Things Graduate Students Should Know and Do When Presenting in a Public School

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The most important thing is to communicate with the teacher (via email or phone) as soon as possible. A week or two before you are scheduled to come is best.

<u>Things to Ask the Teacher</u>

Is there internet access? Will I be able to get onto the internet with my computer (username and password), or should I plan on using yours?

Is there a projector that I can use with my computer?

Where can I park?

Is there a sign-in procedure for the school? (i.e. do I have to go to the main office first, do I need to bring a picture ID)

What class am I coming to (subject, grade level, learning level, how many students)?

What topics have you recently covered? (So to have an idea if the students have any background in the subject you are going to speak about).

How long will I have to present?

How many classes do you want me to talk with?

What do you want the students to get out of this? How does my coming fit in with your learning objectives/goals? What would you like me to present? Do you want more of an activity or a lecture?

What day and time do they want you there? Is there an alternative date (in case of weather, sickness, etc.)?

Am I allowed to take pictures, or have someone take pictures of me presenting? Since students are minors, there are many restrictions to protect their privacy.

Will students have computers to work on? Will they be sharing? (If applicable) What type of computers (pc or mac) do they have? Do you/they have ___ software? (Many schools do not have access to software that we think of as standard.)

Do you have ___ equipment? How many sets do you have? (If applicable)

<u>Things to Give to the Teacher</u>

A draft agenda with timing breakdown. Give it early enough so that the teacher can give feedback and you have time to adjust the schedule. Remember, the teacher hasn't seen your work or you present before, so you are a big unknown to them. Sending them a detailed agenda will show them that you have a plan and make them feel more comfortable about you being in the classroom.

A final agenda (including all the bits and pieces/notes to yourself). Even though the teacher won't be presenting, still consider them part of your team. That way there are no surprises. Also, if kids have any questions later on, a teacher has your notes to refer back to.

Any presentation material (Power Point) that the students will see. Again, it is a good resource for the teacher to have later on. Also, the teacher can provide you with good/needed feedback on whether the material is too basic, too hard or spot on for the student's learning level. They can also help you catch any jargon the students won't understand.

Handouts. This way the teacher can make the appropriate number of copies for their students.

Recommendations

Remember to have fun. Your enthusiasm will go a long way with the students.

Get a good night sleep and eat a hearty breakfast. You'll need all the energy you can store.

It is okay to let the teacher know if you can't do or provide something they ask for, whether is because of time or your expertise. If it is something they really want you can schedule another time to come back to the class to cover the information.

Don't forget to introduce yourself. Things students find interesting are where you are from, where you went to school, how you got into what you do, etc. Also think of this as a recruiting opportunity for the next generation of marine scientists, engineers, technicians and educators.

Time limits. If a teacher says you will only have 30 minutes, your presentation must fit in that time period. Schools run on a tight schedule. There is no bartering an extra minute to cover that one last slide. When the bell rings the students are out the door.

When making your schedule leave time a the beginning and the end for the teacher to cover class business (homework, announcements, etc.) with the students. I'd recommend 5 minutes on each end.

Also, everything usually takes longer than you expect. For example, asking 20 students to type in a certain url into the browser might actually take 3 minutes and not just 30 seconds. Take that into account when drafting your agenda.

Be flexible and always leave time and give opportunity for questions.

When performing an activity, don't move forward unless the majority of students can follow with you. Take time to help the individuals who are trailing behind, or ask your partner to do so. (Btw, teaching as a team can prove a lot easier than doing it on your own).

Practice your presentation. And practice again.

Wear comfortable shoes and clothes. Teachers stand most of the day. Your feet will thank you.

Have a backup plan in case your technology doesn't work (for what ever reason).