

Guidelines for Academic Writing

Final Theses and Seminar Papers

(10.11.2017)

Chair for Organization Studies

Prof. Dr. Daniel Geiger

Universität Hamburg

Faculty for Business, Economics and Social Sciences

Department of Social Economics

Von-Melle-Park 9

20146 Hamburg

Tel. 040/ 42838-9421

Dear students,

These guidelines are intended to assist you in preparing academic papers for the Chair for Organization Studies. Before starting your work, please read these guidelines carefully.

In addition to mandatory requirements, you will find content-related recommendations for academic writing.

If you have any further questions, please visit us during our consultation hours. You can find our consultation hours on our website <https://www.wiso.uni-hamburg.de/fachbereich-sozoek/professuren/geiger/team.html>.

Please contact us via e-mail to make an appointment.

Good luck!

Table of contents

1	In General	- 1 -
1.1	Procedure	- 1 -
1.2	Submission deadline	- 1 -
1.3	Submission of paper copies.....	- 2 -
2	Topic and Content of your work.....	- 2 -
2.1	General information how to find a research topic.....	- 2 -
2.2	Structure and content of the paper	- 3 -
2.2.1	Front cover.....	- 3 -
2.2.2	Table of contents.....	- 4 -
2.2.3	Main part.....	- 5 -
2.2.3.1	Writing style	- 6 -
2.2.3.2	Structure and content.....	- 6 -
2.2.4	List of references	- 7 -
2.2.5	Declaration of Authorship	- 7 -
2.2.6	Appendices	- 8 -
3	Guidelines for formatting articles.....	- 8 -
3.1	Style	- 8 -
3.2	Style of tables and figures.....	- 8 -
3.3	Page numbering	- 9 -
3.4	Scope of work	- 9 -
4	How to cite.....	- 10 -
4.1	Citation in the text.....	- 10 -
4.2	List of references.....	- 11 -
4.3	Plagiarism	- 12 -



5 Further literature - 13 -

1 In General

1.1 Procedure

For a seminar paper or your final thesis you have to come up with an own research topic. Please talk to your tutor during office hours about the scope, focus and aim of your paper.

For developing the structure of your paper, you need to do a thorough search for literature directly related to your topic. Please prepare a table of contents and send it to your tutor. In order to discuss the structure please make an appointment with your tutor during office hours. Please take this opportunity at the beginning of your writing process; otherwise, corrections might be necessary at a later stage of the process.

If you have any further questions during the writing process, please contact your tutor via e-mail to get an appointment.

Keep the individual deadline in mind and submit your work on time.

1.2 Submission deadline

Deadlines must be met; otherwise, your work will not be graded.

Time management is quite important for all your work. The final formatting often takes more time than expected. Your planning should include a time buffer at the end of your writing period – a timetable might be helpful in this case.

The duration of the grading process depends on the type of your work. For more information, please refer to the ‘Studien- und Prüfungsordnung’.

1.3 Submission of paper copies

Please check your work carefully for spelling mistakes, mandatory requirements (chapter 3) and the right citation format (chapter 4). Non-compliance leads to deduction of points. Plagiarism would constitute a fail. In this case, your bachelor- or master thesis may be withdrawn retroactively.

You have to submit several copies. Omitting one of the required formats constitutes a fail.

Final theses and seminar papers are to be submitted to the ‘Studienbüro Sozialökonomie’ in paper- as well as in electronic format (PDF and Word-Document). Please see your ‘Studien- und Prüfungsordnung’ for the exact number of required paper copies.

2 Topic and Content of your work

2.1 General information how to find a research topic

Based on your literature research you should decide on your topic of interest. Develop a clear research question and make sure that you answer that question. Provide a clear definition of important words and phrases of your research question and use it consistently. Never lose sight of your topic. It is recommended to review every completed paragraph of your work concerning the direct or indirect reference of your research question and its context.

