Tips for Video Recording Oral Presentations
August 11, 2011

1. Use a tripod
   There is nothing worse then that “seasick” feeling when watch someone else’s video presentation that is moving around and taken by shaky hands. If you do not have a tripod, use a stack of books or a piece of furniture to hold your camera steady.

2. Camera placement
   Make sure if the presenter is moving around that you always have them in the shot. Make sure that the audience can be seen but is not a distraction. Ensure that the camera is not zoomed in too far in a tight shot. People have a tendency to move around and shift their weight while standing. Being zoomed in too far may risk them moving out of frame.

3. Audio
   Getting good audio is probably more important than getting good video. Most people can get beyond shaky or poorly light video, but if they can not understand the presenter then the recording is worthless. If possible, a separate microphone for the speaker is ideal. When audience members ask questions, if a separate microphone can be passed around this will help to pick up the audience questions. If no extra microphone is available, then the presenter should always remember to repeat the question. Built-in camera microphones should only be used as an extreme back up.

4. Lighting
   Use natural lighting if possible and make sure the room isn’t too dark. If you are using a projector screen keep enough light on the presenter so those reviewing the recording can still see them.

5. Power
   Running out of power for the camera can be avoided by setting up near a power outlet. Or if your camera runs on batteries, make sure the batteries are fully charged. Bring extra batteries with you as backup.

6. White Balance
   This is just as important as lighting. Most cameras will attempt to auto-white balance and have settings to that effect, usually labeled AWB or similar. Students should consult the manuals for their hardware on how to do this. Setting the white balance consists of taking something white as a reference (as white as possible, such as a sheet of paper and holding it up in the area the presenter will be speaking. Zoom in as close as possible so the camera sees nothing but white and then pressing the white balance button or whatever the camera manual says to use. This will set the color tone for the room so the video doesn’t end up with an overly bad tint of red, green or blue.
7. Recording duration
   Make sure that your camera and batteries are able to record for the duration of the presentation. If you use a memory card, make sure it is large enough to store your video. Take a practice video for the duration of your required presentation to see how large the file will be. Depending on the video compression of your camera the file size might range from 25 MB to 2500 MB.

8. PowerPoint slides or other visual aids
   Often presenters use multimedia tools such as showing a video on YouTube or displaying a PowerPoint or other document. This works well on a large projector screen for the live audience. The viewer of the recorded presentation doesn’t get the same benefit. This does not produce the same effect as viewing it in the room - the image will be washed out and text will be difficult to read. And moving the camera back and forth between the presenter and the projector screen can be distracting and give your viewer that “seasick” feeling. Keep the presenter as the focal point of the video recording and provide the slides or links to multi-media as attachments when posting the video presentation.

9. Plan in advance and have a back-up plan
   Arrive at your venue early enough to test the equipment. If possible, have a back-up plan for an additional camera, microphones, or projector screen. Ask someone to help be your technical support!

10. Permission
   It is assumed that by accepting your invitation to attend your presentation that your audience members have already been told that the presentation will be video recorded and that they may appear in your presentation which will be posted in your class for other students to review. You might want to remind them about this before the actual presentation begins.

If you are on or near the UAF campus you can use the UAF Speaking Center as a resource. They have presentation rooms and video equipment that you can reserve for a certain time. Please call 474-5470 or e-mail fyspeak@gmail.com to schedule an appointment at the Speaking Center. The Speaking Center is located in the Department of Communication on the fifth floor of Gruening. Go to Room 507 to meet with a Speaking Center coach. More information on the Communications Department website at http://www.uaf.edu/comm/.

References:
   Special thanks to Stephen Davis, Technology Specialist with UAF’S Campus Technology Services for assistance with compiling these tips.