# Study guide:

# Presentations

## at the FB 02 – Social Sciences, Media and Sports

SoWi?So! Servicemanagement Studium und Lehre

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Dear students of the Department 02,

Those who study, present! Whether it's defending your thesis in an oral exam, presenting a text in a tutorial or giving a group presentation in a seminar - gathering information, preparing it and communicating it to a group of fellow students or lecturers is an important part of studying. In principle, it doesn't matter what subject you are studying. Experience shows that presenting is of great importance and often retains its relevance even after graduation. In many professional fields of the social sciences, presenting remains an important part of daily work. Presenting convincingly is therefore an important key qualification.

The good news is that you don't usually start from "scratch". Many have already given presentations several times in school and know the "rules of the game" of a presentation. Nevertheless, it can come as a surprise when different or additional "rules of the game" suddenly apply at university. Because just like writing papers or reading and researching, presenting is an important part of academic work. And academic work always follows certain norms and standards. At the same time, however, a presentation should be designed in a relaxed and appealing way and involve the audience in order to attract or maintain attention. Our guide aims to help you successfully master this balancing act by providing helpful tips on the basics of presenting at university, as well as on how to implement and structure your presentation. It addresses the following three core questions, among others:

**"What to present?" - "How to present?" - "Present with what?"**

As this guide is only intended as a first aid for your presentation, it also contains numerous references to further reading. Of course, you can also ask your lecturers or fellow students for help with open questions or contact the SoWi?So! team. And if you would like to experience and implement this content in practice, you are cordially invited to our tutorial.

Enjoy reading and good luck with your presentations!

***the SoWi?So!-Team***

## Inhaltsverzeichnis



## Notes

- This guide is aimed at students of all subjects in Department 02. Scientific work in general and the presentation of scientific content includes many things that are the same or similar in all subject areas, so that this brochure can serve as a basis for your presentation, regardless of whether you are an educationalist, political scientist, psychologist, publicist, sociologist or sports scientist. ATTENTION: Your lecturers alone determine which guidelines and requirements apply to your presentations! Therefore, you should always ask them in advance and follow these guidelines, regardless of what you can read in this guide.

- Should you come across information or a link that is no longer up to date, we would be very pleased if you would send us an e-mail to sowiso@uni-mainz.de. The same applies in general to comments, questions, or criticism.

- Furthermore, we would like to ask you to inform yourself about current changes in the context of the Corona pandemic under the following link: https://corona.uni-mainz.de .

# 1. WHAT DO I PRESENT?

## 1.1 PRESENTATION, PAPER, LECTURE, ETC.

**PRESENTATIONS** are a central component of many courses, not only in the social sciences as an examination or course achievement. However, the umbrella term "presentation" can be understood to mean many different **FORMS AND TYPES.** The term is not always used uniformly, especially in everyday language at the university. As a general requirement, presenting can be understood as the task of "presenting a specific topic in a target-oriented and recipient-oriented manner" and thereby "conveying complex arguments clearly, [...] dealing creatively with language" and "performing in front of larger groups" (Nünning 2008, p. 150; translation from German). The challenge is therefore to "prepare even complex issues linguistically and structure them logically so that they are communicated to the target audience in a comprehensible, understandable and stimulating way" (ibid., p. 151). For this, "rhetorical skills as well as presentation techniques are indispensable" (ibid., p. 151). However, the details of how this is done can be quite different.

The terms "presentation", "paper" and "lecture" are often used synonymously (as in this guide) - but they can have very different meanings: Sometimes you are supposed to present a text in a seminar as an "expert"; sometimes you are supposed to work on a (self-chosen) topic and convey this knowledge to the others; a "presentation" can also mean the recitation of a text or the PowerPoint slide belonging to the paper - presenting can be meant very differently from course to course. It is therefore more important than a precise definition of "presenting", "giving a talk" and "lecturing" to think about the form, aim and framework of each presentation.

Speeches and lectures often have the goal of convincing the audience of something, so convincing techniques are important. Convincing has three levels (cf. Nünning 2008, p. 151):

- informing about facts and thereby instructing intellectually
- present topics in a varied and entertaining way
- focus on emotional intensity and appeal to the emotions of the audience

However, a presentation at university can be clearly distinguished from information, sales, opinion presentations and also from presentations at school, in companies or in private/political/social, economic environments, etc. At the university, the focus is on **SCIENTIFIC PRESENTATION**. The following points can be generally noted for this type of lecture:

- It relies mainly on intellectual conviction. The emotional and affective component plays at best a subordinate role. It wants to give the audience "**the information that is relevant for the understanding of a topic. This intellectual conviction is achieved through the comprehensibility, verifiability, transparency and conclusiveness of the argumentation**". (Nünning 2008, p. 152; translation from German);

- it follows scientific standards (scientific procedure and expression, requirements for content and structure, objectivity or intersubjectivity, evidence of sources, etc.);
- it follows similar principles as other academic work (e.g. seminar papers), but has a strong creative and performative component;
- it is an expression of the ability to do one's own academic work.

Presentations can be realised in **different ways**:

- Use of different media/aids (Power Point, blackboard, overhead, handout, etc.)
- different presentation styles (free speaking, reading aloud, performing/acting, etc.).

  ⇒ Both should be well considered and based on personal abilities and preferences. Only those who feel comfortable in their role as a speaker can convince the audience.

- as part of a complete lesson plan - sometimes the actual lecture is only a small component in a complete (or extended) lesson plan on a topic, for which the lecturers can also be responsible. In this case, the contents of the lecture must be combined and coordinated with a discussion in the plenary, with group work or with other dialectical elements.

All other characteristics depend strongly on the respective presentation. Therefore, one should first be aware of its purpose and clarify open questions before starting to develop and implement the presentation.

## 1.2 FORM

An important criterion is the **PRESENTATION ENVIRONMENT**. In what setting does the presentation take place? In a seminar context? In the context of an exam? In a tutorial? In a workshop? Depending on the setting, requirements and framework conditions change, as does one's own motivation. Unless otherwise stated, the following explanations in this guide generally refer to a presentation in a seminar context, which is the most common form of presentation at the university. However, many of the hints and tips listed are in principle transferable to other presentation environments.

First of all, there is the question of **GRADING**, i.e. whether the presentation is graded or not, or whether it is part of the study or examination performance, which can have a considerable influence on the strict adherence to the specifications, on the observance of the time and on the (more or less) meticulous preparation. The question must also be clarified as to whether one is completely free in the choice of topic, whether one can select one from the given topics or whether the topic is assigned by the lecturers. If you are free to choose a topic, it is of course worthwhile to choose topics in which you are interested. If the topic is given, however, you can usually set your own priorities after prior consultation, so that you can bring your own interests into the lecture.

A distinction must also be made between **INDIVIDUAL AND GROUP PRESENTATIONS**. The fact that you are giving an individual or a group presentation naturally has a great influence on the format, but above all on the organisational work before the presentation. Often the structure of the course already dictates whether you give the presentation alone or together with fellow students. However, if you have the choice, you should be aware that both forms have advantages and disadvantages. Whereas with a group presentation you can share the research, preparation, design and presentation on several shoulders, here you need to spend more time coordinating and agreeing on the content. The goal is to have a single presentation with three speakers instead of three individual presentations on one topic. Coordinating the content is sometimes not so easy. Therefore, meet with your working group as soon as the papers have been allocated and discuss the following important points, among others:

- **Division of work** - who does what? Can the presentation be sensibly divided into three parts, so that each person researches, prepares and presents one part, or is it more sensible to divide the research, preparation and presentation between the people (provided there are no guidelines from the lecturers)?
- **Meetings** - When and how often do we meet in advance?
- **Cooperation in general** - commitment and fairness as well as the usual rules of communication should be a matter of course. This also includes informing the others in good time if there are any problems or changes. If conflicts arise in the cooperation, you should seek dialogue (with the lecturers) at an early stage.

