

SCIENTIFIC SEMINAR SELF-CHECKLIST BEFORE PRESENTATION

Before presenting, can I answer “yes” to each question?

PURPOSE & AUDIENCE	Q?
• Can I state the single main point of my seminar in one sentence?	
• Have I explained why this audience should care and what problem is being addressed?	
• Is the background pitched at the audience’s level, with minimal jargon and abbreviations?	
• Does my opening give a concise title, my name, and the context needed to follow the story?	
STORY & STRUCTURE	
• Does the talk tell one coherent story: context → question → approach → results → meaning?	
• Are there only a few major sections, with explicit transitions and a logical flow?	
• Do I clearly state what I will prove early, and restate it at the end?	
• Does every slide and section advance the main point rather than a competing second story?	
SLIDE DESIGN	
• Does each slide communicate a main idea with brief prompts rather than paragraphs of text?	
• Are the titles of slides descriptive and not vague statements like “Results”?	
• Can the text be read from the back of the room: large, high contrast colors, consistent fonts, and little or no ALL CAPS?	
• Have I avoided crowding my slides with multiple (>2) figures?	
• Have I checked spelling, punctuation consistency, and slide numbering/total # of slides?	
DATA & EVIDENCE	
• Have I shown only enough data to establish the point—not everything I collected?	
• Do graphs/images have labeled axes, units, readable lines, and clear labels/legends?	
• Have I eliminated all large, dense tables of numbers from the presentation?	
• Are experimental and simulation data clearly distinguished?	
• Are equations limited to essential ones, large enough to read, with every term defined?	
• Have I cited every borrowed figure or data item and placed relevant references on the slide?	
DELIVERY & PRACTICE	
• Have I rehearsed aloud enough to sound natural (without reading a script) and timed myself to finish within the allotted time ?	
• Will I face the audience rather than the screen?	
CLOSING, Q&A & LOGISTICS	
• Does my conclusion provide 2-3 take-home messages and keep acknowledgments brief?	
• Do I have a clear final sentence that unmistakably signals I am done?	
• Do I thank the audience for their attention/the organizers for the opportunity to speak?	
• Can I answer briefly, ask for rephrasing, repeat questions for the room, and say “I don’t know” when appropriate?	

Your Name: _____

Your Signature: _____