

How to Run a Portfolio Defense Room

1. High Stakes: You set the tone

- Agenda on board
- Room Facilitator introduces the day with quick reminder of why we do portfolios, and the level of professionalism and polish that we expect.
- Remind audience of resubmit, pass, & pass with distinction options
- Review checklist and note-taking expectations
- Go over audience norms
- Before each panel begins, clearly announce who is a panel member and introduce the presenter

2. High Standards: No fear of re-submit

- After a student presents, open the Q & A with questions from the audience. This keeps the audience engaged, and then allows the panel to be more selective with the questions that they ask.
- The panel should be very deliberate about the questions that they ask, as their job is to help the presenter to fill in any holes on the checklist that they did not hit with their presentation. It is the responsibility of the panel to cover all of their uncertainties with questions.
- *The room facilitator asks the student room captain (12th grader) to take responsibility for the room while the panel steps out into the hallway to deliberate*
- During the deliberation, the panel goes category by category (just as we have in staff meetings). If everyone checked that off, the panel moves on. For any category where there is dissent, every panel member must speak, using evidence from their notes, about that category.
- After the panel discusses all dissent, you must reach an ultimate decision. If any box on the checklist remains unchecked, that student must resubmit.
- If the panel decides that the student must resubmit, the panel must create a written **specific** To Do List of 3-4 action steps that the student must complete in order to be more successful for the next time he/she presents. Room facilitator should also enter this in on the master google doc.
- **A resubmit is NOT a failure, and should never be communicated as such.** If the panel feels like they are “failing” a student with a resubmit, they often lower their standards and pass a student without integrity. This should NEVER happen. A resubmit is actually the panel communicating their belief in a student. They are saying, “we know you, and we know this was not the best that you can do.” It is a message of confidence, not of failure.

3. Using Evidence

- The role of objectivity: Default to checklist for all arguments - it will get personal, you will need to bring it back to the EVIDENCE. Objectively, all students have to meet the same standard of rigor.
- The role of subjectivity / holistic mindset: In addition to the above, we are able to take into account different students acting out those criteria in very different ways. *EXAMPLES of students to help people see how this is applied in real life-*

4. Planning Your Message

- Decide who will say what:
 - a. What was said during the deliberation that the student should hear?
 - b. Things to remember / Positive feedback
 - c. The Judgement
 - d. (Revision requirements)
- For Pass: Things you want them to remember, first. Before you give the judgement, they will be listening to you like they have never listened before.
- For Re-submit: Positive feedback, first, critique
- Review Revision To Do List, if applicable, **enter revision to do list on the google doc**, and give the to do list to the student