

CE 507 – CCE Graduate Seminar
Spring 2012

Time: Wednesday 4:00 – 4:50 PM

Location: 312 Kearney

Instructor: David F. Hill, Associate Professor, CCE

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Overview: This is the third course in the 3-course CCE Graduate Seminar sequence. The purpose of this portion of the seminar is to provide graduate students with an opportunity to test and improve their skills for orally presenting their research results (i.e. oral technical communication). This course is intended for graduate students in their first year and is required for all MS and PhD students in CCE.

Course Grading: Grading is P/F, there will be three assignments during the term: (i) the writing of an abstract on your graduate research topic, (ii) one short oral presentation (8-10 min; similar to many professional conferences) on your graduate research, and (iii) a poster presentation of your research during the last week of the term. The poster session will serve as the final exam for this course. Class participation will also be monitored. Examples of class participation include: (i) asking relevant questions after presentations, (ii) providing evaluation and feedback after presentations, and (iii) class attendance. A maximum of 1 absence is allowed during the term.

Final Exam Poster Session: Tuesday, June 7th 3-5pm

Abstract Assignment

In the Winter Seminar, you learned about paper / report abstracts. Typical length, content, etc. You also spent some time analyzing abstracts from your journal of choice. Your first assignment will be to draft an abstract on your graduate research project. For most of you, you have just begun your research project, so you will not have detailed results yet. That is fine; in this case your abstract will be a bit more 'speculative' about what you hope to find. To give you just one example, below I reproduce the abstract from the most recent paper I wrote:

[snip]

Estimates of coastal freshwater discharge into the Gulf of Alaska are necessary for a variety of stakeholders. Freshwater fluxes play a role in controlling nearshore salinity and temperature fields and resultant circulations. These abiotic parameters, in turn, are part of the foundation for understanding observed biological patterns. Discharge estimates require high-resolution meteorological information such as precipitation and temperature as input. High-resolution grids of these parameters on a monthly time scale have recently been produced as part of an ongoing study of the discharge into the Gulf. Extensive weather station time-series data have been synthesized with existing climatological norms to produce these grids. Generated results over a 50 year period demonstrate strong annual and inter-annual variability in conditions. The precipitation estimates are overlaid on the three principal watersheds of Alaska (Gulf, Bering Sea, Arctic Ocean) in order to provide an 'upper bound' on the water available for runoff into those water bodies. The results are favorably compared to other recent estimates of precipitation and temperature and the dataset serves as a valuable resource for hydrological studies of the state.

[snip]

Your abstract is due to me the Monday before your presentation (see below). I will distribute it to the class for background reading prior to your presentation. I will also mark / grade your abstract for clarity and usefulness.

Oral Presentation Assignment

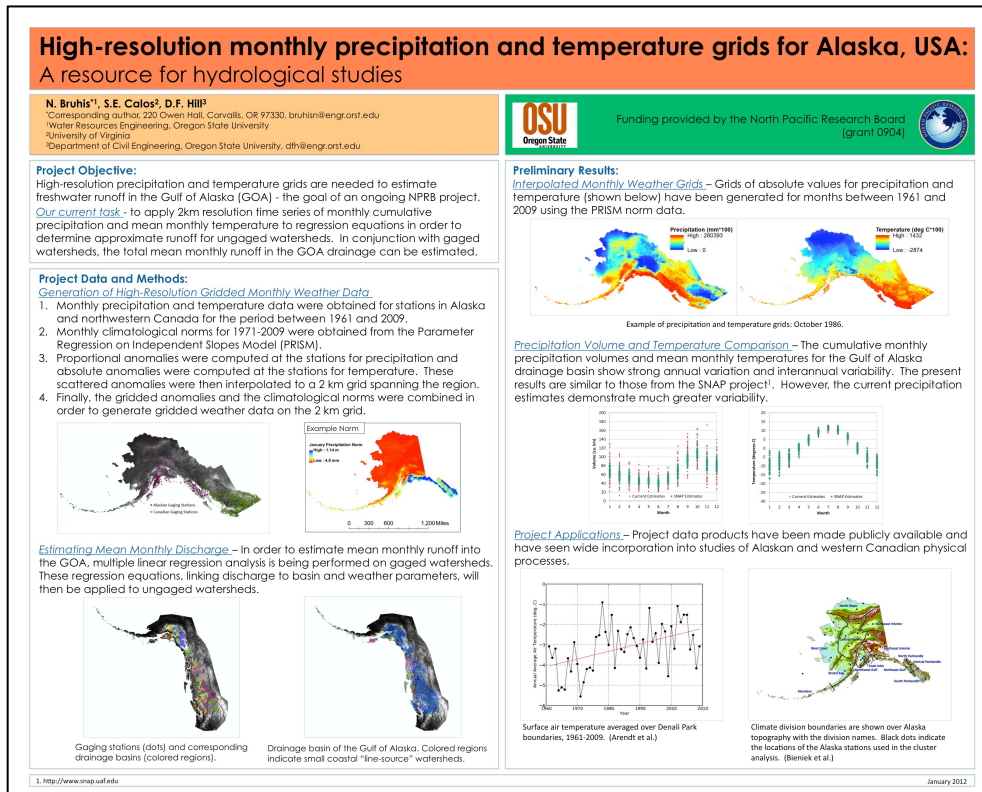
Oral presentations at professional conferences, workshops, or seminars are your premier opportunity for sharing your work with others and conveying to them the value of your work. Yes, they can read the paper, but an oral presentation provides you with the chance to add enthusiasm, additional context, and a 'personal touch' to your work. A good presentation will be long remembered. A poor presentation will also be long remembered, unfortunately. The first week of term, we will review the dos / donts of oral presentations. In the following weeks, we will have four student presentations per week. We MAY need to schedule one additional session near the end of the term to fit everyone in. Your assignment is as follows:

