



RUPRECHT-KARLS-UNIVERSITÄT HEIDELBERG

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SOME GUIDELINES FOR PRESENTATIONS

The following suggestions provide some guidelines for presentations in courses of the chair of Macroeconomics. They state general principles for presentations in an academic context. Additionally, each presentation shall fulfill the specific requirements of the respective course.

General Suggestions

The purpose of a presentation is to present a project and its results to the audience in an appropriate timeframe. Not all details of the project are of interest in this context. Instead, you should explain the main conclusions regarding the original research question. The presentation should therefore always focus on the ‘big picture’.

Some basic rules are:

- Limit your total number of slides. As a rule of thumb, each slide takes 2-3 minutes to present. That means that you should prepare 10 to 15 slides for a 30-minute talk – definitely not more!
- The slides should not contain too much text and preferably no complete sentences. You may want to summarize the main proposition of the current slide in a last or first bullet point (or in the title of the slide). This also applies to slides with graphics and tables.
- The use of technical terms should be adapted to the audience. Make sure to use a precise and neutral language.

Outline

1. Motivation and question

The presentation should begin with the research question and the underlying motivation. Ideally, you should reduce the topic of investigation to a single question and explain why this question is important. If you present a theoretical paper, a reference to the real world and / or current events would be useful. You should then give a short preview of the main conclusion, without going into great detail.

2. Main part

In this part of the presentation, you should present the analysis leading to the answer to the main question. Depending on the type of the question, the main part contains a literature survey, a description of the data and the methods used in the empirical or theoretical model, as well as a presentation of the results.

3. Conclusion

At the end of the presentation you should concisely summarize the results and conclusions. For this purpose, you should come back to the original research question. Lastly, you should discuss possible problems in the analysis and potential extensions.

Slide Layout

The slides should serve as visual support for the talk. They should hence be kept clear and simple. Avoid animations, they most often do not add to the clarity of the presentation. In order to ensure that the slides are readable, use a limited range of muted colors and clear contrasts. A black font without serifs on a white ground is preferable. Don't use too many different fonts, font sizes, and styles (bold, italics, etc.) in the presentation.

The layout of the slides should be clear and uniform across slides. The header should contain the current title, while the footer should display the slide number (which is important as a reference for later queries or the following discussion). You may also want to display the current stage of the outline. All mentioned requirements are automatically satisfied if you use the *beamer* class and the associated packages of the layout language LaTeX.