



## A SHORT GUIDELINE ON WRITING A TERM PAPER FOR AN ENGLISH SPEAKING SEMINAR

These guidelines provide an orientation on writing a term paper. Please note that lecturers may provide further or deviating rules in some seminars. Specifically, this guideline aims at those papers that are based on a single English research paper that is to be summarized.<sup>1</sup> Also, the following structure of a paper is a suggestion; If there are well considered reasons to deviate from this form that enhance comprehensibility – but not merely reduce the author's workload -, this is not a problem.

### *Content of the term paper*

The *goal* of the paper is to review the material in its entirety and to analyze multiple perspectives (concepts, ideas) of the issues at hand, especially with regard to the general topic that you received. Also the paper should offer conclusions based on a re-examination of the material. The paper contains three main sections; an introduction, a body, and a conclusion.

*Introduction.* This section should be about one to one-and-a-half pages in length. It does two things. First, it "introduces" the topic. This means it should begin with some background information about the topic designed to spark interest in the reader. It should also provide evidence for the relevance of the topic and the area of research the topic belongs to. Secondly, it states what the critical review essay itself will contain, e.g. the main theses. This section should also contain a very short characterization of the state of research.

*Body.* The body of the critical review should be around four or five pages in length. Obviously, theoretical background, method of research, and results should be covered in this section. You should focus on relevant information and should present information in a systematic and comprehensible manner (please make sure you're neither too specific nor too general).

The body may consist of several chapters to provide a more detailed structure. Each chapter should cover a broad line of thought, in general it should contain more than just a single paragraph. Introductory and connecting passages can be used in chapters to provide a comprehensible thread throughout the term paper.

The review should be more than just a re-narration of the original material (e.g., use your own words, do not use quotes all the time); therefore, it is highly recommended that outside

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<sup>1</sup> This guideline focuses on seminars that contain both, paper presentations and some group work on case studies. Papers in other types of seminars might require more comprehensive essays based on two or more papers (e.g., 15 pages), or a summary of an oral presentation (e.g., 2-3 pages).

sources be used to further embody the issues brought forward in the original material and to make your discussion richer in content. Such sources should be taken from peer reviewed journals. You should use all of the same technical terminology that the original author uses (i.e., use “personality” instead of “human nature”).

Within the body you will be expected to supply any important tables and figures that help to clarify the material. Figures and Tables should be self-explanatory, numbered, and should also be referred to and explained in the text.

*Discussion/ conclusion.* This section is typically 2-3 pages in length. Again, the conclusion section has two parts; 1) to summarize the main points already discussed in the body, and 2) to offer your own critique of the original material. A summarization of points already discussed should be calculated and concise. In your critique you should offer your own opinions and any criticisms you have of the original material as well as what you see as the theoretical and practical implications of the original research. Finally, you should offer a paragraph that gives a “take home” message.

### *Technical details*

The term paper should consist of about 8 pages, using 12pt font, 1.5-line spacing, and a right margin of about 3cm. Figures and Tables should be self-explanatory, numbered, and should also be referred to and explained in the text. Citations and References should adhere to the standards of the American Psychological Association (APA-Style). Furthermore, use scientific references, i.e., rather than citing Wikipedia, you should refer to peer reviewed journals.

The Title page has to contain:

- Topic/title of your paper
- Personal information: Name, physical and email Address, Phone number, study year (Semesterzahl), Student ID (Matrikelnummer), study major (e.g., BWL, SoWi, Bachelor Sozialökonomik etc.)
- Course number according to the Prüfungsamt (Prüfungsnummer)
- Course type the paper earns credits for
  - Bachelor students: Please indicate the module
  - Diploma students (WiSo credit-point System): Theorieseminar, Projektseminar etc.
  - International students: Please indicate status
- Lecturer(s)'(s) name(s)
- Diploma/ Master students: 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> Version

Furthermore, the last page of the paper needs to contain a signed statement, either in English or German:

"Hiermit erkläre ich, dass ich die vorliegende Arbeit '*hier Titel einfügen*' selbständig und ohne fremde Hilfe verfasst und keine anderen als die in der Arbeit angegebenen Quellen und Hilfsmittel verwendet habe. Die Arbeit hat in gleicher oder ähnlicher Form noch keinem anderen Prüfungsamt vorgelegen."

"I declare that this paper, “(enter the title of your paper, and omit the parentheses)” has been written by me without further aid beyond the references cited in this work. This paper or a similar version has not been previously turned in somewhere else."

You can download an exemplar with a title page for MS Word from: <http://www.wiso-psychologie.uni-erlangen.de/download/studium/hausarbeitEngl.doc>

Usually, the lecturer sets a due date for the term papers.<sup>2</sup> Bachelor students should turn in a *single version* of their paper.

Diploma/ Master students should turn in *two versions* of the paper. A preliminary grade as well as feedback on the paper is then provided and the author has the opportunity to rework the paper in order to improve the preliminary grade up to one grade (e.g., if the preliminary grade is a 2.7 the grade can be improved up to a 1.7). A *single version* of the reworked paper plus the feedback on the first version suffices. Reworking the paper is not mandatory; if this opportunity is foregone, the preliminary grade will be taken as a final grade.

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<sup>2</sup> Please note that due dates may differ. Specifically, in the case of weekend seminars the due date may be prior to the seminar and turning in this version may be a prerequisite for participation.