River Theme

A disciplined Beamer system for structured presentations

Beamer Atelier

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Outline

The LaTex Beamer

Presentation software versus presentation systems

- Many slide tools prioritize surface decoration over structural discipline.
- Beamer approaches presentations as a document system rather than a canvas of isolated pages (Block et al.2017).
- This makes it especially suitable for academic, technical, institutional, and research-led communication.
- A Beamer deck is built through logic: sections, subsections, environments, references, consistency, and reproducibility.
- That logic helps the presenter think clearly before trying to appear visually impressive.

Why Beamer feels intellectually convincing

- It encourages hierarchy: title, section, subsection, frame, theorem, equation, figure, and references all have a formal place.
- It naturally supports presentations that unfold step by step, especially in quantitative and conceptual subjects.
- Repetition becomes a strength: shared design rules create visual stability across a full deck.
- The result is not merely neat slides, but a coherent presentation architecture.

Why systematic presenters are drawn to Beamer

- Researchers want consistency across tens or even hundreds of slides.
- Teachers need strong sectioning to help students follow long arguments.
- Consultants and institutional presenters need a reusable system, not one-off manual formatting.
- Technical presenters need equations, tables, figures, and references to look native rather than improvised.

Beamer supports disciplined workflow

- Content and design can be separated cleanly.
- Theme files enforce visual consistency across all slides.
- Structural changes can be made globally rather than slide by slide.
- Long presentations remain manageable because hierarchy is embedded in the source.
- This is especially valuable for recurring teaching, conference speaking, and branded institutional work.

From convenience to credibility

- A consistent presentation system signals care, seriousness, and authorship.
- Viewers may not notice the code, but they notice the composure of the final result.
- Beamer rewards presenters who value stability over improvisation.
- In that sense, it is not just a production tool. It is a thinking tool.

Why themes matter inside Beamer

- Beamer provides the structural foundation, but the theme determines the experience.
- A weak theme can make a good document feel generic.
- A strong theme gives rhythm to titles, sections, transitions, navigation, and dense content.
- The best themes do not compete with the message. They discipline it.

Beamer Atelier

What Beamer Atelier stands for

- Beamer Atelier builds themes as presentation systems, not decorative templates.
- The goal is to produce slides that feel intentional, calm, and intellectually grounded.
- Our themes are shaped by the belief that good design should reduce friction rather than attract attention to itself.
- We value visual order because order improves comprehension.

Our philosophy of restraint

- Restraint means deliberate design absence in service of understanding.
- We remove unnecessary visual noise so that hierarchy can speak clearly.
- We avoid novelty for its own sake.
- We prefer systems that remain elegant over a full lecture, workshop, or conference talk.
- Quiet design often produces stronger professional authority than expressive clutter.

The four layers of restraint

- **Visual restraint**: limited color, stable geometry, careful emphasis.
- **Cognitive restraint**: less distraction, less scanning effort, cleaner attention flow.
- **Pedagogical restraint**: designs that teach with patience rather than overwhelm.
- **Strategic restraint**: reusable systems that continue to work across contexts.

The values that guide our themes

- Clarity before ornament.
- Structure before decoration.
- Reusability before improvisation.
- Readability before density.
- Professional calm before visual excitement.

Why this matters in teaching and research

- Lectures often fail when slides look active but communicate weakly.
- Research presentations often fail when strong ideas are wrapped in unstable design.
- A disciplined theme reduces these risks by creating predictable visual behavior.
- Predictability is not dullness. In serious presentations, it is trust.

A theme should shape presenter behavior

- A well-designed theme nudges the author toward better decisions.
- It encourages sectioning, proportion, clean titles, and logical progression.
- It rewards careful composition instead of last-minute formatting.
- In this way, theme design becomes part of presentation pedagogy.

The River Theme

What River is

- River is a Beamer theme built for structured academic and professional communication.
- It is designed for presenters who want order, navigation, and a composed visual tone.
- Its visual language is minimal, but not generic.
- It uses geometry, spacing, and navigation to produce identity rather than relying on decoration.

River's visual character

- A clean white canvas gives the content room to breathe.
- A single strong accent color creates recognizability and discipline.
- Horizontal straps and rectangular accents are used as structural anchors.
- Typography is modern and technical through Fira Sans and Fira Math.
- The result feels contemporary, controlled, and presentation-ready.

Built for long-form presentations

- River is especially effective when a presentation has many sections and many slides.
- It helps maintain continuity over time rather than optimizing only for isolated showcase pages.
- This makes it suitable for:
  - ▶ university lectures,
  - ▶ technical workshops,
  - ▶ thesis defenses,
  - ▶ conference presentations,
  - ▶ institutional briefings.

