PowerPoint Guidelines
Committee on Curriculum and Academic Policy (CCAP)
January 2010

In February 2008, CCAP articulated four general principles for syllabi, one of which encouraged teachers to "utilize widely recognized standards for PowerPoint slides". Recent conversations with faculty and students have indicated that additional recommendations may be helpful to faculty as they prepare PowerPoint presentations. The following guidelines are the result of several months of discussion at CCAP and input from student leaders.

We encourage teachers to observe the following "best practices" when using PowerPoint:

- Provide a title for each slide.

- Use six or fewer lines of text per slide.

- Clearly state the learning objectives for the session (preferably early in the presentation; second slide is recommended).

- Include in your presentation fewer slides than the number of minutes in the session (e.g. ≤ 60 slides for a one-hour session).

Additional ideas:

- Use black text on white background when uploading slides to CourseWork, including in your printed syllabus, or otherwise providing hard copies to students.

- Consider using other presentation modalities (board, handouts, oral) if your material does not require high-resolution images; or use PowerPoint only for images (photos, slides, graphs) and supplement with written or oral text.

- Consider inviting your Teaching Assistants into the process of developing training materials, and ask for their unique student perspective.

- Access the resources provided by Educational Technology at http://med.stanford.edu/irrt/edtech/, including teaching support, handouts, and other helpful information for develoment of teaching materials and experiences.