Tips for Creating Great Slide Shows
Role of the Session Leader

Why Use a Slideshow:
Many session leaders use a digital slideshow, like PowerPoint, to facilitate their presentations. A good slideshow reinforces the presenter's crucial ideas, clarifies the line of thinking, provides a display of relevant examples in a simple and powerful manner, and, generally, makes a presentation more memorable. Furthermore, digital slideshows are extremely easy to assemble and the 'drafting' process can help session leaders sharpen and organize their presentations as well as increase their topic's inherent audience appeal.

The Elements of a Computer Slideshow
For typical LLC class presentations, a good slideshow usually has three crucial components (not including the research and reading that usually *precede* the drafting of any presentation).

1. **Title slide**: This first slide should display a pithy, very short headline that captures the core subject and the central thesis of the presentation.

2. **Four-to-eight topical slides**: Each topical slide should capture one main idea in the presentation. For a typical twenty-minute presentation, there will not be time for more than eight slides, with each slide exhibiting a minimal amount of text, usually with a relevant photo or image. The sequence of these slides should be easy for viewers to anticipate, because the slide sequence should follow a discernable order: chronological order, narrative order, geographical order, or some other logical order.

3. **A summary slide**: One final slide should bring together and reinforce the main ideas in the presentation, perhaps in a bulleted list or a final short quotation from a source. Slideshow software comes loaded with formatted slides in dazzling colors and preset text boxes. These are "eye candy." Do not let eye candy substitute for good content. Have good content and take control of the options offered in the software, as follows.

Six Steps to a Great Slideshow:

1. **First do the research**, do the research and decide on the general ideas for the presentation. Also, check with the coordinator to make sure that the slideshow software is compatible with the technology in the classroom.

2. **Next make a "thin" outline**, First, put your main ideas into an easy-to-follow outline of four to eight elements. Then, reduce the words in this outline *to the least amount of words possible for each idea*. Use this reduced text for the four-to-eight topical slides.

3. **Now develop each topical slide**: Load the thin outline, one idea unit per slide, into a slideshow format, like PowerPoint. Check for the following features:

a. **Text and fonts**: Is the text on each slide large enough to be read easily from the back of the room? A font size of 28 points, at least, is a handy guide. Have you kept the same font from the beginning to the end of the show? Have you used black as text color? Black is the most readable text color on screen (unless the formatted slide provides an alternative readable color).

b. **Text copied from a source**: Have you avoided copying lines of text from a source onto a slide? *Never* copy and paste long quotes onto a slide. Such text is always unreadable, unless it is very short.

c. **Bulleted lists**: Can you make use of bulleted lists and various font styles (bold, italic, etc.), to clarify your message?

d. **Photos, pictures and images**: To enhance the impact of a slide, have you added visual content like a photo or an image? But remember the rule of thumb for visual content: Less is more. Use only the most relevant and clear photos, drawings or images.

4. **Draft your spoken notes**: As each reduced-text slide is developed, also draft a separate and parallel set of notes, explanations and comments. These notes can become the basis of the written and spoken texts that accompany the slide show.

5. **Add In Two More Slides**: Now develop the title and summary slides, following the same processes.

6. **Rehearsal time:** Once the slide show and the accompanying spoken text notes are complete, rehearse the presentation to make sure it fits within the timeframe and to feel comfortable handling the technology while making the presentation.