

Guidelines for students – How to write academic papers

As at: November 2009

Formatting requirements for the presentation of discussions/ideas in seminar papers, assignments and Bachelor's theses

- Title page with name, address, e-mail, number of semesters, title of the paper, submission date and lecturer
- Table of contents with structure and page numbers
- Page numbers in the document
- Line spacing: 1.5; font: Times New Roman 12 or similar
- Right and left margins: min. 3 cm
- Hyphenation switched on and text justified
- At the end: bibliography of literature used, internet sites, articles, etc.
- New spelling rules as per Duden.
- The paper must be bound in some way.
- The length of the paper is set by the lecturer. As a general guide, seminar papers (assessed assignments) should be around 10 pages long, and homework assignments around 20 pages.

Guidelines for citations

You are free to choose the citation format that is appropriate to the subject matter and topic of your paper. Sources may either be referenced in the text, in footnotes after the citation (German format) or in brackets (author, year) (American format). The key is to choose a format and stick to it!

The citation format favoured by the American Psychological Association (APA) is becoming increasingly popular in social sciences, humanities and cultural studies:

Books (monographs): - Author of the book - Year of publication - Title and subtitle (in italics) - Place of publication and publishing house – The edition (from second edition onwards) is shown after the title/subtitle (not in italics).

Edited volumes: - Author of the article - Year of publication

Examples:

Mandel, Birgit (2009). PR für Kunst und Kultur. Handbuch für Theorie und Praxis (2nd, fully revised edition). Bielefeld: transcript.

Flammer, August & Alsaker, Françoise (2002). Entwicklungspsychologie der Adoleszenz. Die Erschliessung innerer und äusserer Welten im Jugendalter. Bern: Huber.

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- Title – In - Name of editor (first name, last name) - Title of volume (in italics) - Page numbers - Place of publication and publishing house

Periodicals: - Author of the article - Year of publication - Title - Title of the periodical (in italics) - Year (in italics) - Issue number (not in italics) - Page numbers (without 'pp.')

Internet sources: - Author of the article - Year of publication - Title - Media type (e.g. online journal) (in italics) - Date accessed – Pathname (without a full stop at the end)

- All written papers should comply with the basic principles of academic writing, which can be gleaned from seminars and literature, e.g.:

- Eco, Umberto. (2007). *Wie man eine wissenschaftliche Abschlußarbeit schreibt*. (12th edition) Weinheim, Basel: UTB Beltz.

- Esselborn-Krumbiegel, Helga (2008). *Von der Idee zum Text. Eine Anleitung zum wissenschaftlichen Schreiben*. (3rd edition) Weinheim, Basel: UTB Beltz.

- Paetzl, Ulrich (2001). *Wissenschaftliches Arbeiten. Überblick über Arbeitstechnik und Studienmethodik*. Berlin: Cornelsen.

- Theisen, Manuel R. (2006). *Wissenschaftliches Arbeiten*. (13th edition) Munich: Vahlen.

Sander, Ekkehard (1999). *Medienerfahrungen von Jugendlichen in Familie und Peergroup*. In Fred Schell, Elke Stolzenburg & Helga Theunert (eds.), *Medienkompetenz. Grundlagen und pädagogisches Handeln* (pp. 220-236). Munich: KoPäd.

Schneider, Wolfgang (2009). *Es geht um die Zukunft unserer Theaterlandschaft. Eine kulturpolitische Polemik aus gegebenem Anlass*. *Kulturpolitische Mitteilungen* 125 II/2009, 50-52.

Drummond, Mary Jane (2000). *Comparisons in Early Years Education: History, Fact, and Fiction*. *ECRP*, 2(1). Downloaded on 23.09.2007 from

<http://ecrp.uiuc.edu/v2n1/drummond.html>

Content requirements for the presentation of discussions/ideas in seminar papers and assignments

The key objectives of any academic paper must be clarity and a logical structure. The reader must be able to understand how you arrived at your statements and conclusions, what they are based on and what they refer to. This is why it is vital that you quote all sources referred to in your paper.

You should also think carefully about the way the paper is structured and about what

subjects you want to deal with, at what length and in which part of the paper. Each paper should consist of three major sections as shown below, but they should be given appropriate headings in line with the subject matter of your paper:

- Introduction (around 1/4 of the paper): introduction of the subject matter, its scope, an explanation of the structure of the paper, the methodology used and a description of the current state of research/previous studies
- Main section (around 1/2 of the paper or more, as appropriate): individual sections structured by topic, with sub-sections where appropriate (if possible with no more than three points, using the decimal system, e.g. point 2.4.2). This is the section where you present your main arguments and methodology and describe the results of your research.
- Conclusion (around 1/4 of the paper): a short summary of the conclusions of your paper, including an evaluation and a look ahead. In this section you should once again refer to the framework or wider context of your work, for example by reflecting on how the results may be interpreted from a cultural policy perspective or in which areas they may be applied. This is the section where it is most appropriate to include your own personal opinions, ideas and leanings.

Bachelor's theses

- Find a supervisor
- Talk to them about subject matter selection and research topic(s)
- Create a synopsis that will act as a guideline and aid for you and your supervisor throughout the research and writing process. A proper synopsis (3-5 pages) should, as a minimum, include the following:

Subject matter/title: Which areas are you going to cover? And which not?

Question (problem): What do you want to know? What question is the paper trying to answer?

Objectives: Why do you want to know the answer to this question? What is the academic purpose or benefit of this investigation?

Methodology

Ask yourself the following questions:

How should I tackle this problem, answer the question and assess the various sources?

Sources (materials)

Which sources should I use? Which sources still need to be investigated?

Individual steps/work plan

What are the individual steps that emerge from this methodology?

Schedule

How much time do I need to carry out each of these individual steps? When is the deadline for my paper?

Table of contents/structure

Which aspects should I deal with, and in what order? How should I structure my arguments and ideas?

Bibliography: What literature am I already familiar with on this topic? How can I build on it?

- Content: When working on the content, please refer to the guidelines on preparing assignments and seminar papers. An academic paper such as a Bachelor's thesis requires a more in-depth treatment of the subject matter, a personal contribution to the current state of research (by filling a gap in the body of research) and hence a broader scope.

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