Your work starts with the identified problem, the clear definition of your topic and a short but meaningful overview of the structure. For the main part a systematical approach should be developed. The order in which information is presented should be logical so that the reader can follow your thinking. A clear and logical line of argumentation must be traceable. The chapters should be linked with a suitable transition.

Every academic work should include self-developed parts such as the application of theoretical knowledge to a practical issue and the development of an own solution.

2.2 Structure and content of the paper

An academic paper consists the below-listed parts which are to be structured in the following order:

- Front cover
- Table of content
- List of figures (if relevant)
- List of tables (if relevant)
- List of abbreviations (if relevant)
- Table of appendix (if relevant)
- Main body
- List of references
- Appendix (if relevant)
- Declaration of Authorship (not for seminar papers)

2.2.1 Front cover

The front cover must include:

- Complete title of your paper
- Responsible Professor
- Responsible tutor
- Degree program under which the paper is submitted
- Complete details about the chair
- Name of the lecture (only for seminar papers)
- Your name, address, matriculation number, phone number and e-mail

- Semester
- Date of submission

You will find a template on our website:

<https://www.wiso.uni-hamburg.de/fachbereich-sozoek/professuren/gei-ger/lehre/arbeitsleitfaeden.html>

2.2.2 Table of contents

Every paper includes a table of contents, which lists all headings and subheadings with page numbers. The table of contents shows the structure of your work. It should reflect an appropriate solution to your problem.

The work should be divided into sections and, if necessary, subsections. All sections and subsections should have clear and concise headings. The headings serve as guidelines of the overall organization of the thesis. Therefore, headings that reflect the topic and content of the work are better than very general ones (e.g. Analysis). The number of levels depends on the length of the work and the complexity of the subject matter. However, too much complexity should be avoided: The number of levels should not be more than three or four. Each section or subsection should include at least two levels (if there is a level 1.1, your structure has to also include level 1.2).

Take the opportunity to discuss the structure with your tutor in order to clarify remaining questions with regard to your thematic focus.

We recommend a numerical or alphabetical order (see below).

Example: numerical order

1

1.1

1.1.1

1.1.2
1.2
2
etc.

Example: alphanumeric order

A.
 I.
 1.
 2.
 II.
B.
etc.

Example: Numeric order starts with the introduction and ends with the summary.
No bullet points for the lists.

List of tables
List of abbreviations
1. Introduction
2. etc.
6. Summary/Perspective
List of references

2.2.3 Main part

In general, your headings must correspond to your table of contents. A text between heading and subheading is not always necessary.

When including tables and/or figures in an assignment, it is essential that in the text reference is made to all included tables and figures.

If you plan to include a very large table or figure, then such objects are to be placed at the end of the assignment in the appendices section.

2.2.3.1 Writing style

Academic writing is formal and structured. You should communicate clearly and unambiguously. Please refrain from using too many adjectives and avoid popular phrases or clichés.

Correct use of grammar and punctuation is important. They show that you care about your work and have adopted a disciplined attitude towards writing academically. They also help to make sure your meaning is understood. Do not be tempted to use complex language or expressions that are not your own just to make your writing appear 'academic'. Use straightforward language. Your reader needs to understand the information or ideas that you are conveying.

2.2.3.2 Structure and content

Structure is important in academic writing – it helps you to make your ideas clear, guides the reader's comprehension and can strengthen your arguments. The basic structure of a written assignment should contain the following parts: Introduction, main part, concluding part.

Consider writing the introductory section after you have completed the rest of the paper.

What belongs in the introduction section?

- What is your topic?
- Why is it relevant?
- How is your work structured?

2.2.4 List of references

The list of references contains all works cited in the written assignment (books, journals, Internet sources etc.). Make sure that the list is complete. Entries in the list are ordered alphabetically, and, if several references of the same author are cited, they should be ordered chronologically. An additional subdivision of the type of reference is not necessary.

