

STRATEGIES FOR CREATING EFFECTIVE PRESENTATIONS

There are a variety of tools and techniques you can use to create and deliver engaging course content to students. The following set of guidelines is intended to be a quick-start production guide with two goals:

- *To point you to high quality online tutorials that will teach you everything you need to know to produce your own multimedia course content*
- *To provide a list of general production best practices to keep in mind as you create your material*

STARTING FROM SCRATCH?

The following subscription-based websites will get you started with the fundamentals of audio, video, presentation and screencast production. Both contain high quality video tutorials, exercise files and in some cases, printable how-to guides:

- [Lynda.com](#): Available free at UT - click on the "sign in" button, and select the link "sign in with your organization portal" and enter "utexas.edu" in the field for URL portal, then login with your UTEID to access in-depth tutorials that include closed captioning, searchable transcripts, and exercise files.
- [Tutsplus+ Premium](#): \$19 monthly, this robust network of sites contains everything from screencasts to books on every imaginable topic in web design, development & video/audio/screencast production.

FUNDAMENTALS

- [Screencasting for the rest of us](#) - This great course takes absolute beginners through a simplified screencast production process.
- [Video Fundamentals](#) - This course from Tutsplus+ will teach you all the foundational concepts behind video production.
- [Audio Fundamentals](#) - This course from Tutsplus+ will teach you all the foundational concepts behind audio production.

SOFTWARE

- [Camtasia Essential Training](#) - This introductory level training from Lynda.com will help you set up, record, edit and publish a professional looking screencast for your course.
- [Adobe Premiere Pro CS6 Essential Training](#) - This intro level training from Lynda.com will teach you how to use the Adobe Premiere Pro software and get started editing your own videos.
- [The Complete Camtasia guide](#) to creating quality screencasts (Free) - This free resource from Camtasia provides training on their software.

GENERAL PRODUCTION BEST PRACTICES

LENGTH/DURATION

- When creating screencasts and videos, be mindful of the length/duration of your piece. Students are more likely to watch & re-watch a video when clarification is needed so feel free to maintain a fast pace and explain a concept once. Students also often scrub through a video at their own pace so don't feel as if you need to speak or present content at an unnaturally slow pace.
- Limiting your length also ensures ease of editing down the road - as you decide to amend your content, smaller videos and screencasts will be easier to manage when re-editing.
- Smaller videos/screencasts also take much less time to plan & produce and are easier for students to digest.



AESTHETIC CONSIDERATIONS

- Stay away from animations in presentations unless they specifically illustrate or reinforce concepts. Extraneous special effects can be distracting.
- When it makes sense to, use a variety of text, audio, images and animation to convey information.
- Use high quality images - if you don't have any originals, check stock photography websites and use approved, rights-managed images. One such site is Flickr's [Creative Commons](#), which also integrates nicely with the [Canvas LMS](#).

SLIDES

- You don't have to do away with traditional slides because they seem outdated - just be sure to use them in an effective way and they can still be a very powerful way to communicate information to large groups of students.
- Consider using bullet points instead of complete sentences. The audio accompanying the slides will provide the details. In addition, try to limit each slide to only one idea or concept.

PRE & POST-PRODUCTION RECOMMENDATIONS

- If it is helpful to you, consider writing a script or outline of the main points of your presentation beforehand. If you're shooting in a variety of locations, storyboarding your video will also help you and save time. Try to rehearse a few times before you get in front of the camera. Make sure to focus on audio quality - high quality audio is the single most important thing that will elevate the professionalism of your presentation.
- If you're just starting out, you may want to allot 20% more time than your original estimate for production-you may run into bugs or need to review how you present some concepts. As you continue producing, your workflow will quicken and you'll take much less time. Don't be discouraged.
- Request student feedback about the materials you produce and use it to improve your work.

THE NUMBERS

- Here are some statistics that will help you frame your thinking while you plan your videos. Keep in mind these are statistics on online video use in general and are not meant to be prescriptive in terms of your course assignments and content.
 - 19.4% of viewers abandon an [online video](#) after 10 seconds.
 - 44.1% of viewers abandon the same video after 60 seconds.
 - The average human sustained attention span is 20 minutes. For [online](#) videos, it seems to be about 60 seconds.
 - Despite the above statistics, online video use overall is [increasing considerably](#).

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- [The Complete Educause Guide](#) to creating engaging screencasts
- [BBC Active: Education Videos](#): 10 Ways to use them well

EXAMPLES

- [Ted.Ed](#) - Take a look at these [examples from TedEd](#) that combine concise, modular videos exploring specific concepts with prompts to "Think" and "Dig Deeper", allowing students to answer multiple choice and essay questions. The videos are also supplemented with additional resources to explore the concepts in greater detail. The videos vary in style, length and subject difficulty. The videos are on the higher end of the resource/quality spectrum but you can do similar things without a production team or expensive software.
- [OpenCulture](#) - This website aggregates a variety of instructional materials from disparate sources. The user interface isn't as friendly as some of other sites mentioned but does cover a lot of ground.