In addition, the question arises as to the **VALUE OF THE PRESENTATION WITHIN THE TEACHING CONFERENCE**. Does one give a presentation in a series of presentations? Is the presentation only a small part of the session or is it the central part? This may have an influence on the **TIME** and the **POSSIBILITIES** of the presentation. If in doubt, you should clarify this with the lecturers beforehand.

## 1.3 GOALS AND TARGET GROUP

Before each presentation (as with scientific work in general), you should think about the respective **OBJECTIVES** that you are pursuing with the presentation. Those who simply "reel off" a half-baked, lacklustre presentation for the sake of form fail to realise that the scientific working form of presenting is not only a central component of teaching at universities, but also represents a great individual benefit for both the presenter and the audience. In addition to one's own goals, one should also be aware of the goals of the other participants and pay attention to them. After all, a presentation that only pleases oneself rarely serves its purpose. Conversely, a presentation that does not please oneself will hardly be able to arouse enthusiasm in the audience.

**Aim of the presentation for the event or for the teachers**

A presentation can have different functions within a course. For example, the aim can be to present a certain topic to the other participants, so that part of the material taught in the course comes from the students themselves. However, the aim of the presentation can also be to introduce only one particular text dealt with in the course in more detail. The speakers are "experts" on the text, know it in detail and can classify it and answer questions about it. Another aim could be to give only a short input for a plenary discussion. This would be less about information and more about raising relevant questions. Sometimes, however, the lecturer is asked to take over the whole lesson and not only to present relevant content, but also to convey it through didactic methods. If the goal is not clear from the outset, it is important to clarify this with the lecturers. For them, the presentation is an important part of the lesson, i.e. the content of the presentation is immensely important for the lecturer, as the success of the lesson depends on whether this content is received by the course. It therefore always makes sense to discuss the content in advance.

**Aims of the presentation for the audience**

As a rule, a presentation is about imparting knowledge to the audience. The question of how much relevant knowledge (for further studies in general or for the module examination at the end of the semester) one takes away from a course therefore often depends to a not insignificant extent on the quality of the presentations. In this respect, the audience has a great interest in good presentations. However, "good" does not only mean factually correct. Anyone who has participated in an event with several presentations probably knows that a presentation must also be clear, interesting and entertaining. Only those who are (and remain) interested in the presentation, involved in the topic and sensitive to certain issues will listen attentively and absorb the content presented. Furthermore, your presentation can only benefit if you encourage the audience to participate in discussions or by asking questions. And even if the audience shows little interest - a lively presentation is always better suited to "win" attention than a "bad" presentation.

**Aims of the presentation for the speakers themselves**

The goals that you yourself pursue with your presentation can also be very diverse. On the one hand, it can be about getting a good grade in a course or leaving a good impression. In this case, careful

preparation and execution, but also strict adherence to the guidelines, are all the more important. With your presentation, you not only show yourself and others that you work scientifically, but that you can also present content in an appealing way. On the other hand, every presentation (beyond grades or examination results) is always an opportunity to practise and perfect this "soft skill", which is important for professional practice. And for this - in addition to the recognition for a good presentation - the feedback and constructive criticism of the audience and the lecturers are immensely helpful. Ultimately, however, one should not forget one's own learning effect, which occurs when one deals intensively with a topic. It is therefore worthwhile (if possible) to choose topics that interest you or that you would like to deal with later in your studies. In addition, it is sometimes possible to make the topic of the presentation the topic for the required seminar paper, so that part of the work is already done.

In addition to the objectives of the presentation, it is also worthwhile to think again about the **TARGET GROUP**. In addition to the audience's goals and expectations, two other aspects play an important role here:

**Group size**

The size of the group to which you give a presentation has an influence on various aspects, e.g. which media you can use sensibly or how you can involve the group in your own presentation. If there are handouts, they must be copied in sufficient numbers. T larger the group, the more time you have to allow for questions and the longer ple-num discussions take. If you include group work in your lecture or lesson plan, this usually only works if the group is of a certain size. In addition, if there are more listeners, more time is needed for such tasks. However, the larger the group, the more fruitful the discussions can be and the more differentiated the feedback.

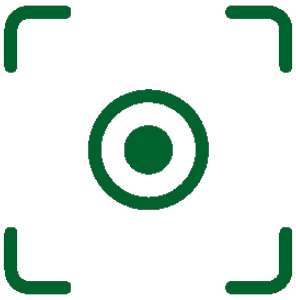
**Level and composition of the group**

The composition of the group also has a great influence. In seminars, it is not unusual for students from different semesters to participate and thus have different previous experience. In addition, there are interdisciplinary courses in which students from different subjects sit. For the presentation, it is important to ask yourself the following questions: "What level can I expect? Which technical terms and theories do I need to explain again? What needs explanation, what does not? How much input does the group need?" If the content over- or under-challenges the listeners, their attention will quickly wane and the learning effect will fail to materialise. In case of doubt, it is worth asking the lecturers which contents can be assumed to be known and which not.

## 1.4 FRAMEWORK CONDITIONS

For every presentation there is a multitude of **FRAMEWORK CONDITIONS** that need to be taken into account in the preparation and design, but over which you as a presenter rarely have any influence:

- **Requirements of the lecturers:** What, how and with what may I or must I present? Most lecturers have strict guidelines here, as the presentation is part of their course concept. Even if you should stick to these guidelines, it is worthwhile to bring in your own ideas and design wishes within the framework of these guidelines and to discuss them with the lecturers. Many are very open to a creative presentation.



- **time frame:** How much time do I have for my presentation? Many people find it difficult to estimate the time correctly. However, it is absolutely necessary to stick to the guidelines. It is better to plan a little time that you can fill with additional discussion questions if necessary, rather than overdoing it. This will not only delay the rest of the lesson (it may also reduce the time available for other speakers). Too long presentations, which are often overloaded with too much content, also reduce the attention and patience of the audience. With time, you will get a feeling for the time needed. In case of doubt, however, it is worthwhile to rehearse the presentation beforehand and to time it.
- **Media/technology:** What tools do I have at my disposal? Do they work? Which ones do I know how to use? The question of which media are basically available to you can be answered relatively quickly. Many seminar rooms have a beamer, so a lecture using a presentation programme is no problem. However, you must either bring a laptop or ask the lecturer for one. Blackboards or whiteboards are also often available, but seminar rooms usually lack suitable pens or chalk. Overhead projectors, on the other hand, are less common. If the desired media are available or available, you should remember to check whether they work in good time before your presentation. If you only realise at the time of the presentation that the technology is not working and/or you have to find a replacement, it will cost you time and nerves unnecessarily. This also applies to technical compatibility: When using presentation slides, don't forget to bring them with you to the Ter-min on a USB stick or send them to the lecturer in good time beforehand. If you are using your own laptop, it should also be connected to the beamer, and if you are using someone else's laptop, it must be able to open the format of the presentation file. If you are using OpenOffice, for example, it is advisable to save the file in Microsoft PowerPoint format and in PDF format, so that a usable file is available in any case.
- **Local setting**: Depending on how you design your presentation, the layout of the room can also play a role, e.g. for group work, which usually requires space and where you may have to move tables and chairs so that participants can get together in groups. For discussions, it is helpful if the participants are seated so that they can see each other and not all face the front (as in frontal teaching). The size of the room also has an influence. For example, you should adjust your speaking style and volume so that you can be heard even in the last row. In large rooms, it can be useful to try to find a microphone.

! Ultimately, you should always follow the **lecturers' guidelines**. However, one's own preferences and abilities should always be taken into account in all decisions. !

