

Short Form Colloquium Presentation Example

Duration: 30 minutes

Title: Helping students manage time and anxiety in the public speaking classroom; An applied semiotic approach.

Submitted by: *(removed for blind review)*

Presentation Description (for program):

This session explores how a background in web design, building small tools to solve specific problems, and an applied understanding of color as a communication signal, led to the development of the color-timer: a public speaking or presentation timing tool that replaces numeric countdowns with a gradual shift in color. Drawing on findings from a 158-student exploratory study, the presenter will share what worked, what didn't, and will explore a transferable framework instructors can use to identify classroom problems their own outside expertise is already equipped to solve.

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PROPOSAL QUESTIONS:

(1) What expertise or experience do you plan to highlight in your presentation?

Years working as a web designer and developer taught me many things, among them: a habit of building small, targeted tools to solve specific problems, and a working understanding of how color communicates information before a viewer consciously processes it.

(2) What specific theory, skill, or practice will you translate into pedagogical application?

Applied semiotics, the study of how signs and colors carry meaning, tells us color can convey status, urgency, or calm without a single word. I translated that principle into a physical build: a public speaking speech timer using only color, no numbers, to signal the passage of time.

(3) How can that specific theory, skill, or practice be used to improve or enhance teaching and learning?

In a self-conducted study of 158 students, nearly 60% said the timer improved their performance, rising to 71% among those who practiced with it beforehand. Anxiety results were mixed: about a third felt calmer, while others struggled to track the color shifts,

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including one student who was color blind. Taken together, the findings point to two forms of enhancement. First, a well-designed classroom tool can measurably improve performance and, for many students, ease anxiety around a stressful task. Second, and harder to quantify but visible throughout student comments, bringing in a solution inspired by real outside expertise builds trust: students see an instructor actively solving a problem for them, not just delivering content.