

## Guidelines for group presentations

### BEFORE THE COURSE STARTS:

Group presentations are part of this course assessment (with a 20% weight on the final grade). They will happen in 4 seminar-like classes<sup>1</sup>, which are scheduled in advance.

Groups of about 6 students will be pre-made by the course instructor. The composition of the groups, the calendar for the presentations and questions to be discussed are available on Moodle.

If students want/need to change groups, or if groups need to change the date (and question) of their presentation, it is their responsibility to arrange the exchange with other students/groups. Once it is settled, they should inform the professor ASAP.

### AFTER THE COURSE STARTS

#### I. Prepare with your group:

1. Research, explore, and discuss possible answers to the question assigned to your group. You can use readings we are discussing in class (if they fit your topic) or explore other philosophical texts or sources.
2. Two groups are assigned to each question (see questions below) and will be presenting in the same class. In class, immediately before the presentations start, we will randomly assign which group will present the case for “yes” and

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<sup>1</sup> There are two different types of classes in this course: seminar-like classes and lecture-like classes. Each week we will have one of each. Presentations take place during seminar-like classes.

the case for “no”, so groups should be prepared to present both positions. The main goal is that students develop their critical skills by exploring both the best arguments for and against each possible side of the argument.

3. Students are expected to collaborate an equal amount in the group presentation. Instances of free riding should be communicated to the professor. Free riding will not be tolerated and should be reported to the course instructors.

## II. Guidelines for the presentation

1. Each group has 8-10 minutes to present their case followed by 10 minutes of Q&A and discussion, so groups should come prepared to facilitate this discussion. Every member of the group must present.

- Presentations should include excerpts from the texts of the relevant authors used to prepare the case of the presentations. Up to 3 excerpts by relevant authors. Each excerpt mentioned should be commented on and referenced (see below guidelines on how to reference it in the presentation).

- Presentations will be assessed by their clarity (10%), coherence (30%), conceptual rigour (40%) and relevance and critical thinking (20%). There will be bonus points for creativity and cooperation within the group (+0,5 each).

- Avoid reading and make sure you speak clearly, loudly, and facing your audience. Eye contact with your audience helps to keep engagement. If you need to have notes, make sure they are just simple topics to help your memory, not full sentences that you read aloud.

- No documents need to be handed in; only the presentation will be assessed. But if you intend to support your presentation with a PowerPoint or other visual aids, make sure to send them to your professor at least 2 hours before class, so that they can be readily available when class starts.

## III. Questions for group presentations:

- Class 3 | Are there actions which are always wrong?
- Class 5 | Is there a good moral claim for progressive taxation?
- Class 7 | Should child labour be banned?
- Class 9 | Should businesses prioritize stakeholder interests over shareholder value?

#### IV. Tips for a successful group presentation and individual essay - the dos and don'ts

##### Do: what you should do for a successful assignment!

Make sure that: 1) you state your main claim clearly at the beginning of your presentation, 2) your arguments and examples support it, and 3) you end with a well-defined conclusion that follows from what you said before. To do this, present at least two compelling, logical arguments; anticipate possible counterarguments to your claim and reply to them, to strengthen your position. E.g. "Of course, there is historical evidence of X, but that does not necessarily imply that all human beings etc." Consider the example below.

You are asked to answer the following question: "Should everyone work in a society?" A well-structured presentation will:

Start with a main claim: My position is 'No': not everyone should work in a society.

Then support it with at least two compelling arguments, such as:

- Some people might not be able to work (i.e., people with impairments, disabilities, older people, children).
- Some people might think work is not part of their conception of what a good life is.

In presenting the arguments:

- explain what they mean,

- illustrate with examples, and
- cite relevant authors who agree with this position.

Then anticipate counterarguments, for instance:

- For argument 1) we could say that if we accept that some people cannot work, we might stigmatize them; so we should maybe reformulate what work is, instead of assuming some people do not conform to what work is under a general definition.

You should explain your intuition and cite any relevant author who might share these objections.

Moreover, if you continue to agree with the main claim, you should provide arguments that reject or temper the counterarguments you are presenting, to persuade the audience that the main claim is the best one.

Other important Dos:

- When you cite an author, clarify what is relevant in their position for your argument specifically.
- Refer to the relevant sources to foster conceptual rigor (see the course literature). Keep in mind that weekly class content on Moodle might not overlap with group work presentations. Hence, you might be presenting on week 3 but find relevant course literature on week 2 or other.

Don't:

- Name-drop or rely on authority-based arguments. E.g., "Because Philosopher P said so and so, such and such is/must be true."
- Restrict yourself to exposition, without engaging in argument. A poor presentation structure goes as follows: "Philosopher P says X. Thinker T claims that Y. I believe X/Y/Z."

- Make contradictory arguments for the same claim. E.g. “P then Q, and not-P then Q, hence Q.”
- Digress. E.g. “P then Q, which reminds me that S and R.”
- Use irrelevant examples and theories for your claim.
- Mix up your opinion with what the authors said.
- Waste time in generic, redundant prose: “For many centuries, philosophers have dealt with the question of whether, etc. This is a multifaceted issue with many sides to consider, etc.”

#### V. How to make bibliographical references?

There are many ways to make bibliographical references (so-called “reference styles”). We advise you to use the Chicago Style. Instructions on how to make references in Chicago style can be viewed [here](#). Make sure you apply coherently the in-text citations, i.e., author-date style, and NOT the footnotes/notes and bibliography style. According to Chicago Style you should reference ideas, excerpts and paraphrased sentences in text, but also add a bibliography section at the end of your assignment with the detailed reference of the works you used when preparing your presentation.

Some examples below - for more, check the link above.

In-text referencing: (Grazer and Fishman 2015, 12)

Bibliography referencing (i.e., Reference list entry):. D’Agata, John, ed. 2016. The Making of the American Essay. Minneapolis: Graywolf Press.

#### VI: Our policy on the use of AI software:

AI software (i.e., ChatGPT, etc.) can be extremely useful in helping you find sources of information, come up with new ideas, or even explore possible ways to deal with challenges you are facing for the presentation. However, you must

learn how to critically use AI tools. Often these tools give inaccurate and incorrect information. Depending on the prompts you give them they can also create superficial answers that only narrowly answer the questions for the presentations. Finally, they also provide homogenous answers – meaning you might end up having an assignment that resembles the one everyone else handed in. But most of all, the one thing these tools can definitely not do is substitute your own personal take on the subject. You are not replaceable by any Large Language Model and this is something that you need to be able to show. Therefore, we recommend you use the readings we give you on Moodle or others we may suggest to you by request. Remember that we are evaluating you by your critical thinking – we wish to listen to your voice and take these topics, and not the ones generated by the software.