



Chair of Behavioral Social Policy

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**Guidelines for Writing Seminar Papers,
Bachelor and Master Theses
at the Chair of Economics,
especially Behavioral Social Policy¹**

¹ This introduction is based on the guides written by Prof. Dr. Ronnie Schöb and Prof. Dr. Abdolkarim Sadrieh.

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1. General Information

Be aware of the core questions that you want to answer in your paper and decide which auxiliary questions will support your main questions.

Every scientific paper is divided into an introduction, a main part and a conclusion. The introduction motivates the topic of the paper, makes core and auxiliary questions (knowledge goals) clear and gives an outlook on the following content. At this point, the basic literature is named. The main part builds the argumentation of the thesis. The conclusion summarizes the findings of the paper.

Make sure that the "red thread" of your argumentation is recognizable at all times. Thus, each section should clearly contribute to answering your core questions and treat features of your paper who are distinguishable from other sections. Establish logical links to connect each section with each other.

Figures and tables can support your argumentation in a meaningful way. Make sure to adequately explain all elements of figures and tables in the text. Only the information which is relevant to your thesis should show up in figures. Tables should only present the relevant numbers. Figures and tables copied from books and articles rarely meet this requirement. It is usually better to create the figures by yourself, e.g. using Microsoft Excel, R or Stata. In this case, make sure that the tables and figures correspond to academic standards. For example, avoid including output from statistical analysis software such as Stata as a screenshot. The book "Academic Writing Skills for Economics and Business Administrations" (Karremann et al. 2017) provides helpful guidelines for this.

2. Literature Research and Outline

First, search for fundamental literature (e.g. overview articles). Your supervisor will give you advice on this. After studying the fundamental literature, it is advisable to proceed in two ways:

A) Use the literature cited in the fundamental literature that is relevant to your issue so you familiarize yourself with the topic. Continue in this way in all steps of the process (snowball system).

B) Partial aspects of your topic will result from the fundamental literature which may serve as keywords for a literature search in library databases (e.g. OPAC) and special article search

engines on the Internet (e.g. Google Scholar, econlit, JSTOR). In addition, it is recommended to search literature using network-based association graphs such as connectedpapers.com.

Based on the literature you have already researched, create an outline of your paper. It is advisable to discuss this outline and the researched literature with your supervisor.

3. Style

The work must be written in a clearly understandable way. To ensure this, the following principle applies: Quality is more important than quantity. Readers should be able to follow the train of thought without having to look up the relevant sources themselves.

Restrict the number of direct quotations to an absolute minimum, because they often do not fit into the style of the paper (see also 4. Citations).

4. Citations

The use of third-party intellectual property must be indicated in the text by a precise reference. It is not allowed to use *unrecognizable* texts or ideas of other authors. This practice is called plagiarism and it is treated as attempted fraud. In this context, please note that each thesis may become subject to a software-based plagiarism check. Detected plagiarism will be reviewed and, if approved by the supervisor, will lead to failing the thesis. Therefore, be sure to cite in a *coherent* and *consistent* manner, as outlined below: as much as possible in the text and there only indicate **the name, the year of publication and the page of the used source**. If a longer paragraph or even an entire subchapter is based up on a single literature source, this should be made clear at the beginning of the adoption of the idea in the text. Example: "The following model is based on Bester and Konrad (2005, p. 29) ..."

Direct quotations should be enclosed in quotation marks. Minor omissions within the quoted passage should be indicated by three dots. Terms inserted in quotations need to be enclosed in square brackets. Any emphasis which is subsequently added or omitted should be indicated in a footnote (e.g. emphasis by the author).

If an idea is not taken over direct, but in terms of content (indirect quotation), this should also be noted. The short citation in the current text then is "(cf. Collier and Siebert 1991, p. 199)" or "(see Collier and Siebert 1991, p. 199)". It indicates the origin of the idea.

If several sources are cited, it may be better to indicate them in a footnote. If supplementary sources to a main source are cited, this can also be done in a footnote beginning with "see also" or similar.

Example:

According to the initiators of the Alternative of Magdeburg, positive employment effects can be generated by "permanently relief of employers from social insurance contributions" (Schöb and Weimann 2007, p. 42).²

² For a summary of the Alternative of Magdeburg see Schöb and Weimann (2007). A detailed representation can be seen in Schöb and Weimann (2006). See also Knabe, Schöb and Weimann (2006).

If, in addition to the source reference, it needs to be expressed that there are also opposing opinions, this can be dealt with in the text or in a footnote. In the latter, the publications in which these are set down can be cited with the addition "Other opinion ...".

If second-hand citations are used (this should be the exception!), the actual reference should be cited with the addition "Quoted from ...".