## 1.5 ELABORATION, COMPOSITION AND STRUCTURE

Clarifying the form, goals and framework conditions of the presentation is an essential part of the **PREPARATION** of a presentation. This also includes thinking about the individual steps that need to be taken and how much time they will take and, if necessary, drawing up a timetable of what needs to be done and by when. Once these things have been clarified, the actual part of the work begins: the **PREPARATION OF THE REFERENCE**. This is essentially done in 5 steps (cf. Nünning 2008, p. 152):

1.) **Research and compile appropriate content/arguments.**
2.) **Structure and organise information or researched material.**
3.) **Put information into a form suitable for a presentation and prepare materials**
4.) **Go through and memorise the sequence of events, theses and central points and make notes if necessary.**
5.) **Give a presentation (and rehearse beforehand if necessary).**

The following schematic overview can serve as orientation.

| ***Preparation*** | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Research/ Collect material | Organise materials | Compress contents | Creating the tools | Final rehearsal | Organisation (room, technology) |

**1.) *Introduction***
- *Greeting/establishing contact with the audience*
- *Introduction to the topic (e.g. own motivation)*
- *Emphasising the benefits/relevance of the topic*
- *Establish connections/classify topic*
- *If necessary, overview of content and procedure*

***≈ max. 1/5 of the scope***

**2.) *Main section***
- *Core of the presentation/elaboration of the topic*
- *Providing information*
- *If necessary, point out questions/hypotheses*
- *Situation & background*
- *Theory & methodology*
- *Results & interpretation*
- *concrete examples & comparisons*

***≈ min. 3/5 of the scope***

**3.) *Conclusion***
- *Summary of the topic/results*
- *Anchor knowledge gain*
- *Formulate a "take-home message*
- *Outlook/Conclusions*
- *Discussion*

***≈ max. 1/5 of the scope***

„TENSION DRAMATURGY "

Below you will find a few more helpful hints on some of these steps:

The selection of **CONTENT** and the **RESEARCH** should not be underestimated and should always be carried out with the topic, the objectives and the target group in mind. This way, only the essential, relevant content will find its way into the presentation and you will not run the risk of overloading your presentation with interesting but not useful information. Experience shows that many students tend to include all the information they find interesting, possibly out of a desire to demonstrate their thorough preparation and research in the presentation. However, this often leads to overloaded presentations and time constraints. Otherwise, the same applies to research and selection here as to other forms of academic work, e.g. the term paper. One should base one's arguments primarily on scientific sources and exercise caution with "grey" literature (literature that is not published on the book market but exclusively through other channels such as the internet).

When making a **REASONABLE SELECTION** of which content to include in the presentation, one should always remember the topic/question and ask oneself whether the respective content really fits in or fulfils a function for the presentation or whether it would only be an "interesting accessory". The guiding principles here are "focus" and "selection". Information that is central to understanding and not known must be conveyed, and not all aspects that are somehow related to the topic. Information that can be taken for granted should only be mentioned, but completely new information should always be explained.

As with any written academic paper, academic presentations have a defined structure and necessary **CONTENT** that fulfils a specific **FUNCTION**. While, in contrast to written work, you have more room for your own design elements and creativity, you should still think about the structure and composition and follow the recognised standards as far as possible. It is important that the structure is logical and coherent, i.e. that all information, ideas, arguments and theses build on each other or fit together and that there are no "gaps" between individual statements. It must therefore always be clear to the audience how the current information fits into the topic or what **FUNCTION** it fulfils **FOR THE ARGUMENTATION PROCESS**. It can also be useful to show these connections explicitly now and then to facilitate understanding. Simply stringing together interesting information (more or less randomly) does not meet the requirements of a good presentation. "Good presentations tell a story" (Nünning 2008, p. 156; translation from German) - so always ask yourself: "What is my story?"

Otherwise, a presentation, like a written paper, should have an **INTRODUCTION**, a **MAIN SECTION** and a **CONCLUSION**, whose respective functions are illustrated in the diagram above. Here, too, a hierarchical structure is given in principle, in which, for example, equivalent sub-topics are dealt with in "sub-chapters" of an "upper chapter". However, one is freer here than in a written paper. It is important not to omit the conclusion or an appropriate conclusion under any circumstances. Summarising the central theses and information contributes significantly to the learning effect. Sometimes you can also condense your presentation to a single core statement that you give along the way ("Take Home Message").

Once you have collected and structured your information, the next key task is to prepare it accordingly. **PREPARATION** is necessary because so far you know what you want to convey to the audience and when, but not yet exactly how to do it. What information do you tell orally, what do you transfer to aids such as slides or handouts? What do you only convey in bullet points, where do you use quotations or whole sentences? Where do you use visualisations? Which contents do you involve the audience in? Where do you need special language, gestures, facial expressions to illustrate the content, etc.?

The selection, structuring and preparation of information should in no way be underestimated in its importance. It is certainly as important as the presentation itself. Even excellent presentations of relevant information can still fail in their structuring and preparation. But what has been prepared also needs to be presented appropriately. To ensure that your presentation is as successful as possible and that you convey the content of your presentation in an appealing way, you will find some helpful tips and advice below.

## 2. HOW DO I PRESENT?

### 2.1 POSSIBILITIES FOR THE INTRODUCTION

The introduction to a presentation is often crucial for its success. The audience should already be "taken along" here. The audience knows that they should be attentive, as the content of the presentation will usually be relevant to the course or study. However, uninteresting presentations often lead to the audience "switching off" and thus not being able to absorb the content, let alone understand it. To avoid this, the audience should ideally be shown at the beginning of the lecture why concentrated listening is worthwhile. It is about winning "hearts and ears" with an "introduction that fulfils its function, that motivates and orients" (Franck 2013, p. 219; translation from German).

A good introduction to the presentation can consist of four parts (building on each other):

**1.) Arouse interest,**

**2.) emphasise benefits,**

**3.) give an overview and**

**4.) establish connections.**

The order of these four points is not mandatory, so it is not "forbidden" to start a presentation with a benefit aspect, for example. Depending on the topic - but also on the preference of the presenter - one can start the presentation in a suitable way. However, this decision should be well-founded and not arbitrary. It is therefore worthwhile to think about all four aspects beforehand. Below you will find some examples:

1. **Arouse interest through…**
   - aphorisms, winged words
   - target-oriented, problem-oriented descriptions
   - provocative questions/theories or stimulating statements
   - concise accounts of experiences that lead to the theme
   - current events that are related to the theme
   - simple allegories, e.g.: "The hedgehogs won the race against the hare. However, they could lose a decisive race - conservationists fear" (Franck 2013, p. 220; translation from German)
   - "Sympathy advertising", e.g.: "A well-known man once said that you can talk about anything - just not longer than 45 minutes. I want to try in just under 20 minutes..." (ibid., p. 220; translation from German)

2. **The benefit aspect…**

Here, the purpose of a thing or also its meaning is asked. "What is being focused on and for what purpose? If the listeners have the impression that listening is worthwhile, you have their attention and advance praise." (ibid., p. 221, translation from German). So basically it is about the relevance of the topic. One can assume different levels of relevance:

**Disciplinary relevance**

- What is the position of the topic in my subject?
- Has it extended something?
- Has it refuted something else?
- Has it opened up new perspectives?
- Who is dealing with the same topic?
- Topicality?

or **Social relevance**

- Historical reference or current events
- Position of the topic in society: what was it like, what is it like?
- Newspaper articles, news, film clips, case studies
- Relate social event

or **Event relevance**

- Why this topic in the context of this course?
- Is it a deepening of what has gone before?
- Is it a contradiction to what has gone before?
- How does the topic of the presentation relate to the topic of the course?

