

Slide Graphics

CSCI 370 Activity

Agenda



1: Why?

Why is it so crucial to consider graphics?

2: How?

How do we create slide decks that are effective?

3: Practice

Let's give one of your slides a makeover!!!

WHY do we Care?

In the real world, you will often be asked to convey complex (*and sometimes dull*) topics **quickly and simply**

*This is also known as teaching and **teaching is hard!***

How do we teach in way people learn?



What is the Goal of a Slide Deck?

Presentations are meant to convey a topic, they are *presenting* knowledge to the viewers. **Your ultimate goal is to ensure that knowledge is absorbed!**

Your slide deck is NOT a substitute for your words

→ *Don't write every word you want to say!*

Your slide deck is NOT just talking points

→ *You need enough information to keep track of*

HOW Do we Make Effective Slides?

Theme

Theme choice and visuals are the easiest make or break

Formatting

How to balance content, graphics, and whitespace

Figures

Figures serve to either convey or to engage - sometimes both

A slide deck failing in any area will either be distracting or unengaging!

Theme

Consider:

- Color Scheme
- Font Choice
- Space usage
- Overall interest

*There are thousands of free themes
- don't use default themes!*

Avoid:

Many bright colors

Dark themes

Not enough contrast

Overly plain or complex

Small or Serif fonts

Large blocks of text

Excess whitespace



Theme Roast

Let's critique some themes!

I will show you a default slide theme from Google Slides.

You will raise your hand with a critique on any of the 4 areas:

COLOR, FONT, SPACE, INTEREST

** I did not change the formatting!*

Cooler Cucumbers

Here are my favorite cucumber varieties:

- Persian cucumbers
- Hot House
- Boston Pickling

Here are the best way to eat cucumbers:

- Pickles
- Pickles
- I love pickles



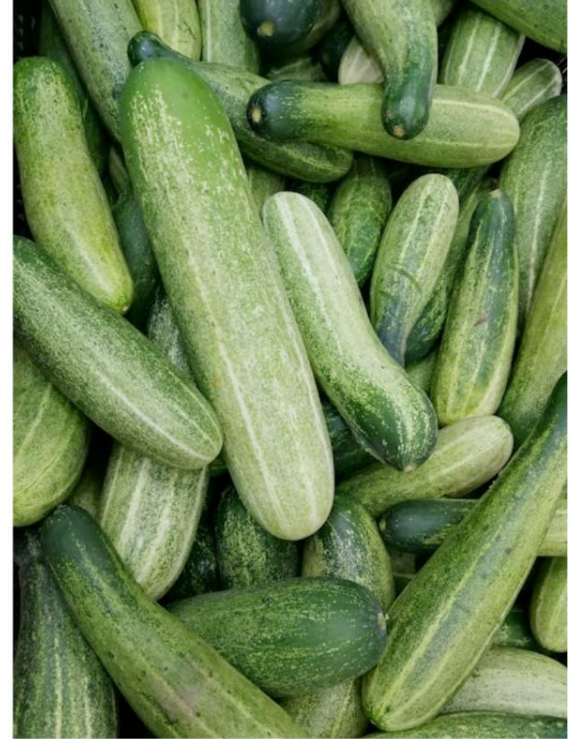
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Fun Fact: this theme is on the verge of ADA noncompliance



Theme FAQ

1. Do you like any of the default themes?

No!

2. What do I do if I mostly like the theme, but it is slightly off?

Fix it! You can edit themes directly

3. Can I have a theme that is creative and visually related to my project?

Yes! Just make sure the slides aren't too distracting

Formatting

Text Size

Can everyone
read your slide?
Implement font
hierarchy!

Text Amount

Enough to follow,
but not enough to
just read off of the
whole time

Text Placement

Do you have
enough
whitespace and
is it consistent?



Formatting Roast

Let's critique my slide!

I will show you a slide from this very presentation.

You will raise your hand with a critique on any of the 3 areas:

SIZE, AMOUNT, PLACEMENT

** Be as savage as you want!*

Theme

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Excess whitespace

Self-Burn, Those are Rare

1. Size

- Which is the title?
- Too irregular

2. Amount

- Too wordy, needs split up, too much to say

3. Placement

- Look at all that inconsistent spacing!

Theme

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- Overall interest

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Let's fix this slide!