A title page that establishes tone

- River includes a custom title page with strong spatial hierarchy.
- The title, subtitle, author block, institute, and date are carefully separated.
- A lower strap anchors the page and creates immediate visual identity.
- The page feels formal and branded without becoming heavy.

Outline page as orientation device

- River provides a dedicated outline slide through `\makeoutline`.
- The outline uses custom section and subsection dot styling.
- Layout is asymmetric in a controlled way, giving the slide a strong editorial feel.
- This is useful both at the start of the talk and before major transitions.

Section pages that create rhythm

- Each section begins with a dedicated section slide.
- River uses a restrained section page rather than a disruptive intermission slide.
- The section title is centered, the visual field remains clean, and a horizontal progress cue supports continuity.
- This gives the audience a moment of orientation without breaking the tone of the talk.

Frametitles with strong identity

- River replaces the default frametitle with a custom headline system.
- A solid accent block on the left creates recognition across all content slides.
- The title sits in a controlled headline area, preserving consistency.
- Because the title treatment is standardized, the body content can remain visually calm.

Footline navigation as a live guide

- River includes a custom footline navigation bar in the bottom strap.
- It displays the current section and subsection.
- It contains a progress bar that tracks the presentation flow.
- The active marker carries the current frame number, combining navigation and numbering elegantly.
- This gives viewers constant but unobtrusive orientation.

Section navigation in the strap

- On section pages, River displays horizontal section navigation in the lower strap.
- This turns the strap into more than a decorative bar; it becomes a structural instrument.
- The current section stands out while the other sections remain present in the system.
- The audience senses the full map of the talk, not just the current slide.

Theme options and flexibility

- Section page can be disabled using `nosectionpage`.
- The accent color is user-overridable through `Theme_Color`.
- This means River can preserve its identity while adapting to institutional palettes.
- The underlying system remains stable even when branding changes.

A complete presentation journey

- River supports the full lifecycle of a professional deck:
  - ▶ title page,
  - ▶ outline,
  - ▶ section transitions,
  - ▶ content slides,
  - ▶ theorem and technical environments,
  - ▶ references,
  - ▶ thank-you slide.
- This makes the theme feel complete rather than partial.

Thank-you slide and closing discipline

- River includes a dedicated thank-you slide command.
- The closing screen matches the visual language of the rest of the deck.
- This matters because endings are often rushed or visually inconsistent in many presentations.
- River keeps the final impression composed and intentional.

References support

- River includes a simple references frame environment for bibliography slides.
- This is particularly useful for academic talks and research-based teaching.
- It allows bibliography content to remain integrated within the presentation system.
- Even peripheral slides feel native to the theme.

Why River works as a sellable theme

- It has a recognizable visual identity.
- It solves real presenter problems: hierarchy, navigation, consistency, and technical content.
- It supports complete workflows instead of isolated showcase slides.
- It is distinctive enough to be memorable, but restrained enough to be widely usable.

Theme Environments

Theme Example

Theorem 4.1: Gauss–Markov Theorem

nder the classical linear regression assumptions, the OLS estimator $\hat{\beta} = (X'X)^{-1}X'y$ is the Best Linear Unbiased Estimator (BLUE).

Math Example: OLS Estimation

Equation 1: Ordinary Least Squares Estimator

$$\hat{\beta} = (X'X)^{-1}X'y$$

Equation 2: Variance of OLS

$$Var(\hat{\beta}) = \sigma^2(X'X)^{-1}$$

As shown in Equation 28, the estimator is derived from minimizing the residual sum of squares.

Table Example: What to Do in a Good Presentation

What to Do	What Not to Do
Clarity in structure	Overcrowded slides
Consistent typography	Random font changes
Minimal color palette	Excessive decorative elements
Logical mathematical flow	Jumping between disconnected ideas

Graphic Example

Figure 1: Structured Visual Identity

Figure 1 illustrates how graphics integrate naturally within the River theme frame.

Conclusion

What this presentation has shown

- Beamer is compelling because it turns presentations into structured systems.
- Beamer Atelier builds on that foundation through restraint, hierarchy, and pedagogical intent.
- River translates those values into a practical theme for real academic and professional use.
- Its strength lies not only in appearance, but in the disciplined experience it creates across an entire deck.

River is a **modern Beamer theme** for presenters who want their slides to feel **calm, rigorous, navigable, and professionally authored**.

Closing message

- Good presentation design is not about adding more.
- It is about deciding what should remain.
- River is built around that belief.

Thank You!

Questions • Feedback • Collaboration

Block, L., Hoof, S., and Stroh-Maraun, N. (2017). Introduction to latex beamer.