Important notes for Cat 11 Proposal Evaluation

This lecture was supposed to be held on 4 Mar (Fri) but due to inevitable interruptions, the only time that we will meet for a full hour before the Proposal Evaluation stage is on 1 Apr.

Hence, it is imperative that you go through these training slides independently and check with your mentor in the meantime. If you have specific queries, you can also email me. I have edited the slides to make it as comprehensive as possible (as opposed to lecture-style slides).

Do note that Cat 11 requires you to phrase your responses clearly, directly (don’t beat about the bush), and often in a specific format as you will see in the slides later. You are also required to do extensive research. It will be instantly evident if a team presents work that is not written in “Future Trends style”. Those who have experience with FPSP will know what I mean.
Essential items for Proposal Evaluation Oral Presentation (12 Apr)

• Each team is expected to identify and record TEN potential problems derived from the scenario in its online portfolio. This online portfolio (also known as your web report) can be created and hosted using a free website creator such as Wix.com, wiki, Google Sites, or it can even be hand-coded in html by you.

• Each potential problem should be accompanied by at least THREE pieces of research.

• Since each team only has 5 mins of presentation time + 3 mins of Q & A time for the oral presentation, each team will only need to orally present FOUR of your best potential problems and ONE piece of research for each problem, followed by your Fundamental Problem.

• The evaluators are at liberty to ask to see the other potential problems you have crafted as well as other pieces of research you have found. They can also ask to see your online portfolio.
Duration of Proposal Evaluation Presentation

Five mins oral presentation (unless formally excused from Prelims, all group members must speak)

Three mins Q & A

Time management is a perennial issue. For students taking part in Cat 11 for the 2\textsuperscript{nd} time, note however that you are only required to present FOUR potential problems this time, instead of FIVE (last year).
Your first slide should indicate clearly your:

- Group Number
- Finalised Project Title. If you have changed your project title, inform the judges that this is so. Your project title should be related to the scenario, your Fundamental Problem, or your aim for this project, and not simply a generic one such as “Future Trends”.
- Project Members’ names, classes. If any member is absent, inform the judges.
How to Phrase a Potential Problem / Challenge

The judges are not looking for essays, rambling arguments. We are looking for clarity, logic, reason and with some luck, creativity.

Use the FPSP model of structuring problems.

For those with FPSP experience, you have a slight advantage here. For those who don’t, fret not as the next few slides will teach you how to phrase problems clearly.
FPSP Model of Structuring Problems

A Potential Challenge has 3 parts:

**Part 1:** A **FACT** that can be derived from the scenario.

**Part 2:** **WHY** this fact could pose a problem within the scenario (this is the problem that you infer here). Better teams go on to mention the **LARGER CONSEQUENCE** too.

Parts 1 and 2 should be on the same slide.

**Part 3:** **RESEARCH** to support why you believe this could be a problem. Your research may be based on formal academic papers / journals, opinions from authoritative / credible sources (e.g. universities, government organisations, international non-profit organisations, reputable newspapers).

Part 3 should be on separate slides (1 piece of research per slide). You only need to present 1 piece of research for each potential challenge, but it would be good to have the other 2 pieces of research in your slides as well so that you can show them to the judges if/when they ask about them.
An example of a well-phrased challenge from a fictional scenario

The future scene states that students these days face increasing levels of stress from home (assume this is a **FACT stated in the scenario**). This could be problematic in 2030 because if this trend persists, students may face such an insurmountable level of stress that many may turn to suicide (**INFERRED PROBLEM**) leading potentially to a generation of youths with poor emotional health (**LARGER CONSEQUENCE**).
Example from a fictional scenario

Research:

1. According to Dr Daniel Fung, Deputy Chief of IMH’s department of child and adolescent psychiatry, teenager suicide is usually caused by “relationship problems, especially with their parents”.
An example from this year’s scenario (you should ideally identify problems that are significant to the the scenario. This example may or may not be particularly significant – I leave it to you to decide.)

The future scene states that hawkerfare is getting increasingly expensive (FACT, from future scene); this may be a problem as food already takes up a large chunk of each person’s expenses, leaving them with less money for other needs (INFERRED PROBLEM), leading to a lower quality of life (LARGER CONSEQUENCE).
Research 1:
According to the 2012/2013 Singapore Household Expenditure Survey, food constitutes the biggest expenditure item of the average Singaporean household per month, with $1188 on food, $811 on transport, $156 on clothes and apparel, $154 on holidays and $138 on other forms of recreation.

Source:
Notice...

Potential problems are always phrased as statements (not questions), and are always suggested as problems (using words like may, might, can, could) and not regarded as definite (not using words like will, would, shall, should, must).
Char Kway Teow is too expensive.

Reworked:
Since the future scene states that hawkerfare is getting too costly (FACT), this may be a problem as demand for local food may decrease (INFERRED PROBLEM), leading potentially to the loss of our cultural food heritage (LARGER CONSEQUENCE).
Negative example

Since the future scene states that foreigners do not take the MRT, this may lead to a foreigner-local divide, which may lead to conflicts, riots, and eventually massive chaos and the demise of the country, and before you know it, even the world.