Theme Considerations

→ Color Scheme

High contrast, check ADA

→ Font Choice

Simple and clean

→ Space Usage

Appropriate blocking

→ Overall Interest

Appealing, not distracting

Tip: There are thousands of free themes -
don't use default themes!

Theme Pitfalls

MAJOR

1. Not enough color contrast
2. Overly plain or complex visuals
3. Large blocks dedicated to text

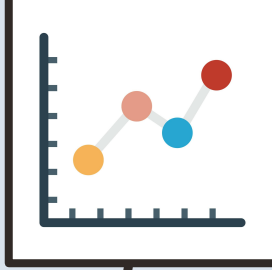
MINOR

1. Small or Serif fonts
2. Excess whitespace
3. Dark themes
4. Many bright colors
5. Image-centric

Formatting FAQ

1. Can I incorporate unique formatting between each slide?
Yes, I love when each slide feels unique (within reason)
2. Should I add slide transitions?
In my objective opinion, no
3. Do I put the presenters name on the bottom of each slide?
Yes! YES! A million times yes! (at least in this class)
4. How do I know if my slide has too much content?
If you are spending 3+ min on one slide, evaluate

Figures



Readability

Maximum
contrast, large
font

Purpose

Can be to engage or
to explain - ideally
both!

Complexity

Remember, you
are trying to
TEACH us

Readability

- **Large, Simple Font**
 - No serifs on figures!
- **Color Scheme**
 - Avoid dark themes
 - Prioritize high contrast
- **Figure Sizing**
 - Make everything BIG



Tip: Pretend your grandma is in the audience! Can she read your figure?

Purpose

ENGAGE

- Simple clip art
- Topical images
- Aesthetic filler

Tip: You DO NOT need a figure on every slide

EXPLAIN

- Graph
- Diagram
- Table

Tip: The figure should actually help viewers

Complexity

You are trying to *teach*, not *just run the clock!*

➔ **Break down large figures/topics**

- Show the whole, then each part, then the whole again now that they have context

➔ **Reference what you are currently discussing**

- Use your arms or a pointer to keep people on track

➔ **KISS - Keep it simple stupid**



Figure Roast

Let's pretend we are trying to explain the MechE flowchart!