### 3. Give an overview

Especially when presentations are of a certain length, it is advisable to give the audience an overview of the course of the presentation (table of contents). This can be done in different ways (orally, on a PowerPoint slide, etc.), but should always include the parts (chapters) into which a presentation is divided. Here it is advisable not only to list and read out the individual sections, but to relate them to each other (differences, similarities, continuities, etc.) and to explain why the presentation is divided into these parts and what goals the individual parts pursue. The advantage for the listeners is that they can better place the contents of the presentation in the overall context and it is thus easier to follow the speaker's explanations. The danger of losing attention is reduced. CAUTION: Just as with a shorter term paper, you should be careful not to include too many subdivisions or levels of structure in a presentation, as this tends to confuse the audience.

### 4. Establishing connections

The audience should be made aware of existing connections between the presentation and, for example, the seminar topic, other seminar content or previously discussed issues (relevance to the event). If the audience can put the contents of the presentation into an overall context, this not only facilitates understanding but also the learning effect. Why is the course dealing with this right now? How does it fit with the theme of the lesson or course? What does it have to do with the topic of the last or next session? This can also include demarcations and contradictions with other subject matter, or you can go into what you are not dealing with and for what reasons. If you are unsure about this, it is worthwhile to ask the lecturer about this aspect in advance.

## 2.2 LANGUAGE AND SPEECH

If you give a lecture at university, there is one thing you cannot avoid - speaking. Both the VOICE and SPEECHING, as well as how relaxed you can be when speaking in front of a group, are highly individual things. Some people find talking easier, some more difficult. But the way one presents oneself and the way one speaks can be practised and the presentation thus made easier. In addition, there are some basic tips that should be followed here as well:

First of all, it is important to note that "we speak differently than we write". Formulating a scientific presentation in writing beforehand and then reading it out in front of an audience is therefore often not considered entertaining or professional. Writing good papers does not necessarily make you a good speaker - and vice versa. Speech use and speaking style have a great influence on how the speakers themselves come across, whether and how you can keep your audience "in line" or how the content is conveyed. However, this can also be a great advantage, because you can use presentation style

and language to make "dry" content more interesting and to "win over" the audience, perhaps even to "inspire" them. You should pay attention to the following levels:

**Speech and Language**

First of all, one should speak naturally, as one would speak in everyday life. In some situations (e.g. in an exam situation) it is necessary to adapt the language accordingly, but here too the general rule is: if someone uses a way of speaking that is unfamiliar to him/her, this is noticeable and tends to distract from the content. One should therefore be "comfortable" with one's way of speaking. However, this means above all the manner, not so much the language used. Everyday/ colloquial language should be used sparingly or not at all in a scientific presentation. But the language should also not appear "artificial"/abstract and the choice of words should remain descriptive and comprehensible. The following maxim applies to technical words/terms: "As many as necessary, as few as possible". Their meaning must be clear or made clear to both the presenters and the audience. Pay attention to the use of possessive pronouns such as "whose", "whose" etc.. Problems of comprehension can quickly arise if the audience does not know what exactly you are referring to.

**Sentences**

You should also be careful not to overload sentences or make them too complicated. What may be intended to look professional often leads to confusion and can also throw you off your game. In addition, too much information per sentence, nested sentences or complicated subordinate clauses will not be absorbed and the audience runs the risk of "dropping out". Therefore, limit yourself to one core statement per sentence and keep the sentences short. You should also make key statements in your main sentences or at the beginning.

**Volume**

You need to adjust the volume at which you speak to the size of the room so that the last row can still understand you. This can be a challenge for people with naturally soft voices, but is ultimately a matter of practice. If there is a commotion in the room, it is sometimes better to use a short pause and wait for the commotion to subside than to talk louder or even shout louder. However, if the noise or commotion persists, you as the presenter can also address it directly and ask politely but firmly for silence.

**Speed**

Experience shows that people tend to speak too fast rather than too slow, whether because of excitement, lack of time or because they can and want to go through the content much faster "in their heads" beforehand. In this case, one should force oneself to slow down the pace of speaking a little and also to vary the tempo so that the presentation does not become too monotonous. More experienced speakers can "play" with the pace, emphasis and pauses to keep the audience's attention. However, if you are not yet confident in giving a speech, it is also okay to simply speak calmly and objectively, with natural intonation.

**Pauses**

Often speakers (or the audience) have difficulty with pauses, because pauses that are too long tend to be embarrassing or disruptive. However, pauses can be used as a rhetorical device (to make statements or questions effective) or as a means of structuring (pause after the main idea to show that a new consideration is coming) and can be used to "direct" the attention of the audience. And especially when you are nervous or irritated during a presentation, you can use pauses to calm yourself down or to put your thoughts in order.

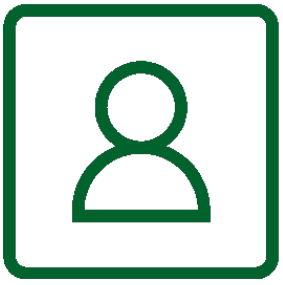
## 2.3 BODY AND POSTURE

The NON-VERBAL PART of a presentation should never be underestimated, as it has a great influence on how the speakers and their content are "received". BODY AND BODY POSTURE, also the MOVEMENT in the room as well as the handling of furniture, media and objects are not always conscious, but immensely important for the success of the presentation. Therefore, you should try to pay attention to how you present yourself. This is not always easy, as posture and the way you move are usually unconscious and have been "practised" over many years. Nevertheless, it is possible and also makes sense - especially if you still feel uncomfortable when giving a presentation - to train these things consciously. The first step is to become aware of your own behaviour when giving a presentation. After that, you can try to change certain behaviours selectively, to get into or out of the habit. Basically, however, the following applies:

**You should always feel comfortable with your own way of presenting and appear as authentic/natural as possible!**

Nevertheless, here too there are some tips on what to look out for in the non-verbal part of the talk:

**Eye contact and posture**



Keep eye contact with the audience not only in normal conversations, but also in lectures! If the audience does not feel addressed, they will not follow your presentation as attentively. However, you should let your gaze wander between the audience members rather than fixating on individual persons. Looking at the audience in a friendly way should be a matter of course in order to signal openness for participation in the presentation.

One should adopt a posture that is as natural as possible, but respectful and appropriate to the context. Extreme postures and movements are not advisable (e.g. one should neither stand rooted to the spot nor constantly move around). Sometimes it is perceived as negative if speakers sit, hold

or lean on the lectern or bend over the lectern. However, this also depends on the context. Even presentations given in a seated position can be engaging and lively, while presentations given in a standing position can be completely boring. Feel free to try out different modes and find the one that suits you best. However, a posture that primarily expresses listlessness (e.g. hands in trouser pockets, a slumped posture, sitting with folded arms, etc.) usually has a negative effect on the audience's attention.

After the end of the presentation you should not "run away" directly, but definitely give the audience time for questions (but also for applause/tapping). Remember: questions are not a sign that you are being tested or that your presentation was inadequate, but a sign of interest in your presentation. If you do find yourself in a situation where people are trying to embarrass you with questions, remain confident and behave in the same way as you did in your presentation before - calmly, thoughtfully and naturally. Remember to sort or collect your documents after your presentation and take them back to your seat.

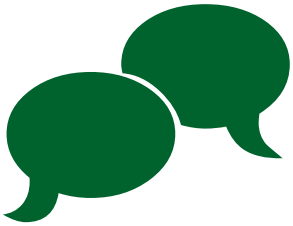
### Gestures and facial expressions

Gestures and facial expressions, as well as body language, should be used sparingly and naturally to emphasise what is being said. Exaggerated gestures or facial expressions look artificial and tend to be distracting. Also watch out for the use of irony or exaggeration - these must be clearly understood. CAUTION: Do not rehearse gestures! This usually goes wrong and is conspicuous. You should refrain from making derogatory gestures such as shaking your head, shrugging your shoulders, giving the thumbs up, etc. as well as the following: folding your arms, folding your hands or resting them on your waist, playing with a pencil or similar, clinging to the lectern or manuscript, etc.

