Elec 391 Presentations

The last three classes of Elec 391 will feature student presentations. Groups of four students will select a topic, prepare a PowerPoint presentation, and deliver the presentation in class. These presentations will be short - 6 minutes per presentation - and the time limit will be strictly enforced. Each group must submit its PowerPoint presentation to Tracy Volz of the Cain Project for a critique at least one week prior to the group's presentation in class. Groups are also strongly encouraged to use the resources of the Cain Project to prepare for the presentation delivery. Each member of the group must participate in the presentation delivery during class.

During the presentations, you will fill out a short evaluation form for each group presentation (except for the group to which you belong). These evaluations will be collected in class and used to provide feedback to the groups. A member of the Cain Project will also evaluate the presentations, to allow you (and us) to compare your evaluations with those of a professional in technical communications. There will be no summaries required for these class days. Each group will provide an electronic copy of its PowerPoint presentation to the instructors.

The general topic for the presentations is electrical and computer engineering failures, in a broad sense. Select a specific example of a failure, and design your presentations to address the following questions:

- What was the product/process/system for?
- What was it supposed to do?
- What did it actually do (how did it fail)?
- Why did it fail?
- Where did you get your information?

The answers to these questions clearly overlap, and you should not treat the questions as an outline for structuring your presentations. You decide how best to organize the information for your example.

Your group must submit a proposal for your presentation to the instructors no later than March 27. Be sure to include the names of the members of your group with the proposal. Proposals must be approved by the instructors. If you are looking for ideas, there are sources you can try. The October 1976 issue of IEEE Spectrum magazine was devoted to case histories of failures in electrical engineering and computer engineering. Also, during the late 1980s, and possibly into the early 1990s, IEEE Spectrum ran two series of articles, the first called "Whatever Happened To?" and the second "Faults and Failures." Groups must choose different topics, so if you have a particular favorite, get your proposal in early. Dates for presentations will be assigned randomly.