

Amy's Guide to Writing Good Talk Slides

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Here is some feedback Amy will always give about writing high-quality slides for talks. Check-off all of these items first before circulating a first draft of your talk! In fact, you can download a template for a talk (that complies with the OSU style guide), here: <https://osu.box.com/v/connolly-talk-template-ppt>

Things of Absolute Importance:

- ☐ If you are giving the talk on behalf of a collaboration, be sure that the author of the talk is “Your Name for the xxx Collaboration”. For example: “Amy Connolly for the ARA Collaboration”.
- ☐ Acknowledge your funding sources. A current list of funding sources is available on the last page of this guide. We have to report all of the “products” of the research grants at the end of every year, so this is essential.

Examples of appropriate ways to do these two things are given below in figure 1.

THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

ASKARYAN RADIO ARRAY

CCAPP

The Askaryan Radio Array: Overview and Recent Results

Carl Pfendner
for the ARA Collaboration
Ohio State University

Supported by NSF CAREER Award 1255557,
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APS April Meeting

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Figure 1: An example of an appropriate way to list talk authorship and cite funding, borrowed from Carl's 2017 APS April Meeting Talk.

Aesthetics:

- ☐ Slides should have minimal white space. Large amounts of white space means your plots or your words could be bigger and be easier to read for the audience.
- ☐ The font size should be the same on all slides, and as big as possible.
- ☐ Make axis labels/titles nice and big; they should be easy to see. Sometimes you should just paste over them in Power Point / Keynote with a textbox, which is easier than re-making a plot in ROOT. Use the same strategy to enlarge the numbers on the axis too if necessary.
- ☐ Lines in plots should be thick. Use different colors (red, blue, black, etc) and styles of lines (solid, dashed, dotted, etc) to make curves stand out from each other.
- ☐ Do not use yellow or lime green as colors on a slide. The colors do not show up on projectors well.
- ☐ Make sub-bullets a different color from the main bullets, and be consistent with your color scheme throughout.
- ☐ When changing the size of figures or photographs, be sure not to change the aspect ratio.

Content:

- ☐ There should be approximately one slide per minute of the talk, excluding the title slide. So a ten minute talk should have ~10 slides (or 11 including title), etc.
- ☐ All slides should have a slide number, except perhaps the title slide.
- ☐ Somewhere in the talk, usually the title slide and/or the summary slide, you should acknowledge the funding sources of your research.
- ☐ Give proper acknowledgement to publications or people responsible for any figures/pictures you use.
- ☐ Each slide should focus on one main idea; break up slides that contain more than that.
- ☐ Spectra are generally plotted on a log scale.
- ☐ Avoid words like "very" without quantifying.

Procedural:

- ☐ If you are giving a talk on behalf of a collaboration, send a draft to the collaboration in plenty of time for comments, say about 48 hours.
- ☐ If you are giving a talk on behalf of a collaboration, only show plots “approved” by the collaboration
- ☐ If you are giving a talk on behalf of a collaboration, be careful not to include personal opinions, or facts or materials that are not yet public

Current Group Funding:

Current as of April 10 2017. If you don’t know which funding source to credit, ask. Generally, you should always list Amy’s CAREER Award, and all of our supporting centers (OSC, CCAPP, Physics). The project you work for (ARA vs ANITA, etc) guide what other grant you should list.

Grants currently supporting the group:

- NSF Career Award 1255557
- NSF ARA Grant 1404266
- NSF Big Data Grant 1250720
- NASA ANITA-4 Grant NNX15AC20G
- US-Israel Binational Science Foundation Grant 2012077

Research centers currently supporting the group:

- OSU Center for Cosmology and Astroparticle Physics (CCAPP)
- OSU Department of Physics
- Ohio Supercomputer Center (OSC)