

GUIDELINES FOR PRESENTATIONS

Objective of a Presentation

As the presenting group, you are responsible for organizing the seminar session. Your main goal is to provide your audience with input to a given topic. This input serves as the basis for discussion during “your” session. For a fruitful discussion, it is not only essential to present the basic concepts and ideas, but also to spark (and preserve/ strengthen) your classmates’ interest in the topic. You can best achieve this by incorporating graspable, disputable theses and/ or questions (= „Diskussionswiesen“) that go beyond the mandatory readings.

Content

In your presentation, refrain from merely recounting data, facts and developments and avoid summarizing the readings. Concentrate on a specific aspect of the session’s larger topic by basing your presentation on a clear overarching question. When answering this question, it is important that you follow an appropriate analytical approach. A positivistic research design can be helpful here (refer to guidelines on research proposals).

In addition, a good presentation connects theory and empirics.

Note that a presentation is not meant to explore a topic in its entirety. Limit the scope of your topic and expand upon central aspects concisely.

Structure

Your presentation should more or less be based on the following structure:

(1) Introduction

In the introduction, briefly introduce your group, your topic, research question, approach (method) and the structure of the presentation by way of a table of contents.

(2) Presentation with periodic open discussions

The kind of question to ask and approach to employ depends on the topic. Sometimes it is suitable to conduct a theoretically guided case comparison, other times comparing competing theories is more appropriate.

Avoid indulging in details or anecdotes and report facts and figures very selectively. Do ensure that slides are readable without being overcrowded. If you give too much information, you might lose your audience’s attention.

Please integrate three discussions in your presentation – two in between and one at the end of your talk. An active inclusion of seminar participants will make your presentation and the discussion livelier.

(3) Conclusion

The conclusion should briefly summarize the results of your presentation without repeating too much. Refrain from bringing up new points at the end. Prepare one or two suitable questions or statements to transition into the final discussion.

Style

Try to speak freely, guided by just a few key points. Presentations that are read out loud from a script tend to put the audience to sleep. Make eye contact with your audience and engage them while speaking and during discussions.

Stick to a pre-set time frame and be prepared to make cuts to your presentation in case time runs out. The talking part of the presentation should not exceed 30 minutes.

Medium: PowerPoint/Prezi

The PowerPoint presentation should accompany and support your oral presentation, not replace it.

Use key words to present the main points (avoid long sentences) and try to illustrate (maps, photos etc.). Special effects tend to distract more than they impress. Make sure to keep your slides uncluttered.

Don't underestimate the time it takes to present one slide. For a 30-minute presentation, you will need about 12-15 slides.

Required Preparation

For optimal support, make sure to come see me at least one week before the date of the presentation, though it is possible to meet two to three weeks in advance (appointments to be made through the secretariat: sekabpol@zedat.fu-berlin.de). In order for the consultation to be productive, it is helpful for your group to have read the texts, reflected on possible issues, and to have met beforehand to come up with a concept.

Please send a draft of the presentation a week in advance, in order to get feedback on it. The final draft of the presentation is due at least 48 hours before the session (seqbers@zedat.fu-berlin.de and shkabpol@zedat.fu-berlin.de).

Obligatory formalities:

- Create a maximum of 12-15 slides;
- Of these, include a table of contents and 3 discussion slides with questions;
- Individually number the slides, e.g. 1.0, 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 2.0, 2.1, 2.2, ...;
- Conclude with theses and questions;
- Observe all deadlines (consultation meeting, one week in advance draft presentation, 48-hour final submission).

The final draft of the presentation should be submitted no later than 24 hours in advance of the session to both email addresses (seqbers@zedat.fu-berlin.de and shkabpol@zedat.fu-berlin.de).