

## What makes a good seminar class presentation?

It's your turn to lead class. What do we expect from you?

First, you should think about what the aim of content for the day or section is.

You will want to be able to summarize the goal, and articulate that summary to us.

You will want to explain the new ideas and definitions, and illustrate them with an example or two. You might need to unpack or verify an example given in the text, or find a different example.

You will want to explain the main results, and the tools we need to get there.

You may want to do some exercises (which have not been assigned for a problem set).

But not everything written in the text needs to be proven in detail in class. And some of the gaps left in the text are things you'll want to fill in. Some of the gaps, you won't.

How do you decide what to include and what not to include? Well, this is a balance of many different issues. The biggest factors are: How important does it seem to be? How un-intuitive does it seem to be? How puzzled or intrigued were you by it? How difficult was this to read in the text (ie, were there lots of gaps for you?) Is this an interesting statement, or a technical, unsatisfying lemma?

**Let me stress this next point: do not ignore something you do not understand, and do not simply parrot something you do not understand.** No, not everything will make sense to you, and that is ok. Part of learning is knowing when you don't know something. And the next step is to work to articulate specific questions about that. Bring those questions to class. Do this in an informed way. That is, once you identify a question, think about it. Does the statement seem to contradict something you already know? What ideas did you use to try to account for the veracity of the statement? It's ok to say "Then the author says....but I can't see why that's the case." You should be prepared to tell us though, how you tried to reason it out, or why it seems like a contradiction. But you should NOT feel that by articulating a question you are unprepared; it is far better to call attention to the gap so we all notice it and can think about it than to pretend everything is fine.

Finally, a note. These are team presentations, but the impact on your final grade is not dependent on your team. So, all members of your team should be involved in presenting. If that's not happening, that's likely because someone isn't doing the work, or because someone isn't letting a team member contribute....both reflect badly on *someone* in the group. While you do not to feel responsible for the ability of your partner to present, you should be trying to meet together to discuss your task (and the material). And you are expected to have thought about all the material in the sections assigned for your presentation, not just those pieces you yourself are expositing.

We may add to this as the term goes on....