

Economics 313, Winter 2024, Presentation Assignment

Students will be assigned a topic in groups of three (there may one or groups of two). Each topic will entail a policy debate related to the Great Recession, covid-19 recession, or the macroeconomic situation.

Each group is to divide the presentation into 3 parts:

i) person who will present the question. This includes explaining who supports each side of the question, as well as the evidence, econometric and otherwise, that is relevant to the question. For groups of two, the presenters might split this part between them.

ii) one presenter should then argue each side of the issue

Here are some guidelines:

1. Plan on speaking for about 15 minutes total.
2. Try to identify the core economic issue which causes reasonable and informed people to disagree. Then argue for why your side of the issue is correct. For example, many economic policy debates boil down to one side believing that a market failure exists while the other believes that markets are efficient. In this example, you should identify the market failure, or lack thereof, and explain why your position remedies the problem or why the other side's does not.
3. A good presentation will acknowledge, refute, or mitigate the other side's best arguments.
4. In some cases, we will have already covered the related material in class. In others, we will not have done so. In the latter case, you will want to provide more background than the former.
5. Your goal is to provide reasoned and informed arguments to an audience of people with extensive coursework in economics. Tailor your presentation accordingly.
6. Students who fail to show up for their presentation will receive a zero, and no opportunity for a makeup will be offered. If an unexpected conflict emerges, please contact me immediately. If a student does not show up, I will ask for a volunteer to "wing it." Such a volunteer may receive extra credit at my discretion; their grade cannot be adversely affected by volunteering.
7. In the past, some presentations have led to lengthy further discussion. This is welcomed.

8. I am aware that this assignment may cause some students considerable anxiety, especially among those with little experience public speaking. I think overcoming this anxiety to give an effective presentation is an important skill, which is part of my motivation for including this assignment in the class. Remember that I am happy to meet with you or email with you to discuss your preparation and make sure that you are on the right track.

9. Your grade solely depends on the quality of your arguments, not your position. Some topics are more difficult than others, I adjust my expectations accordingly.

Here is the list of statements. Depending on enrollment, one may be dropped. If needed, I may provide clarification or refinement of topics in class prior to the presentations.

Wednesday, January 31: The Federal Reserve should either either cut interest rates in January or signal that it will do so soon. **Thomas, Kaden, Alice**

Wednesday, February 7: The Federal government should continue to promote home ownership as a standalone goal.**Eric, Maeve, Alec**

Wednesday, February 14: The Fed is mostly to blame for high inflation since 2021.**Matt, Maggie, Noah**

Wednesday, February 28: The U.S. government should have saved Lehman Brothers.**Bea, Hailey**

Wednesday, March 6:Fiscal policy was more effective during the covid-19 recession than the Great Recession.**Emmy, Max, Eli**

Wednesday, March 13: The regulatory structure imposed after the Great Recession has made future financial crisis far less likely.**Alexi, Rawson, Spencer**

Wednesday, March 27: The large U.S. national debt has become a significant drag on growth **John, Chrissy, Cam**

Wednesday, April 3: Lockdowns were the correct policy to combat covid-19.**Joe, Tyler, Ben**