2.2.5 Declaration of Authorship

All final papers have to include the following ‘Declaration of Authorship’.

Ehrenwörtliche Erklärung

Ich versichere hiermit ehrenwörtlich, dass ich meine vorliegende Abschlussarbeit selbstständig verfasst und keine anderen als die angegebenen Hilfsmittel – insbesondere keine im Quellenverzeichnis nicht benannten Internet-Quellen – benutzt habe.

Die Arbeit wurde vorher nicht in einem anderen Prüfungsverfahren eingereicht und die eingereichte schriftliche Fassung entspricht derjenigen auf dem elektronischen Speichermedium.

Wörtlich oder dem Sinn nach aus anderen Werken entnommene Stellen sind unter Angabe der Quellen kenntlich gemacht.

Ort, Datum

Unterschrift (Vor- und Nachname)

2.2.6 Appendices

Appendices are only added if they contribute to a better understanding of the paper and if they formally or objectively do not fit into the text sections (e.g. illustrations or tables).

3 Guidelines for formatting articles

All academic articles have to be formatted according to the following criteria. Non-compliance leads to deductions of points.

3.1 Style

- Papers need to be written in Times New Roman, font size 12
- Line spacing 1.5
- Activate automatic hyphenation and full justification
- Footnotes are written in Times New Roman, font size 10; line spacing 1 (only make use of footnotes for further descriptions such as definitions)
- Lists need to be left-justified
- Top and bottom margin: 2.5 cm; Left margin: 5 cm; right margin: 2 cm

3.2 Style of tables and figures

- Tables, figures and graphs should be placed in the text. Tables and figures within your text must be easy to grasp.
- Each table and figure should be given a caption. Captions are put below the tables and figures. Times New Roman, font size 10; line spacing 1

- Tables and figures within the text should be numbered consecutively throughout your written work (Table 1; Table 2 etc.).
- If a table or a figure taken from another source is modified, the source description is important (chapter 4).
- Own modifications of others work have to be labeled by the prefixed indication ‘Original source:...’ (‘In Anlehnung an’)

3.3 Page numbering

The pages prior to the text body are numbered with roman numerals (front cover without any number). The text body is numbered with Arabic numerals (starting with page 1).

- Front cover (no page number)
- Table of content (roman numerals, start with I)
- List of figures (roman numerals)
- List of tables (roman numerals)
- List of abbreviations (roman numerals)
- List of appendix (roman numerals)
- Text body (arabic numerals, start with 1)
- List of references (arabic numerals)
- Appendices (arabic numerals)
- Declaration of Authorship (arabic numerals)

3.4 Scope of work

You will find information about the scope of your work in your ‘Studien- und Prüfungsordnung’. All specifications of page numbers are understood without front cover, list of figures, table of content etc.

4 How to cite

Whenever you quote or base your ideas on another person's work, you must document the source you used. By following the guidelines of this manual, you avoid plagiarism which is a serious violation of the university's citation rules. Plagiarism can result in expulsion from your course and the university.

As a principle, the original source should be quoted.

4.1 Citation in the text

The most common reference style used is the American system style, which uses parentheses in the text (Author Year: Page number(s)).

A reference quote should be placed at the end of the text. Indirect quotes which refer to a whole book or article should be marked with the name of the author and the year (Geiger 2009). If possible, a page number should be mentioned (Geiger 2009: 459). Also direct quotes should be marked with the author, the year and the page number (Geiger 2009: 459).

If there are several references from the same author during a particular year they are distinguished through the addition of letters in alphabetical order (Geiger 2009a; Geiger 2009b). If the publication you are referring to has several authors, the reference note should include both surnames (separated by /) (Geiger/Antonacoupoulou 2009). Articles with more than two authors are marked with (et al.) – for example (Geiger et al. 2011). All authors must be mentioned in the reference list.

