One of the most important and underrated skills in an academic or professional environment is the presentation of one's work in public forums—and it is one that our department and discipline suffers from on any number of levels. This assignment is designed to offer a practice environment in which to hone these skills, and will hopefully build on your experiences in the previous History 738 course to develop something more finely-honed and capable of being used for a professional forum.

For our two meetings on Thursday, December 2, you will be giving an oral presentation of your research, which is to be conceived as a mock exercise for a future presentation of research in a public forum. I would suggest examining the guidelines for our own Graduate & Professional Students' Association Research Forum as a model template for this assignment, which will be held in March of 2011:

http://gpsa.unlv.edu/research%20forum.htm

You may also find the following web sites with tips for giving academic talks helpful (and, quite frankly, humorous). Others can be found online as well:

http://www.si.umich.edu/~pne/PDF/howtotalk.pdf
http://www.cs.berkeley.edu/~jrs/speaking.html

In the spirit of this advice, your oral presentation should adhere to these basic guidelines:

1) We will treat our class as individual panel presentations on our research topics of choice, and you will give a presentation based on the state of your research paper to date. Your talk should not exceed twenty (20) minutes in length, after which we will leave a question-and-answer and/or reflection period of ten (10) minutes.

2) Your presentation should include the use of visuals, preferably through the medium of PowerPoint (I can provide the setup/technology for this along the lines we have seen throughout the past year); critiquing this part of the presentation will also be part of the assignment.

3) Your classmates (and myself) will be given a form with which to evaluate and constructively critique your talk for the purpose of helping to improve your content, delivery, form, etc. A copy of this form is attached to this assignment so that you know what to expect as both presenter and evaluator. It should be noted that this form is roughly identical to the one that is used by the judges at the G&PSA Research Forum held every March.

4) One final note—if you are working on a continuation from your project in History 738, it is expected that you have made significant progress at this point from where you were four months previous. Make sure your new and improved presentation demonstrates that!
ORAL PRESENTATION EVALUATION FORM

PLEASE NOTE: THIS FORM WILL BE GIVEN TO THE PRESENTER AFTER THE EVENT TO PROVIDE FEEDBACK

Name of Presenter / Department:
Session:

Rate the presenter on each point listed below by using this scale:
Poor 1    Fair 2    Average 3    Good 4    Excellent 5

Content
______ Extent, clarity of coverage
______ Difficulty level of topic
______ Relevancy of topic
______ Familiarity of topic

Organization
______ Coherent, easy to follow
______ Concise, clear
______ Transitions used well
______ Purpose clearly stated
______ Gained audience interest and immediate attention
______ Identified the topic, defined scope of the presentation
______ Main points supported with details
______ Documented facts where necessary
______ Informative: knowledge was imparted
______ Clearly summarized; memorable
______ Responded well to questions

Delivery
______ Professional/confidence
______ Eye contact
______ Facial expressions/gestures
______ Voice inflection, speed, pace
______ Humorous, relaxed, enthusiastic
______ Timing
______ Used language well

Overall
1. What did you like most about this presentation?

2. Please suggest improvements.