1. Get the date of your presentation from the calendar (see below)
2. Create a powerpoint presentation based upon your research project. Again, many of you will not have 'results' yet, but you can at least scope out the background, anticipated methods, and anticipated results.
3. Plan on speaking for 8-10 minutes. I will STOP you at 10 minutes, no exceptions. Conferences are like this; a moderator is charged with keeping things on time and some conferences use a system a green / yellow / red lights to keep you on time. From the time that you begin, I will give you a 'two minute warning' at the 8 minute mark. At the 10 minute mark, I will ask you to stop talking.
4. Plan on a 2-3 minute Q&A session. During this question period, the next speaker will be setting up at the podium.
5. One week after your talk, I will send you a summary of the Peer Evaluations of your presentation. Two weeks after your talk you will need to submit a self-critique in which you provide comments on how you will improve your talk for the future.

Poster Presentation Assignment

In addition to oral presentations, conferences often have ‘poster sessions,’ due, in part, to the limited slots that can be made available for oral presentations. A typical poster session takes place in a large hall with tens to hundreds of posters set up in rows. During the time set aside for the poster session, the posters are ‘hosted’ by their authors and other conference attendees circulate through, often stopping to ask questions. Poster sessions are excellent for one-on-one discussions and often lead to new professional contacts and connections. Posters are usually about 3’ high and 4’ wide. Keys to creating good posters include appealing layout and graphics, not too much text (keep it large enough that it can be read) and clear objectives, methods, results, and (optional) discussion / synthesis. As a point of context, I reproduce one of my recent posters below (too small to read, of course).

We will have a poster session during the last week of class. Your poster (.ppt file) will be due to me Friday, June 1st (NO exceptions), in order to allow ample time for printing. We will set up our posters in the atrium of Kearney Hall. You will be responsible for ‘hosting’ your poster during one hour of the session and acting as a ‘conference attendee’ during the other hour, circulating among your colleagues’ posters, asking questions, etc. See time slot assignments below.