### Stage fright

When you are nervous, it usually has a big impact on the way you speak and your posture. But don't worry! Being a little nervous before a presentation is completely normal, even if you already feel very confident in presenting. Practising the presentation beforehand, mentally preparing yourself for certain anxiety-provoking situations or letting the presentation play out in your mind's eye can already help to reduce your excitement a little. If stage fright or fear of the presentation are so great that they hinder the performance, it may be advisable to work on this fear fundamentally (as with exam nerves). Consciously exposing oneself to such situations and losing fear through practice can be one possibility; seeking appropriate help (e.g. from university counselling institutions) can be another. The important thing is to know that you can work on this problem and do not have to "surrender" to stage fright.

## 2.4 DISCUSSIONS



In the university context, it is often part of a presentation to discuss its content or thematically related issues. Speakers are sometimes asked by the lecturers to include a few discussion questions in their presentation (or at the end of it), DISCUSSIONS develop among the audience during the presentation, or the speakers themselves decide to involve the audience in the presentation with a discussion. Discussions are not an accessory or an end in themselves. They serve to critically discuss a topic with others, to remember, process, transfer or classify the contents presented and thus to increase the learning effect. Discussions also make it possible to establish a particular connection between the content taught and current or everyday topics/questions. Ultimately, a successful discussion is also the core of the course format "seminar", as all participants can contribute their knowledge, views and ideas.

However, for this to be as productive as possible, a plenary/group discussion also needs skilful facilitation to start the discussion in the first place, to keep it going and also to deal with difficulties in understanding. If the discussion is part of your lecture or follows on from it, it may well be that you are responsible for MODERATING the discussion instead of your lecturer. There are some basic rules and hints that should be followed:

- Two main principles apply to the moderator of the discussion: NEUTRALITY and VALUATION. On the one hand, you should refrain as much as possible from expressing your own opinion and evaluating the contributions of others. If you express them, it should be clear that you are doing so as a participant in the course and not as a presenter or expert on the topic, so that the impression is not created that the position expressed by the presenters is the "right" one or the one "wanted" by the lecturers. In addition, you should not use leading questions, i.e. questions that already suggest what answer is expected. On the other hand, you should respect and accept all justified opinions and contributions of the participants equally and only refute them by factual and logical counter-argumentation (instead of interrupting or making fun of them, for example).
- As a moderator, you should pay particular attention to the CLEANLINESS of the discussion - especially in controversial discussions - so that the participants do not try to assert their point of view, e.g. by insults or insinuations, or so that individual participants do not try to take over the discussion, interrupt others, etc. o You should also make sure that the discussion is fair. Depending on the topic and situation, it can be helpful to agree on such "rules of the game" for the discussion with everyone in advance (although a fair tone should actually go without saying at the university). In general, you should try to create an open and pleasant atmosphere at the beginning of the discussion.
- The moderator should also make sure that the discussion does not deviate too much from the topic - unless the deviation is important or helpful for the learning content or the lesson

topic - and address this if necessary without "cutting off" or "censoring" contributions. He/she also ensures that the discussion does not fall asleep. It can help to encourage the group or individual participants to speak or to bridge "pauses in the discussion" with their own contributions.

- Even if it is rather rare at the university, the moderator must also deal with DISORDERS and CONFLICTS and clear them up. However, the lecturers are usually also responsible for this. Nevertheless, it is worthwhile to think about how to deal with disruptions in a professional manner so that such a negative event does not rub off on the presentation.
- As a moderator, you will also help the discussion a lot if you - if you have the possibility - take stock of the results, i.e. write down important discussion results on the board/flipchart, etc.. At the end of the discussion it is also very helpful if the moderator briefly summarises the results again orally (or in writing, if possible).

In order to successfully manage these tasks as a moderator, there are different types of questions that you can and should use in a discussion:

**QUESTIONS IN GENERAL**

Establishing a relationship with the audience, activating the audience, increasing attention, increasing comprehensibility, introducing one's own explanations - questions can take on all these functions. When asking questions as a speaker or moderator, you should make sure to give the audience at least 3-4 seconds to think. This is not always easy, as silence and pauses tend to be perceived as uncomfortable. Nevertheless, you should allow the audience this time to formulate a speech - especially if no one has said anything yet - and endure the silence for a while instead of continuing directly with the next question or giving an answer yourself. It is better to avoid knowledge questions and closed questions (yes/no) in discussions, as they are not conducive.

Do not be afraid of questions from the audience. They show the interest of the audience and should therefore be taken seriously. You can deal with follow-up questions in the following way:

- Step 1: Listen to the questioner attentively and with interest, if necessary take notes in bullet points if the question is longer or more complicated.
- Step 2: Repeat the question (in summary) (this ensures that you have understood the question correctly).
- Step 3: Answer the question calmly and objectively, preferably in a structured way. If you do not have a suitable answer, it is better to be honest and open about it than to try to "talk your way out of it" with an inappropriate answer. In this case, you can also pass on questions to other participants first and thus involve them in the discussion again before answering the question yourself.

## QUESTIONS AND TECHNIQUES TO INITIATE A DISCUSSION

If you want to stimulate a discussion with questions, you should consider beforehand: What do I want to achieve? Do I want to contrast different points of view on a topic? Do I want to advocate a solution to a problem, a proposal, a demand? Or do I want to justify a point of view? Depending on what the goal is, you can design the questions differently:

- **Short & comprehensible open-ended introductory question**: Those who are already overwhelmed by the introductory question will have inhibitions about participating in a discussion. Closed questions [yes/no] are not suitable because they can be answered quickly and do not evoke follow-up questions.
- **Thesis that invites comments**: Provocative theses, which do not necessarily have to reflect the opinion of the speaker, are particularly suitable as an introduction to a controversial discussion. They serve to get a discussion going and do not have to be confirmed at the end.
- **Input by film or quotation**: The material that is to initiate the discussion and to which the participants react does not have to come from you. Of course, you can also use (audio-visual) quotations - especially when it comes to provocative statements. In this case, however, you should couple them with a concrete question so that the audience also knows that they are supposed to react to it (e.g. "Do you agree with this?").
- **Divide the audience into pro and con groups**: Especially for controversial topics/issues, it may be worthwhile to turn the discussion into a debate by "forcing" one half of the audience to take a certain view on the topic and "forcing" the other half of the group to take the opposite position. If participants are asked to take a view that may not be their own, this can help to get arguments and contributions that one would not normally have thought of. Here it can also be useful to give the two (or more) groups a little time to prepare their point of view and arguments before the debate.
- **Short poll/vote**: Sometimes it is not so much about exchanging arguments, but more about getting a distribution of opinions on a certain topic. In this case, a simple poll or vote is suitable instead of a discussion, in which the participants do not explain their position or support it with arguments. This can be done in different ways. Voting by show of hands is certainly the easiest and quickest method, but it has the disadvantage that it is not anonymous and that counting the messages is rather difficult with many participants. A written vote is anonymous and easier to "count", but it also takes much longer.

