

## GUIDELINES FOR TERM PAPERS

In your paper, you will examine a certain aspect of either the text(s) you have read in class or other texts related to its overall topic. You will be expected to use relevant secondary sources (e.g. scholarly books and articles), but a paper is more than a compendium of quotations. You should present *your* argument, *your* analysis of the question you are discussing (instead of giving a mere summary of the texts you have read). Before you start writing, you must discuss the outline of your paper with your lecturer. Term papers have to be handed in as print-out and in electronic form via email. Length of term papers: 6.000 words (Proseminar), 7.500-8.500 words (Hauptseminar), 9.000-10.000 words (Masterseminar).

### I. How to Structure Your Paper

#### Introduction

First, introduce your readers to the general topic; then present the specific thesis you will discuss in your paper. This thesis must be clearly stated in the introduction. You should also tell your readers how you will go about your task, and how you will structure your argument.

#### Main Part

In this part, you are expected to prove the thesis you put forward in the introduction. Make sure that your arguments are logical in themselves and follow a coherent order. You should go through your arguments step by step, and you must give sufficient reasons for the claims you make. A division into chapters and, where suitable, subchapters will help you to structure your argument. Give sufficient examples from the text you are analysing to illustrate your argument. Integrate relevant opinions from secondary sources; always acknowledge these sources, even when you do not directly quote them but paraphrase them. When you are quoting material, make sure you tell your readers what you are trying to show with the respective quote.

#### Conclusion

Briefly summarise your initial thesis and the conclusion you have reached. Do not present new arguments.

### II. General Layout

Please use Times New Roman (font size 12pt) or Arial (font size 11pt); use a line spacing of 1.5. Left and right margin should be about 3cm, top and bottom margin about 2cm. Paragraphs should begin indented and there should be no gaps between paragraphs.

## Title Page

The title page is not numbered (pagination starts with the introduction, see below).

Please provide the following information on your title page:

- semester, type and title of the course, lecturer's name
- title of your paper
- your name and address, your course of study (BA, MA, Lehramt), your 'Fachsemesterzahl', date

## Table of Contents

Please provide a table of contents. It might seem superfluous with a seminar paper, but it will help you in structuring your ideas. Furthermore, you should practice this part of writing an academic paper because you will be expected to provide it for your BA/MA thesis or 'Zulassungsarbeit' (at the very latest). Make sure your system of numbering your chapters or sections is consistent. The page containing the table of contents is not numbered, i.e. pagination starts on the next following page (on the first page of your introduction). The chapter headings should give an indication of your argument (i.e. do not use "Chapter 1" or "Main Part").

## Bibliography / List of Works Cited

Make sure you include all articles, books, websites etc. you have quoted from or referred to in your text. Do NOT include any material which you may have read while working on your paper, but to which you do not actually refer in your text.

## III. Quotations and Documentation

Demonstrate in your paper that you know how to look for and use secondary sources (e.g. books, scholarly articles in books or journals, *reliable* websites). Make sure you integrate quotes into your argument (yet be aware that quotes cannot replace the argument itself!). You can use quotes to back up your argument, but also to point out where you disagree with other critics.

When quoting primary or secondary sources, make sure to be precise! You should indicate all omissions as well as additions and changes to the grammatical structure of the original (how to mark this depends on the citation style you work with; see the manual of your respective citation style, e.g. the *MLA Handbook*). If there is a mistake in the original, you should also mark this (usually with [sic]; again, consult the manual of your respective citation style).

***You have to document all cases where you quote or use somebody else's text or ideas!***

Plagiarism is a severe offense in academia. If found out, you will automatically fail the class, and not be given a second chance to write another paper!

Please attach a declaration to your paper stating the following (in German):

Hiermit erkläre ich, dass ich die vorliegende Arbeit selbstständig verfasst habe, dass ich keine anderen Quellen und Hilfsmittel als die angegebenen benutzt habe, und dass ich die Stellen der Arbeit, die ich anderen Werken – auch elektronischen Medien – dem Wortlaut oder Sinn nach entnommen habe, in jedem Fall unter Angabe der Quelle als Entlehnung kenntlich gemacht habe.  
[Date] [Signature]

There are different ways to document quoted material. We recommend using **MLA style** since this is one of the most commonly used citation styles in English and American studies, and convenient for both the reader and the writer of the paper. For more information on how to structure your list of works cited, please consult the **7<sup>th</sup> edition of the *MLA Handbook***. If you choose to use a different style of documentation, please remember that you have to be consistent and precise; and you should check with your lecturer if your chosen style of documentation is acceptable.