

Hints for making a good seminar presentation and discussion

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General remarks

- Each seminar participant **presents** his/her seminar paper and **discusses** the seminar paper of another participant. After the presentation by the author and the discussion by another student the paper is discussed by the group.
- Please **send your presentation slides as a pdf document** to fiwi@uni-jena.de no later than 12 o'clock noon on the day before your presentation.
- During your presentation, the members of the audience only ask clarification questions; the actual discussion takes place afterwards.
- Please contact your supervisor **two weeks before your seminar presentation**.

Preparation

Good preparation is a crucial prerequisite for a good presentation. In the following, you can find some hints:

- Develop a clear objective. Imagine that you are another participant who listens to your presentation and answer the following questions: What, why, how?
- Please ensure to only present those arguments that you **fully understood**. A lack of understanding will typically show quickly during the discussion.
- Consider the presentation's **time limit** (approx. 20min) when you prepare it. Concentrate on the key arguments and ideas of your topic.
- **Practice** your presentation several times.

The presentation – structure and content

- Introduction:
 - Introduce yourself.
 - Motivate the topic and its objective.
 - Present the **outline of your presentation**.
- Main part:
 - Present the **core arguments** in a logical order.
 - Divide your presentation into meaningful steps. Highlight the contribution of each step towards the final objective of the presentation, e.g. by making interim conclusions.
- Concluding remarks:
 - **Summarize** the objective of your topic.
 - If appropriate, say how future research about your topic could look like.
 - “Take-Home-Message”
- References

The presentation – Designing slides I

- Use **slides** for your presentation.
- The slides serve to **graphically support** your presentation; it is therefore not appropriate to have the whole presentation on your slides.
- Structure your slides **clearly** and **consistently**. Do not overload the slides!
- Use a font that has at least **size 16** and is sanserif.
(This is too small!)
- Rule of thumb: **schedule two minutes per slide** (depends on the slide's complexity).
- You may use **colors** to highlight things. (But: too many colors may take the audience's mind off more relevant things!)

The presentation – Designing slides II

- Present your chain of thoughts in no uncertain manner.
- Present complex relationships with the help of **examples**.
- Use **graphs** and **tables** to visualize contents. To a limited extent you may also want to use equations.
 - Always **label** and **explain** pictures, graphs, diagrams and tables (especially the axes).
 - If you use equations you have to explain them. It is insufficient to just read them!
But: Do not overexert the audience with equations.
- Insert page numbers on each slide. Members of the audience can later refer to them when they ask questions.

Hints for the presentation

Here are some general hints regarding your oral presentation:

- A **clear and correct pronunciation** eases listening. (Check how to spell and pronounce complicated words!)
- From a communication perspective, speaking freely is always better than reading.
- Use an **appropriate speaking tempo** and always address the audience, even when reading. Make sure you take your eyes off the paper and look at the audience.
- Pay attention to the correct usage of economic technical vocabulary.
- Use the **blackboard** (e.g. to answer questions).
- **Use a clock** to keep track of time while presenting.

The discussion

The discussion of each paper will begin with a discussion by another participant of the seminar.

- While preparing the discussion, please note the **time limit**.
- A discussion may start by, again, pointing out the crucial points of the seminar paper.
- However, its primary task is
 - to point out possible extensions of a model,
 - to question critical assumptions, or
 - to show the empirical evidence of the stated arguments.
- The discussion should conclude with three questions that serve as an useful starting point for the general discussion.
- Use slides for your discussion, but mind the 2-minute-per-slide rule mentioned above.

Active Participation

- To ensure a successful participation in the seminar, you have to be **well prepared** in each seminar session.
- You should **carefully study** the seminar papers of the other participants and look at further articles addressing the topic. (A comment sounds more sophisticated if it starts with *“I read in ...”* instead of *“I believe ...”*.)
- Each seminar paper’s bibliography gives an overview of the relevant literature addressing the topic.
- Note that **active participation** in the seminar sessions will have a beneficial impact on your overall grading.