## QUESTIONS AND TECHNIQUES TO SUSTAIN A DISCUSSION

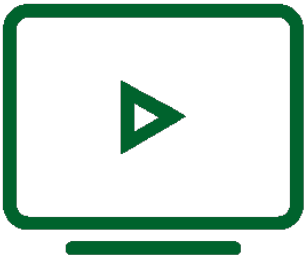
A plenary discussion is only really helpful if as many participants as possible exchange their points of view and arguments and refer to each other, so that there is lively participation from as many listeners as possible. Logically, this is not the case if only a few participants exchange views or if the discussion is over quickly. The following techniques can be used to keep a discussion going:

- **Overcome stagnation**: If no one wants to give a first answer, you can explain the topic again to create a better understanding, or choose another introductory question. If there are long pauses or sudden silences during a discussion, you can take stock of what has been said so far and make it easier for the participants to follow up on what has been said or to point out which aspects have not yet been addressed. If necessary, you can also steer the discussion in a different direction by asking new questions or initiate a new discussion. However, if you notice that new contributions only repeat old ones or that no one really wants to say anything more, you should not artificially prolong the discussion, but rather draw your own conclusion or supplement it with your own contributions. However, this should never be done too early. You should always allow some time for reflection first.
- **Remind of topic/objective and defer questions that stray too far:** If a discussion digresses from the actual topic or is in danger of "getting out of hand", the moderator should address this openly and remind the audience of the topic or the objectives of the discussion. However, if possible, one should not just "censor" or "cut off" the divergent contributions, but postpone the (obvious) need to speak to another time or another medium after consultation with the lecturers (e.g. own discussion in another session or further discussion after the current one, exchange in an electronic rea-der/forum etc.).
- **Provocative questions:** If you notice that few or no new points of view and arguments are being expressed, a deliberately provocative question can be used to generate contradiction and the impulse for new contributions. As a moderator, you can also distance yourself from the provocation and explain (afterwards) what the actual purpose of the question was.
- **Short poll/poll:** Polls or surveys are not only useful to initiate discussions, but also to get stalled discussions going again and to re-motivate participants. Similar results can be achieved with an opinion/assessment question to everyone. Here, each person in turn is asked to give his/her opinion on an issue. This not only shows how opinions are distributed, it also integrates all participants and can lead to new points of view. ATTENTION: However, you should not force anyone to speak if he/she does not want to.

## 3. WITH WHAT DO I PRESENT?

### 3.1 APPROPRIATE USE OF MEDIA

It is not only in the university setting that it is customary to use **AIDS AND VISUALISATIONS** in a presentation to support the lecture. However, these should never be an end in themselves, but should always have one or more functions: Most of the time, aids are used to facilitate the explanation (by the presenter) as well as the understanding (by the audience) of complex content. Content that is visualised in this way can be better understood and retained. However, aids are also suitable for loosening up the presentation, bringing variety into a lecture, thus motivating and



extending the attention span of the audience. Visualisations thus support the **UNDERSTANDING AND RETENTION** of the material presented, i.e. the two main goals of a presentation. However, they should only be used in such a way that they do not distract from the actual content of the presentation, which can easily happen with a "flood" of images. Less is sometimes more here too! Especially at university, there are many ways to enrich your lecture with tools and media. The guiding question when deciding which ones to use should always be:

**What content do I want to convey and**
**in what way can I do this in the best possible way?**

Probably the most common way at the university is to design presentation slides with a **PRESENTATION PROGRAMME**, usually in **POWER POINT** from the Microsoft Office package, which is accessible to every user with a university account via the ZDV. Alternatively, there are similar programmes that are completely free of charge, such as the Open Office programme "Im-press" or "Prezi" (www.prezi.com | ATTENTION: With a free licence of Prezi, the created presentations are publicly viewable online; students can also obtain a free private licence if necessary). Presentation programmes offer the advantage that you have a lot of design options, that you can support your presentation very easily with multimedia (sounds, music, videos, pictures), that you also have access to the internet in most seminar rooms and that it is basically possible to make the presentation slides electronically available to all participants in advance or afterwards. Even if there is no laptop or beamer available on the day of the presentation, it is possible to distribute the previously prepared slides as a printout.

Depending on the type of content presented, presentations, i.e. prepared slides which disappear again after a few minutes, are not always the best form of presentation. Therefore, it is worthwhile to think about ALTERNATIVE PRESENTATION POSSIBILITIES for every presentation. Other useful media are, for example:

- **OVERHEAD PROJECTOR** - Although the self-designed overhead slides incur additional costs, they are quite suitable as a substitute for a presentation programme if one can do without video, sound or animations, or as a supplement to a presentation programme if, for example, certain content should not "disappear" but be visible for longer or permanently. Overhead transparencies can also be prescribed or created during the lecture, which can offer additional advantages. ATTENTION: While beamers are widely used, not all seminar rooms have an overhead projector.
- **WHITEBOARD/TABLE** - A whiteboard or blackboard is particularly suitable for audience participation or for recording comments/questions from the audience. Certain contents of the lecture may be easier to understand if they "emerge" during the lecture. Blackboards/whiteboards are available in almost every seminar room. Chalk or dry-wipe (!) pens, on the other hand, often have to be organised by the participants themselves.

- **STANDWALL/FLIPCHART/MODERATION CARDS** - Some (few) seminar rooms offer the possibility of using a flipchart or movable walls to have another, movable surface for "blackboard writing" on paper. The advantages are similar to those of a table, but the movable walls/flipcharts can be moved aside as needed. They are particularly suitable for group work (e.g. presentation of results). Both labelled papers and moderation cards can be pinned to movable walls, which are particularly suitable for sorting and clustering individual aspects. However, most of these materials have to be organised at the university itself.
- **AND MUCH MORE...** - You are welcome to give free rein to your creativity when it comes to the ways and means of making your presentation lively, appealing and easier to understand. A lecture on comedy as a carnival speech? A presentation about weblogs in a blog? A little quiz for the audience? Anything is possible and makes sense, as long as it fits the content and is not just an accessory. However, you should clarify with the lecturers beforehand what possibilities you have for design.

The decision on which tools to use should not be taken lightly, because their design does take time and effort, and tools that are not used optimally will do more harm than good to your presentation. You should go through the following **CHECKLIST FOR HOLDING A MEDIA-SUPPORTED PRESENTATION**:

- What is the aim of my presentation? How and where can aids help me?
- What expectations does the audience have of my presentation?
- What are the expectations of the lecturer?
- What are the spatial requirements (size, layout, ...)?
- What technical equipment does the room have (beamer, overhead, ...)? Which things do I still have to get or buy?
- What time frame do I have available? What is possible in this time?
- How can I handle the different media? How well do I know them?
- Is there a reasonable relationship between effort and return?
- Should I illustrate complex contents with graphics/tables?

## 3.2 POWERPOINT-PRESENTATIONS

Since most students and lecturers use PowerPoint, some tips and hints on its use are listed below.

How the PowerPoint slides are designed in terms of colour and content or layout is, of course, a matter of taste. Nevertheless, there are some **GENERAL NOTES AND FORMAL BASIC RULES** that you should observe when working with presentation programmes. When designing them, you should always keep the "question of all questions" in mind - "What content do I want to convey and how can I do this in the best possible way?"

- **OUTLINE AND STRUCTURE** - Every scientific presentation needs a meaningful and comprehensible outline and structure. This also applies to the presentation slides. Even if you use slides only selectively, i.e. for individual parts or contents of your presentation, it should always be clear from the slides to which part they refer. The structure and arrangement of individual slides should also be reflected in the alignment and spacing of individual elements. If you decide to accompany your entire presentation with slides, it makes sense to start with a cover sheet or a "welcome slide" and end with a summary (this can alternatively/additionally also be distributed as a handout). For longer presentations or complex topics, it is also advisable to present the structure of the presentation by means of a slide ("table of contents") after the welcome.
- In the **HEADER AND/OR FOOTER** of the slides, the framework in which the presentation takes place should always be recognisable (e.g. title of the seminar, name of the speakers, topic of the presentation, ...). Slide numbering can help both the presenters and the audience to refer to certain contents in later discussions. Automatic slide numbers can be set in PowerPoint.
- **SPARENCY** - Sparseness is a basic principle. The slides should neither be overloaded with information/text nor with design. However, slides that are too minimalistic (black text on a white background) may also be unsuitable for attracting attention. Economy also applies to the use of animations (e.g. the appearance and disappearance of text, moving text, moving images, etc.). Such animations take time, can distract from the content and sometimes seem forced.
- **UNIFORMITY** - The typeface, font, font size, font colour, spacing and highlighting should be as uniform as possible and easily recognisable by all participants.
- **FORMAL DESIGN OF TEXT**
  - The font size on slides should be at least 20 pt so that it can be read from the very back of the room.
  - A font without serifs is usually easier to read in presentations, e.g. Arial instead of Times New Roman.
  - Use as few different colours as possible.

