive? Do many people do this kind of research?
- 3) Introduce the particular hypothesis and/or theory that the paper focuses on. What was the research question?
- 4) Describe what the authors actually did. If your paper describes an experiment, explain how the authors tested their hypothesis and what were the results? If your paper is a review, summarize the studies that are being discussed (why do the authors think that these studies support their theory?). This part is a little tricky. You want to describe enough details so that the students can understand the paper, but not too many details, which will make your presentation boring. You can focus on the critical details and leave out the details that are not necessary for the main point of the paper.
- 5) Explain the conclusions of the paper. Why are these conclusions interesting?

Tips for building your power-point slides:

- 1) DO NOT WRITE LOTS OF TEXT!!! The slides should contain graphical elements that help you explain your point. They should not contain the actual text that you are

saying. There is nothing more boring than listening to someone read text from a slide. The most interesting presentations are those with minimal text.

- 2) Show lots of figures, pictures, and videos that help explain your point. Having a graphical display of experimental results is extremely helpful. Show all of the figures that are in your paper and search for helpful figures/movies online.

General presentation tips:

Many of us find it difficult to stand in front of a class and talk.

This is absolutely natural!

The best thing you can do in order to improve your presentation skills is to practice your talk at home. Stand in front of a mirror and give the talk to yourself a few times. Make sure that you are not exceeding the 30 minute time limit. You will notice that you become more fluent, focused, and easygoing, the more you practice. Then give the talk to a friend.