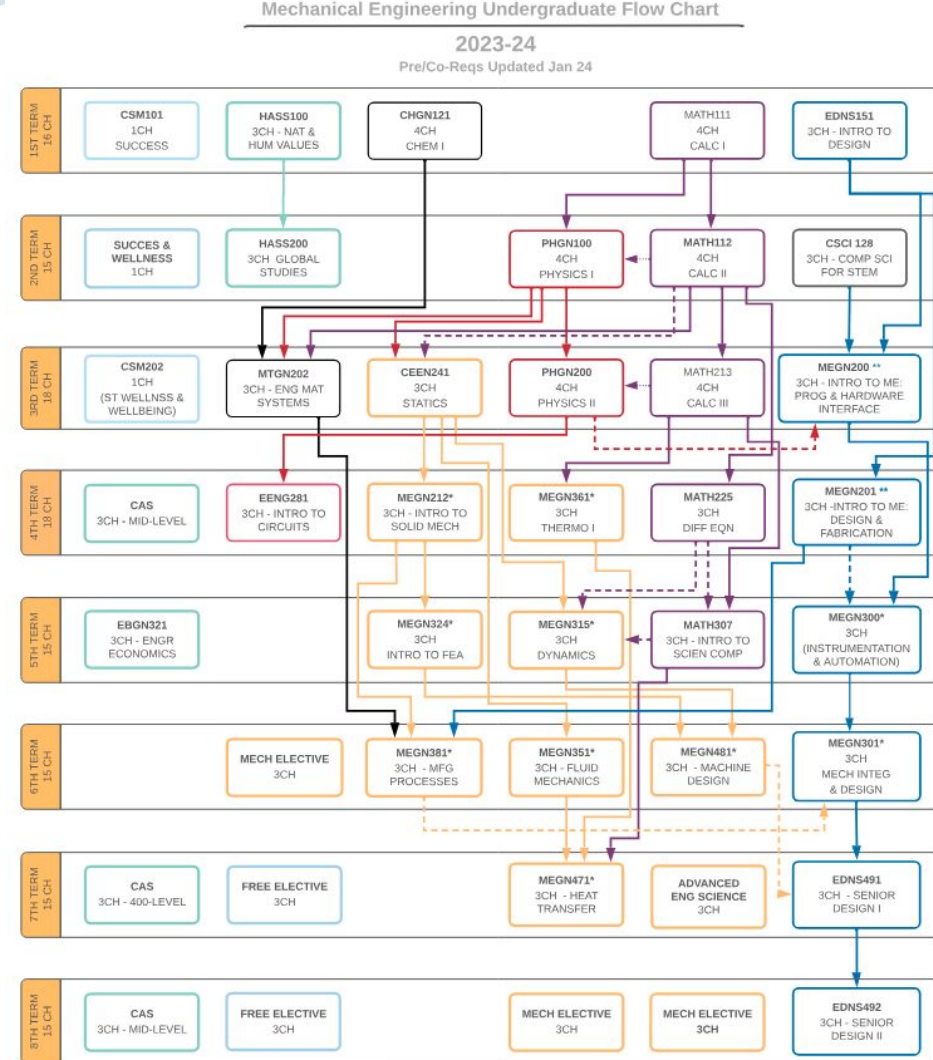
I will show you a slide

You will raise your hand with a critique on any of the 3 areas:

**READABILITY, PURPOSE,
COMPLEXITY**

MechE Flow

- **Year 1: Gen Eds**
Gen eds and maybe one or two MEGN courses
- **Year 2:**
Chemistry and MechE fundamental courses
- **Year 3:**
Advanced fundamentals
- **Year 4:**
Choose your own adventure



How can we fix this?

→ Readability

- Increase color contrast
- Add a color key

→ Complexity

- Discuss by year, break it up!
- Identify ways to simplify, maybe remove disconnected nodes from the main flow

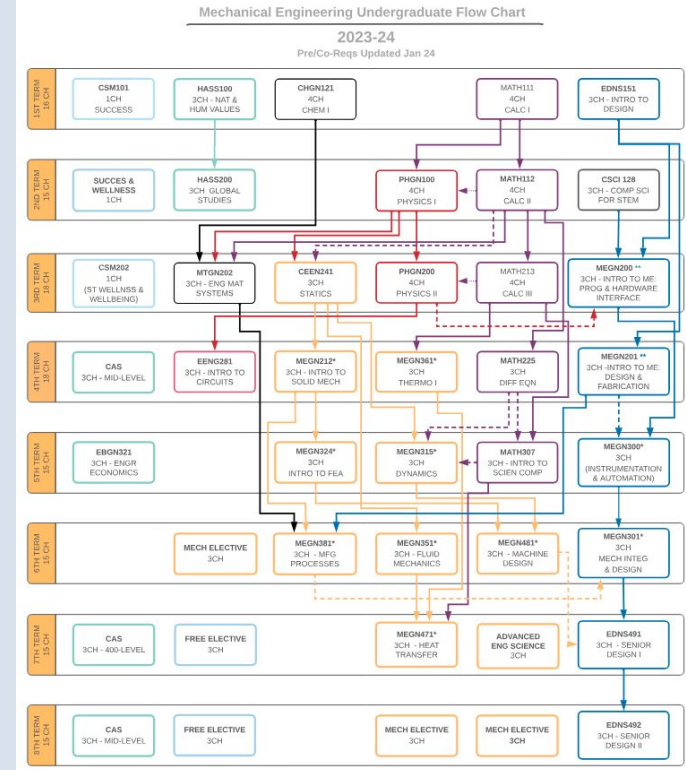


Figure FAQ

1. How do I know when I need a figure?
If having something to point would help explain yourself
2. Why do I show the whole figure if I have separate slides breaking it up?
People learn from repetition and multiple perspectives
3. Do you need to have engagement figures?
No, but a couple here and there help break up monotony

Refresher

Theme

1. Color
2. Font
3. Space
4. Interest

Formatting

1. Text Size
2. Text Amount
3. Text Placement

Figures

1. Readability
2. Purpose
3. Complexity

*Slide decks are an **art AND a science**
Making them takes conscious practice!*

BONUS: Humor

- Relevant
 - No tangents
- Considerate
 - No politics
- Not Distracting
 - Keep it minimal





Activity - Self Roast

1. **Identify** 1 “Bad” slide from your design presentation - **do as a group**
2. **Create** a copy of that slide for each group member
3. **Correct** the slides **individually**, write down what you change
4. **Discuss** each member’s fix, note any differences/takeaways
5. **Submit** a document to Canvas with the old slide, your new slide, and your notes - **EACH MEMBER**