- USE consistent **and** NOT *too* ***much emphasis***.
- The most important principle is readability. This always takes precedence over all other design principles.

- **TEXT QUANTITY** - The amount of text on each slide should remain limited. Slides should therefore not be "overloaded" and should contain only the essentials, ideally in bullet points where whole passages of text, sentences or quotes are not important. If a lot of text is necessary, it is better to distribute it sensibly over several slides instead of "squeezing" it onto one slide. Remember that the slides only support your presentation and do not have to contain everything you say. Here, 3-4 bullet points per slide are usually more than enough.
- **CLARITY AND ORDER** - The information on each slide should be organised, structured and "functional". Elements that belong together should be closely spaced, while separate or contrasting elements should be more widely spaced. Elements above or next to each other should be aligned, e.g. text should be indented to the same height. Use visual orientation aids such as arrows, boxes, lines, etc. for this purpose.
- **VISUALISATIONS** - It is often advisable to use visualisations instead of pure textual information. Advantages of visualisations are:
  - They can have a motivating function, loosen up a presentation and make the lecture varied.
  - They can have a positive effect on the audience's attention, making them more "receptive".
  - They make it easier for the audience to understand complex content and in some cases they are also easier to remember.
  - Visualisations appeal to additional senses.

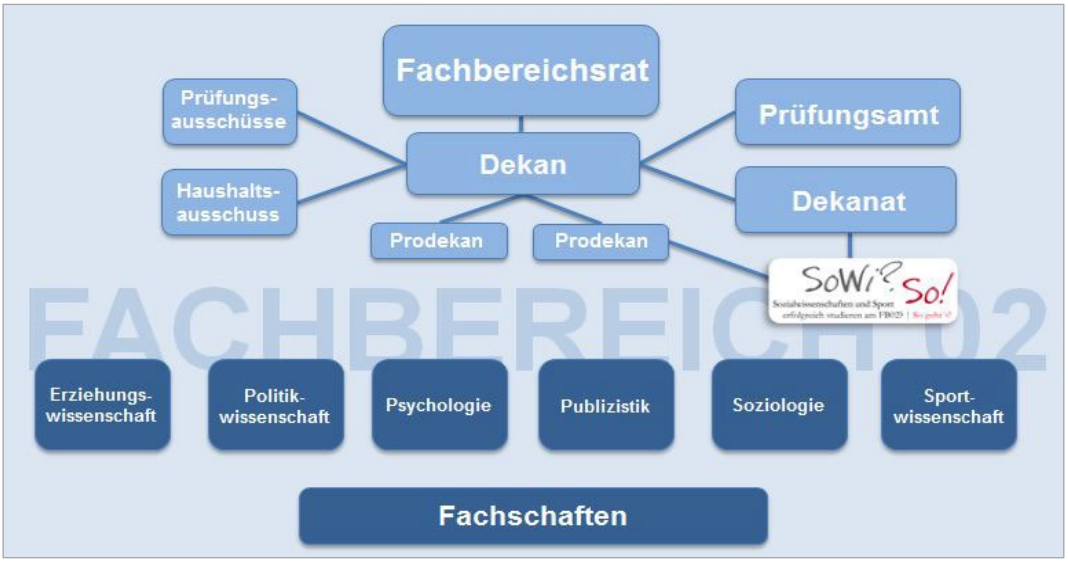
    → Visualisations can therefore support the understanding and retention of the content to a particular extent. However, the principle of "Form Follows Function" applies here: No matter which visualisation you choose: It must fulfil a clear function and should not be an end in itself. However, images, for example, can convey meaning, but they can also have the useful function of loosening up slides or conveying moods. They should nevertheless be related to the content.

There are numerous possibilities for visualisation, including pictures, tables, graphs, diagrams, videos, timelines and much more. The contents can be prepared in different ways, each with different results. For example...

- **…as text…**

> *Six subjects belong to Faculty 02:*
>
> Education, Political Science, Psychology, Journalism, Sociology, Sports Science.
>
> *(Management) Committees, persons, organisational units:*
> Departmental Council (professors, students, academic & non-academic staff)
> Dean's office, dean, associate deans,
> Examination Office, Examination Committees, Budget Committee
> SoWi?So!
> Subjects, student councils

- **…or as Organisational chart:**



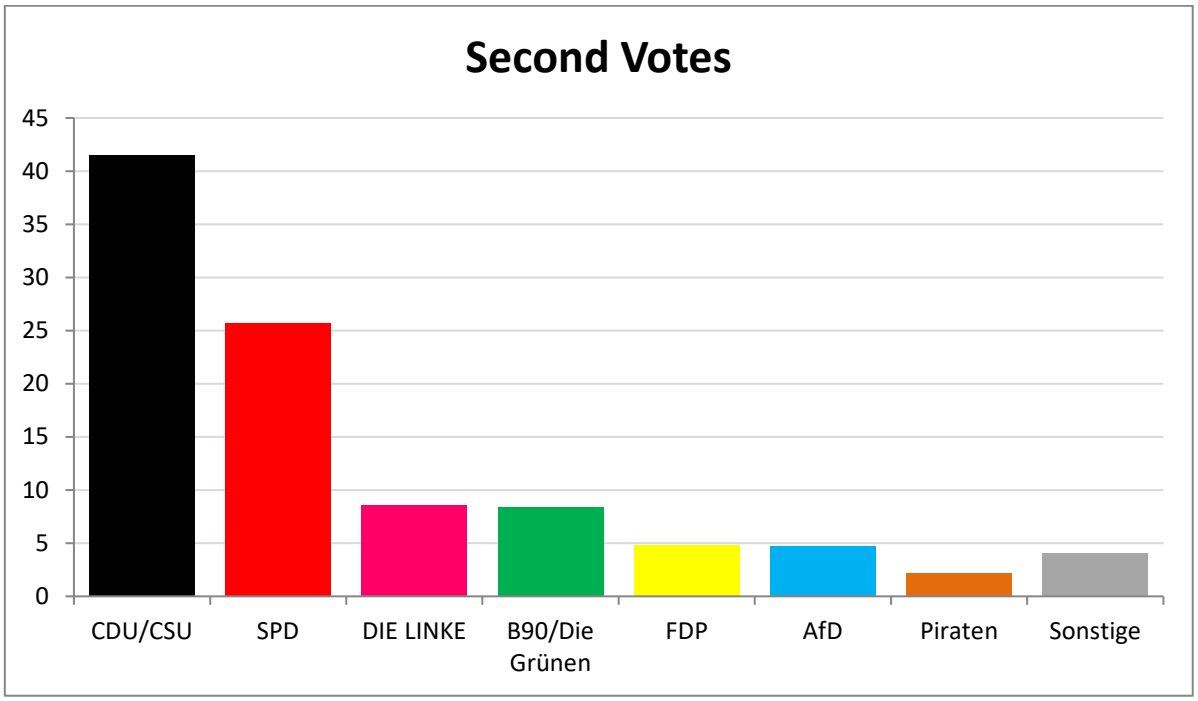
- **…as a statistic…**

***German Federal elections***

**Result second votes**
CDU/CSU: 41,5 %
SPD: 25,7 %
DIE LINKE: 8,6 %
B90/Die Grünen: 8,4 %
FDP: 4,8 %
AFD: 4,7 %
Piraten: 2,2 %
Others: 4,1 %

**Distribution of seats in the Bundestag:**
Absolute Majority: 316 Seats
CDU/CSU: 311
SPD: 193
DIE LINKE: 64
B90/Die Grünen: 63
Total seats: 631

- **…or as a graphic:**



- …sometimes it makes sense to visualise content "live" during the lecture. For example, it is easier for the audience if a complicated mathematical formula is calculated step by step than if it appears directly. This is possible, for example, on a blackboard/whiteboard, but also through animations in PowerPoint.

$$\left(\sqrt{X_{\min}{}^2 + d^2} - l_1\right)^2 = d^2$$

In addition, visualisations such as diagrams, blackboard pictures, etc. can also be worked out together with the audience, which further increases understanding and learning effects.

