Public Debate on Innovation Policy

Seminar Economics of Innovation HT23

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# Debate

During the evening debate, the students will have the opportunity to showcase their understanding of the course topics by engaging in a lively discussion. To ensure an inclusive and manageable debate, a maximum of six participants will be allowed, with two moderators and two individuals representing each side of the argument. In order to provide equal opportunities, the participants will rotate after approximately half the time, allowing different students to contribute their perspectives.

Alternatively, if rotating participants becomes impractical or disruptive, the focus can shift towards the collective effort put into preparing for the debate as the primary learning activity. This would require the students to work collaboratively and allocate responsibilities among themselves to ensure a well-organized and insightful debate.

# Seminar

The seminar serves as a preparatory session for the debate, where the students collectively work on various aspects of the upcoming event. The seminar will be divided into two main parts: organizational aspects and group preparation.

During the initial 30 minutes of the seminar, the students will discuss and decide on essential organizational aspects, such as selecting debate topics, determining the debate format, appointing moderators, and assigning participants to the pro and contra camps. This initial phase is crucial for establishing a solid foundation and ensuring smooth progress throughout the preparation process.

Following the organizational phase, the students will divide into their respective pro and contra groups and spend the next 60 minutes preparing their arguments, conducting research, and formulating persuasive points to support their positions. Throughout this period, the instructors will actively engage with the groups, providing guidance, answering questions, and offering assistance where necessary.

# Teacher Preparation

As teachers, it is important to support the students in their organizational efforts and provide the necessary resources for a successful debate. To begin with, we will book a suitable room and finalize a convenient time for the debate. Additionally, we can take the initiative to invite audience members to ensure a diverse and engaged audience.

In preparation for the seminar, it is advisable to compile a list of thought-provoking questions related to the course topics. These questions will serve as a starting point for the students’ research and preparation, encouraging them to delve deeper into the subject matter. In the event that student groups encounter challenges with organizing themselves, it is prudent to have one or two backup debate topics readily available to keep the seminar productive and on track.

# Grading

For assessment purposes, if grading beyond a pass-fail basis is desired, students can be asked to write a reflection paper as part of their preparation for the seminar. The reflection paper will require students to answer specific questions related to the topics they intend to discuss during the debate, drawing upon the knowledge gained from the course. This exercise will encourage critical thinking, reflection, and the integration of course content into real-world scenarios. Some sample questions for the reflection paper could be:

What is the role of universities in fostering innovation, and how does this impact societal progress?  
How does innovation contribute to addressing the pressing social and environmental challenges of our time?  
What are the ethical considerations that arise when exploring innovation in various industries or sectors?  
How can innovation be effectively managed within organizations, and what factors contribute to successful innovation initiatives?  
Reflect on a specific innovation or technological advancement that has significantly impacted society and discuss its implications, both positive and negative.

These questions should encourage students to think critically, provide well-reasoned arguments, and demonstrate a deep understanding of the course material in the context of real-world applications and challenges.