[This is considered a slippery slope argument because the most catastrophic situation occurs from a simple inferred problem, i.e. one thing leads to another, and another, and another. Besides, there are multiple challenges inside this one problem statement.]
If you are unable to brainstorm for potential challenges, this list of categories on the left may aid you in identifying significant challenges from these various categories. Tip: diverge before you converge. This means that you brainstorm for as many problems as possible before zeroing in your final ten for the portfolio, and the final four for the presentation.

- Arts & Aesthetics
- Basic Needs
- Business & Commerce
- Communication
- Defense
- Economics
- Education
- Environment
- Ethics & Religion
- Government & Politics
- Law & Justice
- Media
- Miscellaneous
- Physical Health
- Psychological Health
- Recreation
- Safety
- Social Relationships
- Technology
- Transportation
The Fundamental Problem

You may notice that out of your ten potential problems, a few may be related to the same significant theme that requires significant attention from you.

You may combine elements of these into the Fundamental Problem.
The Fundamental Problem (FP)

After identifying your 10 potential challenges, it is time for you to craft the most important part of your project, which is the Fundamental Problem (FP).

To craft the FP, look at your potential challenges and see if there are any recurring issues / theme. The FP should always be one that BEST FITS your intent AND if solved, would MOST POSITIVELY IMPACT the future scene as a whole / create the most change. It should therefore tackle what you deem as the most important issue in the scenario.
Constituents of an FP

Your FP must have a **condition phrase**, **key verb phrase**, **purpose**, and **future scene parameters** (time, location).
Given the inference we have made that teenagers in 2050 are likely to suffer from the potential problems of teenage depression, isolation, and stress-related conditions (CONDITION PHRASE), how might we improve the psychological well-being (KEY VERB PHRASE) of these teenagers so that they will not succumb to mental illnesses that easily (PURPOSE) in Singapore in the year 2050 and beyond (FUTURE SCENE PARAMETERS)?

(In this FP, 3 of the team’s potential problems are about depression, isolation and stress experienced by teenagers. The team then found that psychological well-being is hence a recurring issue that they would like solved.)
Phrasing of KVP

It would be very much more realistic if your FP deals with something you and your team can address.

Hence, your Key Verb Phrase should aim to INCREASE, DECREASE, MINIMIZE, MAXIMIZE, REDUCE, IMPROVE a situation of your choice, as opposed to PREVENT, ELIMINATE, SOLVE, which are harder (and at times almost impossible) to do.
A good FP...

...is phrased as a question.

...deals with a significant issue from the future scene.

...deals with a significant issue from the future scene that is manageable – not too broad, not too narrow (FOCUS). A good gauge of an FP with good FOCUS would be one with a KVP that is observable and measurable.

...does not reverse the future scene
Negative example of an FP from our scenario

Singapore has too many foreigners. This is the root problem. Everything else is an associated problem. We should ban all foreigners.

(This is not a good FP because it includes a solution, and attempts to reverse the future scene rather than work within the confines of the future scene. It is also too extreme)
A better example of an FP from current scenario (you should not copy this though!)
Given that there appears to be a foreigner-local divide seen from their lack of contact, increased conflict and segregation (CP), how might we increase interactions between foreigners and locals (KVP) so that the country can be more united (P) in the year 2032 and beyond in Singapore? (FSP)
Structure of Presentation Slides

(just a guide)

Slide 1 – Opening Slide that shows group details
Slide 2 – Problem 1 (no point form)
Slide 3 – Further elaboration of research supporting Problem 1 (point form)
Slide 4 – Problem 2
Slide 5 – Further elaboration of research supporting Problem 2
(etc)
Slide 10 – Fundamental Problem (no point form)
Slide 11 – Bibliography (using APA format)
The APA Format

APA stands for American Psychological Association. The APA format is most commonly used to cite sources within the social sciences.
How to cite internet sources using APA

Contributors' names (Last edited date). Title of resource. Retrieved from http://Web address for OWL resource

Citing other sources

https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/

Alternatively, search “APA format” in Google and click the first link. It should bring you to the Purdue Online Writing Lab, which details just about every single kind of source you can cite in APA format.
That said…

As long as you present what is essential for Prelims, you are at liberty to style your presentation in as creative a manner as possible (e.g. gameshow, skit, speech of great rhetoric, etc). In fact, if your intention is to stand out from the rest and shine, you should aim to do this (just remember there is a time limit).
Things to omit from your presentation

Role assignment for team members (this is an internal matter – the judges don’t need to know this)

Timeline of project (this is fixed anyway)
Reiteration

Remember, Future Trends requires you to be creative yet also disciplined with the research process as well as with your phrasing and expression.

The Fundamental Problem is the heart and soul of your entire Future Trends project. If not done well (insignificant, poor scope), it will affect your whole project (since you have to develop an action plan eventually to solve your FP). Ultimately then, the aim of the Proposal Evaluation presentation is for you to propose a good Fundamental Problem.

Check the rubrics to be aware of how you will be scored.
Contact me...

• If your require any clarifications regarding the project.

• If you are completely lost in the category and don’t know how to proceed.

• siewwj@hci.edu.sg
Thank you, work hard & good luck!