- **TIME REQUIREMENT** - A popular "mistake" when presenting with PowerPoint is to create far too many slides and thus too much information for the available presentation time. Although the pace and time of speaking varies between speakers, the following can be used as a rule of thumb for different types of slides:
  - Enumertaion: 2 – 4 Min
  - Pictures/ Diagrams: 3 – 6 Min
  - Charts/Statistics: 4 – 8 Min
  - Tables: 3 – 7 Min
  - Workflows: 4 – 8 Min

- **PRACTICAL TIPS –** Make use of the many practical possibilities that presentation programmes offer you. In PowerPoint, for example, you can use the "w" key to fade the presentation in and out briefly if necessary. The "b" key turns the screen black. It can also be useful to make changes to the slides during the presentation. In addition, newer PowerPoint versions offer the possibility of making notes on each slide and displaying them in presentation mode on the laptop together with the time, while the audience only sees the finished slides.

## 3.3 HANDOUTS

A "**HANDOUT**", i.e. one or more printed pages that are distributed to the audience during the lecture, can basically take on different forms. Here, too, the terms are not always clearly delineated in everyday university life or are often used synonymously:

*Thesis papers, summaries, additional discussion and illustrative material, selected quotations, graphs and diagrams, literature lists, etc.*

A successful handout can therefore fulfil different functions, e.g. only convey certain information such as diagrams, tables, quotations, pictures or contain work assignments. In the context of a presentation in a seminar at the university, however, the term "handout" often refers to the summary handout that accompanies the presentation, which summarises the core content of the presentation and also contains the important literature references. There are also certain requirements for such a handout, which should be adhered to when designing it. The following aspects should be considered (adapted for other types of handout):

**Functions of the Handouts**

- A successful handout presents the relevant points of view in a concise, structured and clear manner. The keyword "relevant" is important here, because the handout should under no circumstances contain the entire presentation.
- Instead, it should make it possible to review the important content of the lecture afterwards; it thus serves the immediate understanding of the material. But it can also serve as a "red thread" during the lecture, making it easier for the audience to follow the lecture.
- It relieves from or facilitates taking notes during a presentation, so that the audience can fully concentrate on the actual presentation.
- The participants are given something to "take away". This means that the content of the presentation is not "lost" and is also available for later follow-up.

**What does a good handout look like?**

- It usually comprises 2-3 pages, but never more than 5 pages.
- It should be uniformly designed, structured and ideally structured along the lines of the presentation. Clarity and economy are important principles here - just as with presentation slides.
- The framework in which the handout was handed out should always be recognisable (e.g. in a header or footer). This includes the title of the seminar, the name of the lecturer, the name of the speaker, the topic of the presentation, date, etc. The handout should also contain page numbers (if there are any).
- It contains page numbers (if it is more than one page), so that the lecturer as well as the audience can easily refer to concrete contents, e.g. in case of questions.
- At the end of the handout, the sources used by the speaker are indicated so that the audience has the opportunity to deepen certain information or to obtain further information.

**When do I hand out the handout?**

A handout can be given both before and after a paper or lecture, and there are good reasons for both methods. If you do not want to anticipate anything and you are confident that you can give a varied, well-structured and comprehensible presentation, it can be useful not to give the audience the opportunity to concentrate on the handout with their heads down, which can distract from the actual presentation (if time permits, it is therefore also advisable to give the audience a moment after handing it out before the presentation begins). In addition, you may want to stimulate discussion with a surprise ending and not reveal all theses from the outset. In this case, it can be advantageous to hand out the handout after the presentation. In this case, however, the audience should be informed that there will be a handout later.

On the other hand, a good handout distributed before the presentation can help the audience to follow and understand the presentation and serve as a common thread. In addition, the audience can make specific notes on the handout about some of the content, which makes it easier to understand afterwards.

## 3.4 DEVELOPING CONTENT

Besides the classic lecture with the help of PowerPoint or other media, there are of course many other ways to **PRESENT** important **CONTENT** or to develop it during the lecture. This is especially important when the audience is involved in the creation of the content, e.g. in plenary discussions or in GROUP WORK. The use of such didactic tools and different forms of presentation can have a significant learning effect, be a welcome change and motivate and activate the listeners in a special way. Therefore, they can of course also be part of a "normal" presentation with PowerPoint. It should be noted that different forms of presentation have their own specific advantages and disadvantages, which can have a significant impact on the understanding and retention of the audience:

| | ADVANTAGES | DISADVANTAGES |
|---|---|---|
| **CLUSTERING**<br>= (Joint) collection of relevant content; subsequent grouping of this content according to relatedness/similarity; clarification of relationship through distance/proximity & arrangement | • Visual presentation serves as orientation and arouses interest<br>• Useful for abstract content<br>• Openness for different categories | • Seems like a closed system in which the process of developing the categories is hardly comprehensible for the listeners. |
| **PRESENTING**<br>= (Oral) reproduction of the relevant contents | • No distraction from the speaker | • No orientation, as there is no visual representation<br>• No visual supplementation of the audience possible |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **MINDMAPPING**<br>= (joint) collection of relevant content on a central concept; clarification of relationships by linking the concepts; hierarchical system (branching, etc.) | • Visual presentation serves as orientation and arouses interest<br>• Open for additions by the listeners<br>• Comprehensibility of the associative development process of ramifications and categories | • Danger of confusion due to openness<br>• Compulsion to concentrate on a few supercategories and concise terms |

If you use didactic methods of this kind in your presentation, please note that they require different amounts of time and - if you want to involve the participants - must also be explained. If content is visualised by you or the group, it can be helpful to record these visualisations (on the board, flipchart, etc.) photographically and make them available to all participants afterwards.

## 4. PRESENT, PRESENT, PRESENT

As with all forms of academic work, the following also applies to presenting: "No master has ever fallen from the sky". No matter how good and confident you feel in your presentation, you can only learn and perfect presentation skills by presenting. Your school knowledge and the tips in this guide (or in the further reading) form a good basis - but you can only really learn to present by doing it. Therefore, take every opportunity to try your hand at this important key skill. The advantage is that presenting is usually more fun and offers room for individual development than other forms of work. And since presentations are often not part of the module examination, you can also try things out quite freely and give your creativity free rein. Your lecturers and fellow students will thank you, because a good presentation stands out from the crowd, raises the level of the course and remains in the memory. We wish you lots of fun and success!

## 5. FURTHER READING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**IMPRINT**

This document was originally created as part of the overall project Teaching, Organizing, Consulting (LOB) 2013-2020 at Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz

LEHREN ORGANISIEREN BERATEN

GEFÖRDERT VOM

Bundesministerium für Bildung und Forschung

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*and is continuously updated and revised by the staff of the SoWi?So!.*

Publisher: SoWi?So! – Erfolgreich und international studieren und lehren
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