Poster Presentation Schedule

Student Name	Degree	Focus Area	Poster Time Slot
Adami, Nasim	Masters	Geotech	4-5pm
Al-Aukaily, Alabbas Fadhil	Doctoral	Structures	4-5pm
Alldritt, Kenton Charles	Masters	Structures	3-4pm
Blackmar, Philip James	Masters	Coastal	3-4pm
Chen, Jiaming	Masters	Structures	4-5pm
Chen, Min	Masters	Structures	3-4pm
Chen, Ming	Masters	CEM	3-4pm
Conner, Jeremy Chad	Masters	Geomatics	3-4pm
Dharmadasa, Uma Kavya	Masters	CEM	4-5pm
Gifford-Miears, Christopher	Masters	WRE	3-4pm
Gomez Cunya, Luis Angel	Masters	WRE	4-5pm
Goodall, Eric Christopher	Masters	Structures	4-5pm
Islam, Mohammad Rabiul	Doctoral	Transpo	3-4pm
Kalmbacher, Kirk D	Masters	Coastal	4-5pm
Keen, Adam Steven	Doctoral	Coastal	3-4pm
Kelley, Andrew Joseph	Masters	Structures	3-4pm
King, David Thomas	Masters	Structures	4-5pm
Ko, Harrison Tse-Shuan	Doctoral	Coastal	4-5pm
Li, Chang	Doctoral	CEM	3-4pm
Long, Yicheng	Masters	Structures	3-4pm
Mahmoudabadi, Hamid	Doctoral	Geomatics	4-5pm
Marnell, Patrick Stanley	Masters	Transpo	4-5pm
McNatt, James Cameron	Masters	Coastal	3-4pm
Moghaddam Vahed, Ali	Masters	CEM	4-5pm
Mohtat, Ali	Doctoral	Coastal	4-5pm
Owokoniran, Quadri			3-4pm
Park, Hyoungsu	Doctoral	Coastal	3-4pm
Phaksopa, Jitraporn	Doctoral	Coastal	4-5pm
Pflaum, Therese M	Masters	Structures	3-4pm
Prasittisopin, Lapyote			3-4pm
Roholt, Ian Michael	Masters	Transpo	3-4pm
Romney, Kyle T	Masters	Geotech	3-4pm
Santhana Mahalingam, Santha			4-5pm
Schoeman, Hendrik Andries	Masters	Coastal	4-5pm
Sharifi Mood, Mahyar	Doctoral	Geomatics	3-4pm
Swake, Joshua	Masters	Transpo	4-5pm
Valverde, Rachelle	Masters	WRE	4-5pm
White, William Schaffer	Masters	Geotech	4-5pm
Wiebe, Dane Michael	Masters	Coastal	3-4pm
Wu, Wei-Cheng	Doctoral	Coastal	4-5pm

Peer Evaluation Form (DRAFT VERSION)

Speaker Name: _____

Presentation Topic: _____

1. Subject. Was the presentation informative? Did it have a clear focus? Was it well researched?

1 . . . 2 . . . 3 . . . 4 . . . 5 . . . 6 . . . 7
poor outstanding

2. Organization/Clarity. Was it easy to follow? Was there a clear introduction and conclusion?

1 . . . 2 . . . 3 . . . 4 . . . 5 . . . 6 . . . 7
poor outstanding

3. Preparation. Had the speaker rehearsed? Was s/he in control of the sequence, pacing and flow of the presentation? Did s/he make effective use of notes, without relying on them too heavily?

1 . . . 2 . . . 3 . . . 4 . . . 5 . . . 6 . . . 7
poor outstanding

4. Sensitivity to audience. Did the speaker maintain eye contact with all members of the class? Did s/he make effective use of pauses, gestures, change in pace and pitch? Did s/he have effective body language?

1 . . . 2 . . . 3 . . . 4 . . . 5 . . . 6 . . . 7
poor outstanding

5. Visual aids. Did the speaker make effective use of presentation slides? Were they informative and visually appealing without being distracting?

1 . . . 2 . . . 3 . . . 4 . . . 5 . . . 6 . . . 7
poor outstanding

What was the BEST thing about this presentation?

What was the WEAKEST thing about this presentation?

Oral Presentation Schedule

Date	Speaker			
April 4	Instructor – Introduction to course			
April 11	Gifford-Mears, Christopher	Keen, Adam	Valverde, Rachel	McNatt, Cameron
April 17 ¹	Adami, Nasim	Islam, Mohammed	King, David	Li, Chang
April 25	Roholt, Ian	Mohtat, Ali	Pflaum, Therese	Sharifi Mood, Mahyar
May 2	Owokoniran, Quadri	Wu, Wei-Cheng	Wiebe, Dane	Park, Hyoungsu
May 9	Moghaddam Vahed, Ali	Mahmoudabadi, Hamid	Long, Yicheng	Kelley, Andrew
May 15 ²	Kalmbacher, Kirk	Goodall, Eric	Gomez, Luis	Dharmadasa, Uma
May 23	Conner, Jeremy	Chen, Ming	Blackmar, Philip	Alldritt, Kenton
May 29 ³	Chen, Min	Phaksopa, Jitraporn	Prasittisopan, Lapyote	Santhana Mahalingam, Santha Rubini
May 30	Al-Aukaily, Alabbas	Chen, Jiaming	Ko, Harrison	Marnell, Patrick
June 6	Romney, Kyle	Schoeman, Hendrik	Swake, Joshua	White, William
June 7 ⁴ 3-5 pm	Poster Session – All students			

¹ Note that this is on TUESDAY; same classroom, same time (this is a makeup session)

² Note that this is on TUESDAY; same classroom, same time (this is a makeup session)

³ Note that this is on TUESDAY; same classroom, same time (this is an EXTRA session)

⁴ This date may change (possibly into finals week) – stay tuned...