TIPS FOR GIVING ORAL PRESENTATIONS:

1) Keep length to 10 minutes to allow for questions.

2) Acknowledge your faculty advisor and department, and any other individuals you worked with.

3) Try to look at and direct your talk to the **AUDIENCE** as much as possible, and look at your slides as little as you can (practice with your slides enables you to do this). It helps to consciously look at different parts of the audience, so everyone feels included.

4) Keep laser pointer use to a minimum, and only use it to point to important data on your slides. It can be irritating to the audience to have to watch the red spot jumping around.

5) The type on your slides should be HUGE, and there should be a minimum of text. This point can't be overstated. Try viewing your slides from the back of an auditorium, and you'll be surprised how difficult it is to read small type. A good rule of thumb is that type on a slide is big enough if it is readable when you hold the slide up to a light!

6) Avoid use of color in your slides unless you really know what you are doing. The very worst black and white slides are generally better than 75% of all colored slides. If you must use color, make your slides enough in advance to test them, because what looks good on the computer screen may be disastrous as a slide. A good compromise is to make black and white slides with a bit of colored text or graphics to liven things up.

7) You can only reasonably expect people to remember 2-5 things from your talk, so a conclusion slide with 12 points on it is worse than useless (they won't remember anything at all). If you have a few conclusions from the first part of your talk, it's OK to have a conclusion slide early on, provided that you make it clear that that this is what you are doing. Don't repeat these early conclusions at the end. It seems to work best to closely paraphrase the points in the order that they appear on the conclusion slide, but not to read them directly off the slide (reading off your slides can appear patronizing to the audience).

8) Most importantly, practice your talk enough times that you are very comfortable with it and can almost do it in your sleep. This will help you get the transitions and timing right. It's not a bad idea to write the whole text out (provided you don't end up reading from it), as this forces you to think about exactly what you want to say and to avoid saying things that waste time. It helps a lot to practice with someone who is not familiar with your work, because they will be in a position to tell you what is clear and what is not clear. The more you practice, the more you will be able to relax and really enjoy yourself during the talk.