

Msc Economics, Winter Semester 2019/20

Seminar: Controversial Topics in Economics, Peter Dürsch

Kick off meeting: Wednesday, 30/10/2019, 15:15 – 16:45, D 247

Friday, 20/03/2020, 09:00 – 17:00, F424

Saturday, 21/03/2020, 09:00 – 17:00, F424

Course description:

Students will pick a controversial economic topic to discuss together with another student. Within each pair of students one person will argue the pro position and one person will argue the contra position. Each student will give a short presentation of their side, followed by a discussion of the topic by both sides of the topic. Each student will hand in a 5 pages long paper putting forward their position. Potential topics could include, but are not limited to:

- Peer punishment in overcoming under provision of public good.
- Fixed-pay vs. performance pay in labor markets.
- Is the utility function a good way to describe human behavior?
- Are teams better than individuals in decision making?
- Should food be subject to lower a consumption tax than other goods?
- Should recipients of Social Service (like welfare) be required to do community service?
- For a developed country, is it good to accept more immigrants to sustain its economic growth?
- EU as currency union
- Use of deception in economic experiments

Expected competences acquired after completion of the module: Students will be able to conduct independent research into a topic of interest and evaluate the found fact. They can put forward logical arguments for a position, even if this position do not match their personal opinion. Students will be able to hold a presentation on their own and effectively coordinate their presentation with another student. In writing their final paper, they will hone their ability to write a scientific text.