

Academic Writing in Econ (Ph.D.)

Lec 3 - Conf. Participation & Presentation

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March 9, 2025

Presentation & Networking

- ▶ Seminar and Conference Presentations
 - ▶ Identifying Seminars and Conferences
 - ▶ Networking and Interacting with Peers
 - ▶ Presentation Guidelines

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Why?

- ▶ You **MUST** present your research to your peers and mentors **REGULARLY** - many advantages
 - ▶ 1. Important feedback on your work - improves quality
 - ▶ 2. Your work gets noticed - improves citation
 - ▶ 3. Creates opportunities, e.g., publication in a special issue of a journal
 - ▶ 4. Collaboration - people would invite you to join related projects

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Why?

- ▶ Advantages of presentation cont...
 - ▶ 5. Improves communication skills - even your vocabulary
 - ▶ 6. Get inspiration from successful academics
 - ▶ 7. Meet up with co-authors and progress on an ongoing work
 - ▶ 8. Improve your CV - positive signals
- ▶ I co-authored some of my great work with colleagues I met during presentations (conferences & staff seminar series)

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Where to present?

- ▶ Departmental seminar series & (brown bag) - you get in-house peer input
- ▶ Conferences & Workshops: input from peers in your area of research
 - ▶ Attend at least one conference per year - a couple of more is better!
 - ▶ Attend as many sessions as possible - don't skip sessions to visit the souvenir shop! Plan for it after the conference
 - ▶ Particularly don't miss keynote sessions! They often offer:
 - ▶ Rich insights on a specific topic
 - ▶ Directions of future research
 - ▶ Learning and inspiration

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Conference Funding

- ▶ Funding for conference presentation is substantial particularly to early-career & global south researchers
- ▶ Plan for it way in advance - in many research grants, you can include travel cost to conferences
- ▶ Many conferences are nowadays giving scholarship for participants from the global south, e.g.,
 - ▶ The African Economic Conference - November/December
 - ▶ Economic Development in Africa (CSAE, Oxford conference) - March
 - ▶ European Association of Environmental and Resource Economists (EAERE) conference - end of June
 - ▶ Environment for Development (EfD) Annual Conference - October

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Effective Presentation

In part from Cochrane & Cox (2019) - Be Clear

- ▶ Use fewer words - do not read from the slides
- ▶ Do not put in too many equations - people can't follow them that fast
- ▶ Leave slides up for a decent amount of time for people to digest them
- ▶ Get to the point as quickly as possible - what you do & find
- ▶ Speak loudly, slowly and clearly

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Effective Presentation

In part from Cochrane & Cox (2019) - Time Flies

- ▶ Time goes much faster than you anticipated - this happens even if you rehearsed your presentation several times
 - ▶ Unexpected technical issues
 - ▶ Distraction during presentation
- ▶ Thus, you need to get to the point - avoid long motivation or extensive lit review
- ▶ Avoid preview of results - at least in conference presentations - you're given 15-20 min!
- ▶ Otherwise, time will be up and you will have to rush the results - the most important part!

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Effective Presentation

In part from Cochrane & Cox (2019) - Listen & Learn

- ▶ Listen to questions all the way to the end - take a breath before answering
 - ▶ Respond concisely - do not be defensive!
- ▶ Sometimes it is ok to postpone answers to questions - but do not forget
- ▶ Always keep a notebook handy and take notes
 - ▶ Questions/suggestions + names of people who gave you important feedback and suggestions

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Effective Presentation

Cochrane & Cox (2019) - The “Big Five Approach”

1. Tell the audience your **research question** immediately
2. Motivate its **importance**
3. Point out the **limitations** in previous work
4. Elaborate how you're doing **better**
5. Summarize your **main results** up front

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Effective Presentation

Cochrane & Cox (2019) - The “Big Five Approach”

- ▶ After the “big five” move on to the rest of the presentation
 - ▶ Provide an “intuitive appetiser”, e.g., simple model, regression, or graph delivering the main message
 - ▶ Boil your idea to its simplest essence and tell it to the audience
 - ▶ Keep the math as little as possible - undergrad econ level is good!
 - ▶ Emphasise the economic intuition

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Effective Presentation

Harvard Business Review

► Great Presenters:

1. Use fewer slides - and fewer words: reduce clutter where you can
2. Do not use bullet points - consider pictures and images (more likely to be remembered)
3. Enhance their vocal delivery - vary the pace, pitch, and volume of their voice (effective & signals confidence)
4. Create “wow” moments - something that will be remembered
5. REHEARSE! - put substantial time in rehearsing their presentation several times

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Effective Presentation

- ▶ End of Lecture
- ▶ Follow my research X account [@AlemResearch](#)
- ▶ I regularly post research (mostly replicable) conference, fellowship and training related info!