



Marin Science Seminar

Speaker Guide

June, 2010

1

Thank you for your interest in the Marin Science Seminar. This document will inform you of what to expect and how to best plan your presentation.

What you need to know

About the Seminar: The Science Seminar is a one-hour lecture/presentation with a question and answer period targeted at high school science students in the San Rafael High School district. Seminar sessions are held on a Wednesday evening during the school year, from 7:30 to 8:30 pm at Terra Linda High School, 320 Nova Albion Way, San Rafael, 94903. *If you get lost, call 415-860-2573.*

Seminar speakers are scientists, physicians, mathematicians, engineers and computer programmers with a relevant degree and public speaking experience. The topics presented are in a specific area of the speaker's expertise, geared to interested high school students. The format is a 30 - 45 minute presentation with a Q & A period.

Time Allotment: Please apportion your 60 minutes of presentation time to accommodate the following three areas. Suggested time allotment is given after each description but feel free to do as you like so long as all three areas are covered.

1. Introduction: Who you are and where you work. What first got you interested in your field? Where and how long you trained. (5-10 min.)
2. Topic Discussion: The specialty on which you are talking. Please gear this to a high school audience and include as much interactivity as possible. See below for detailed suggestions. (30 -35 min.)
3. Questions & Answers, Suggestions for students interested in a career in your field. (15-20 min.)

Speaking to Teenagers: We have surveyed the students and spoken with science teachers regarding student feedback. The following are some guidelines on what the students say they like the most and what works best in terms of conveying the information.

- *Graphics and multimedia.* Please make sure your powerpoint or keynote presentation has plenty of graphics rather than simply charts and quotes. The students will be listening to you speak, and most of what you will be telling them is new. Audiovisual aids in the form of graphics, movies and sounds are all welcome options for layering the learning experience.
- *Interaction.* The more you directly involve your audience, the more receptive and responsive they will be. Rhetorical and direct questions both improve audience involvement. Something as simple as asking the group every now and then if they have ever heard of X can accomplish this goal.
- *Humor.* If you can get the audience to chuckle, you have their attention. General levity, references to popular culture, imaginative comparisons, exaggerated self-deprecation or lionizing: any of these can work to achieve the goal of capturing the students' attention and helping them grasp your topic. Make it fun, even silly if you have to. See www.betablockerprotocol.com's mini-quiz page to get more ideas.

The Room: Room 207 is a physiology lab and accommodates up to 50 people. There may be anywhere from 10 – 60 people in attendance. We bring a simple PA system. The room includes a Mac OS X.4 desktop, a screen and LCD projector. Many presenters prefer to bring their own laptop.

Time: Please arrive at the high school no later than 7 pm on the evening of your presentation. We will be there to greet you by 6:45 pm if you would like to come earlier. The presentation needs to begin as close to 7:30 pm as possible and finish as close to 8:30 pm as possible. Feel free to run over 5 -10 minutes if there are a lot of questions, but please remember that these kids have school tomorrow. It is better to end in a timely manner and to take individual questions from students who approach you at the end.

Please bring: Your presentation on a thumb/flash drive or on your own laptop and LCD adapter.

What we need to know

Please email us with the following information:

- Presentation title and description. The snappier, the better – we may rename it, with your consent, to make it more high school student-friendly ☺
- A short bio or your CV for use on the website and in the introduction
- A photo in electronic format of you or of something relevant to your talk (if you don't have anything, we'll put something appropriate in there, usually something we find on the Internet.)

When do you plan to arrive? We will be at the school by 6:45 pm to set up. Please arrive no later than 7:00 pm for set-up.

Do you have other materials to share with the students such as demonstrables (robots, whale skeletons, etc.) or handouts? If so, we need to make sure that you have a table on which to share these materials.

Thank you so much for your interest in the Marin Science Seminar!