Presentation Design Concepts:

1. Presentations are about communicating something from you to your audience. You start with two strikes against you: you are communicating a complicated topic and you have a limited amount of time. Therefore it is essential that you communicate effectively.

2. Use your slides to augment your spoken remarks. In some disciplines, a speaker can get by with no slides (e.g. the humanities). However, in the geosciences we can often communicate much more effectively with images (geological maps, strat columns, cross sections, data plots).

3. Think of your slides as maps. Every map has a few basic design elements (scale, north arrow, legend, etc.) that allow the reader to focus on what the map is depicting and not on these sorts of basic things.
   - *Title slide* with the presentation title, name of presenter and date
   - *Content slides* with a “sacred space” for the title, slide number, and other relevant info (course number, semester, etc). Only cede this ground to content on special occasions.
   - *References slide* with all of your references in alphabetical order by the first author’s last name.

4. Your audience will try to read every word you put on a slide. If there’s a lot of text, they may ignore whatever you are saying as they try to read everything.

5. There is a lot of white space, so don’t be afraid to make a graphic BIG (don’t cover the *sacred space*, of course).

6. Be mindful that small font sizes can be hard to read. Use 12 point as the minimum size and only use it sparingly (for citations). 24 is ideal. 36 is getting a little big.

7. Understand how to use the “crop” function to eliminate parts of a graphic that are not important. Also become familiar with the “Remove Background” function.

8. Avoid slides with only words or only images.

9. A good rule of thumb is to budget two minutes of talking per slide. In this presentation, I set the number of slides so you can’t get carried away. But when you are not limited formally, enforce this limit on yourself. I have seen people shoehorn 60 slides into 50 minutes and *each slide was up so briefly, I though it was a movie*. This is almost as offensive as going over your allotted time.

10. Because of the way we read books, your audience’s eyes will go to the upper left corner of your slide instinctively and then read from left to right. Put your most important information there.

11. Make sure you include a citation for every image you use that is not your own. Even free stuff from Wikipedia should have a citation. Generally, the audience will value your presentation more if you cite from primary sources (journals, books, etc) and academic websites (one ending in .edu) than Wikipedia.

12. If you show a regional map, indicate specific places of interest with a box or star.
Presentation Delivery Tips:
1. *Face the audience as much as possible.* They are here to see you and what you have to say. Plus the screen will absorb some of your voice, making you more difficult to hear.
2. *Practice, practice, practice* your presentation before you deliver it. Your audience will be able to tell if you didn’t.
3. If you can, try to *see what your slides will look like on the screen* before you give the presentation. This helps you correct for things are too light or too dark or images that may be fuzzy.
4. *Avoid apologizing for fuzzy images.* First of all, everything looks fuzzy when you are next to the screen and second, it let’s the audience know that you aren’t giving a presentation that meets your own standards.
5. Reminder: *budget 2 minutes per slide and don’t go over* your total allotted time—in fact, aim slightly under. In grad school, a seminar speaker talked for 90 minutes in a 50 minute time slot. How do you think his message was received? On the other hand, another speaker talked for 45 minutes in the 50 minute slot and the audience was springing from their seats afterwards to ask questions and discuss what he had presented.