If an author has published more than one paper in a year and if these are cited, a clear reference should be made by adding small Latin letters to the year (e.g. "Corneo (2006a)", "Corneo (2006b)").

Care should also be taken to use accurate citations when presenting data. If multiple data from different sources are processed in a table or graph, each data series must be attributed to the appropriate source. If own calculations are made, it must be clearly recognizable from which raw data the own calculations were made.

Sources of the law are quoted as followed (direct/ indirect):

"The age of majority occurs when a person reaches the age of 18." (§ 2 BGB) / "The General Council of the World Trade Organization represents the Ministerial Conference between its sessions (cf. Art. IV, para. 2, WTO Agreement)."

5. Bibliography and Directory of Legal Sources

All authors cited in the text must be listed in the bibliography in alphabetical order. Within an author, references must be listed in chronological order. In case of multiple references by one author from the same year, they are numbered in small Latin letters after the year.

- **Books** are listed according to the scheme "Author(s) (Year): *Title. Subtitle*, Publisher: Place(s) of Publication, Year of Publication (if applicable)." The first author(s) will be noted as "Last Name, First Name." Subsequent authors are noted as "First Name, Last Name". Example:

Schöb, Ronnie and Joachim Weimann (2006): *Arbeit ist machbar. Die Magdeburger Alternative: Eine sanfte Therapie für Deutschland*, Janos Stekovics Verlag: Döbel, 5th edition.

Wolters, Jürgen, Peter Kuhbier and Herbert S. Buscher (1990): *Die konjunkturelle Entwicklung in der Bundesrepublik. Ergebnisse und Schätzungen alternativer aggregierter Konjunkturmodelle*, Campus: Frankfurt/Main, New York.

- **Essays from books** are listed according to the scheme "Author(s) (Year): Essay Title, in: Publisher, *Book Title*, Publisher: Place(s) of Publication, Edition Year (if applicable), Pages Beginning - End of the Essay." Example²:

Rendtel, Ulrich and Torsten Harms (2009): Weighting and calibration for household Panels, in: P. Lynn (ed.), *Methodology of Longitudinal Surveys*, Wiley: Chichester, pp. 265-286.

Schrettl, Wolfram (2007): Einige Thesen zu Wirtschaftswachstum unter Putin, in: M. Buhbe und G. Gorzka (Hrsg.), *Russland heute*, Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften: Wiesbaden, pp. 155-160.

- **Scientific papers** are reported according to the scheme "Author(s) (Year): Title of Article, *Journal*, Issue, Pages Beginning - End of Article." Example:

Baßeler, Ulrich and Rainer Naser (1997): „Klassische Theorie versus Monetary Approach der Währungsintegration“, *Konjunkturpolitik*, 43 (4), pp. 371-405.

² Always note the differences between German-language and English-language sources in this example and the examples that follow.

Bester, Helmut and Kai Konrad (2005): "Easy targets and the timing of conflict", *Journal of Theoretical Politics*, 17 (2), pp. 199-215.

Steiner, Viktor (2002): „Kombilohnmodelle – Ein Weg zur Erhöhung der Beschäftigung in Deutschland?“, *ifo-Schnelldienst*, 2002 (4), pp. 5–9.

- **Discussion and working papers** are listed according the scheme "Author(s) (Year): Title of the paper, *discussion or working paper series*, Number, Month Year.". Example:

Knabe, Andreas and Ronnie Schöb (2008): Minimum Wages and their Alternatives: A Critical Assessment, *CEifo Working Paper*, No. 2494, Dezember.

Nautz, Dieter (1997): Banks Demand for Reserves when Future Monetary Policy is Uncertain, *Diskussionsbeiträge des Fachbereichs Wirtschaftswissenschaft der Freien Universität Berlin, Volkswirtschaftliche Reihe*, Nr. 1997/12, Juni.

- **Internet pages** are indicated according to the scheme "Author(s) (Year): Title, Location, URL, [Access Date]". Example:

Bundesagentur für Arbeit (2022): Monatsbericht zum Arbeits- und Ausbildungsmarkt, Berichte: Blickpunkt Arbeitsmarkt, Februar 2022, Nürnberg, https://statistik.arbeitsagentur.de/Statistikdaten/Detail/202202/arbeitsmarktberichte/monatsbericht-monatsbericht/monatsbericht-d-0-202202-pdf.pdf;jsessionid=164EAF31A41A6B2D943C3BC767537E61?_blob=publicationFile&v=2, [23.02.2022].