Examples:

- Direct quote: ‘Organizations are understood as self-referential social systems which are inherently dynamic and complex.’ (Geiger 2009: 344).
- Indirect quote: Sometimes organizations are considered as self-referential, complex social systems (Geiger 2009: 314).
- Indirect quote, for a reference to the general idea of a book or article:

Researchers following the linguistic turn often argue that organizations are best understood as self-referential systems (Alvesson 2002; Geiger 2009; Luhmann 1984).

- Secondary quote: Polanyi's argument was that the informed guesses, hunches and imaginings that are part of exploratory acts are motivated by what he describes as passions (Polanyi 1967: 4, cited in Nelson/Winter 1982: 77).

When consecutively citing the same source, it is not necessary to rewrite the source. The acronym (ibid.) or (ibidem) is used; in German (ebd.).

A quote, which continues on the next page, is marked with the acronym 'ff.' for following (Geiger 2009: 77 ff.). In German the acronym 'f.' is used when the quote continues on the next page; e.g. (Geiger 2009: 77 f.). A quote which continues on several pages is marked with 'ff.'.

4.2 List of references

In the list of references, each reference should be listed in alphabetic order according to the surname of the author of the book, article or some other material. If for whatever reason you are unsure of the name of the author use (n. p.) instead. The second line of the paragraph should be indented (see below).

When there is more than one reference from the same author, then these should be listed in chronological order. If there are several sources from one author published within the same calendar year, then use a letter (beginning with 'a') to separate them (e.g. 2001a; 2001b; 2001c etc.).

The publisher should be marked with (eds.) or (ed.) – in case it is just one publisher. In German the publisher(s) is/are marked with (Hrsg.).

Monographs

Luhmann, N.: Soziale Systeme. Grundriss einer allgemeinen Theorie; 1st Edition, Frankfurt a. M.: Suhrkamp 1984.

Edited books

Schreyögg, G./Koch, J. (eds.): Knowledge management and narratives: Organizational effectiveness through storytelling; Berlin: Schmidt-Verlag 2005.

Article in edited books

Geiger, D.: 'The Practice Turn in Organization Science: Some Conceptual and Methodological Clarifications', in: Scherer, G./Patzner, M./Kaufmann, I. (eds.): Methoden der betriebswirtschaftlichen Forschung; Wiesbaden: Gabler 2009, pp. 187-205.

Academic articles in journals

Geiger, D.: Revisiting the concept of practice: Toward an argumentative understanding of practicing, in: Management Learning Vol. 40 No. 2, 2009, pp. 129-144.

Internet sources

Mark the date when the information from the Internet was retrieved as well as the complete URL-address.

4.3 Plagiarism

The reader must be able to identify which part of text is the author's/student's own analysis, discussion or information based on his/her own research, and which part of the text is from other sources such as books or articles. Therefore, the students must include a reference within the text whenever the information presented originates from a written or other identifiable source. It is plagiarism to quote another author's words or ideas without referring to him/her. In addition, incorrect documentation, failure to cite one's sources or simply relying too heavily on external sources is considered as plagiarism.

Citations of sources which are not marked constitute at deception and result in the student failing the examination.

If the deception is recognized at a later stage, the grade will be corrected or, where appropriate, the examination will be regarded as not passed. According to the applicable examination regulations of the Faculty for Business, Economics and Social Sciences the bachelor and master certificate can be withdrawn up to 5 years after the date of certificate, if the bachelor or master examination will be regarded as not passed.

5 Further literature

Björk, L./Räisänen, C.: Academic Writing. A University Writing Course; Lund: Studentlitteratur 2008.

Brookes, A./Grundy, P.: Writing for Study Purposes. A Teacher's Guide to Developing Individual Writing Skills; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1990.

Greetham, B.: How to Write Better Essays; Basingstoke: Palgrave 2001.

Murray, R.: How to Write a Thesis; 2nd Edition, Berkshire: Open University Press 2006.