- When quoting from **standards**, a list of legal sources is added to the bibliography. The reference of the standard is indicated. Example:

BGB, Deutscher Taschenbuchverlag: München, 56. Auflage 2005. WTO-Ü, in: R. Schwartmann, *Völker- und Europarecht*, C.F. Müller: Heidelberg, 3. Auflage 2006, S. 303-314.

6. Formal Requirements of the Seminar Paper/ Thesis

Table 1 informs you about the scope of your work and the form of submission. Each paper must be preceded by a non-technical abstract.

	<i>Size of the work (in pages)</i>	<i>Scope of the non-technical summary (in words)</i>
Seminar Paper	12 to 20	200 to 210
Bachelor Thesis	35 to 45	200 to 210
Master Thesis	35 to 45	200 to 210

Table 1: Scope of Scientific Work

Source: Own Representation

- **Tables and figures** are numbered consecutively. Each table and figure is given its own title. Lists of tables and figures are only necessary if the total number of tables and figures exceeds six.
- The **list of abbreviations** describes all abbreviations that are not included in the Duden dictionary. In general, the use of abbreviations should be kept to a minimum. Furthermore, if you introduce an abbreviation in the text for the first time, it should be written out first.
- A **list of symbols** describing the used variables is indispensable. The variables also must be introduced the first time they are mentioned in the text.

Example:

"In the following model, the quantity of the demanded products G is a function of investment in advertising W . The function is denoted $G(W)$."

- The **parts of the paper** are arranged as follows:

Title page

Table of contents (outline)

List of figures, if applicable

List of tables, if applicable

List of abbreviations, if applicable

List of symbols, if applicable

Non-technical summary

Introduction

Main part

Concluding section

Appendix, if applicable

Bibliography

List of legal sources, if applicable

Declaration of Authenticity

- The wording of the **declaration of authenticity** can be found on the homepage of the examination office

- **Margins, Font Size and Line Spacing:**

Margins: 2.0 to 2.5 cm on each side

Line spacing: 1.25 to 1.50

Font size: 12 pt in Times New Roman or similar font

Footnotes: Font size 10 pt

- The **submission** of the seminar paper has to be sent as a pdf file to the chair via email. If necessary, submission as a printed version is also required. Bachelor's and Master's theses have to be submitted in duplicate, i.e. welded or glued (no ring or spiral binding), to the examination office by the deadline (please also refer to the examination regulations applicable to you). Both copies must be accompanied by a digital version on a data carrier firmly attached to the paper. Preferably, this is a USB stick.

7. Requirements of the Final Presentation

- To avoid possible compatibility problems, a pdf version of the presentation should always be created and submitted in time via email.
- The presentation should be structured analogously to the written work.
- The headings should be short, precise and analogous to the outline.
- A few short bullet points on the presentation slides are sufficient.
- The presentation structure should follow a common thread.
- The presentation should be kept as free as possible.
- Sources on slides should be cited in the form of a brief reference:

Example 1 - direct quotation:

"There is a very large job potential available to students with a degree in economics." (Employment Agency 2014, p. 66)

Example 2 - indirect quotation:

Competitive pressure for students of economics is increasing (cf. Employment Agency 2014, p. 66).

- The list of all sources cited in the presentation is at the end of the presentation. The bibliography is to be discussed only upon request.
- The following should be considered when designing the slides:
 - strong contrast between font color and background
 - slide master should not take up more than 20% of a slide
 - header and footer should include: **slide number**; title; presenter's name; date
 - support content with visual elements, e.g. figures and tables (if possible, created by yourself; using a uniform color scheme; do not overload visualization)
- Material which you are not planning to present during the main presentation, but which could help answer potential questions, can be prepared as backup slides.

8. Literature Recommendations

- A comprehensive account of scientific work in economics can be found in:
 - Karreman, Bas, Gelijm Werner, Henk van der Molen, Eveline Osseweijer, Margriet Ackermann, Henk Schmidt und Estella van der Wal (2017): *Academic Writing Skills for Economics and Business Administration*. Boom|Lemma: Amsterdam.
- A brief introduction to scientific work is provided by:
 - Heesen, Bernd (2021): *Wissenschaftliches Arbeiten: Methodenwissen für Wirtschafts-, Ingenieur- und Sozialwissenschaftler*. Springer: Berlin Heidelberg. 4. aktualisierte Auflage
 - Theisen, Manuel René (2021): *Wissenschaftliches Arbeiten. Erfolgreich bei Bachelor- und Masterarbeit*. Verlag Franz Vahlen: München, 18. Auflage.
- A representation focusing on linguistic-stylistic expression specifically for theses written in English can be found in:
 - Skern, Timothy (2019): *Writing Scientific English. A Workbook*. UTB: Stuttgart, 3. überarbeitete Auflage.