

1 Guideline for writing a term paper (in a seminar course)

1.1 Structure of a term paper

The length of a term paper depends on the selection of topics; about 15 pages as a guideline. The formal structure of the paper should meet the following scheme:

- Title Page
- Table of Contents
- List of Illustrations (when applicable)
- List of Abbreviations (when applicable)
- Text
- Bibliography
- Appendix (when required)

1.1.1 Title Page

The subject of the paper appears centered in the upper part of the title page, beneath the note “Term paper in seminar ...” plus name of the university, name of the lecturer and the term in that the paper was written. In the lower part of the page, the complete address of the author including his matriculation number as well as place and date of completion are placed.

1.1.2 Table of Contents

The table of contents contains the outline of the text with page numbers. The headings have to be the same as in the text. For these short and meaningful titles, which provide an overview of the paper, should be chosen. The structure should be logically comprehensible and preferably non-overlapping. Sections whose contents have equal priority should be placed at the same level of structure, which is not to say that their length has to be the same. The headings should indicate the aspects mentioned in the related subsection. A subsection will be designed if at least one more subitem is following, i.e. with a minimum two subitems. It is not recommendable to divide the paper into too many subsections; one page per subsection should be the minimum. Within the scope of a term paper at most 3 levels of structure are appropriate.

Formally the division of the table of contents should follow the Dewey decimal classification or the mixed alphanumeric classification.

1.1.3 List of Illustrations

If the paper contains several illustrations, it is reasonable to attach a list of illustrations. In this list all illustrations are enumerated with their heading, number and page number.

1.1.4 List of Abbreviations

The abbreviations that are employed in the paper are to be listed and explained in the list of abbreviations in alphabetical order. The use of abbreviations should be constrained to general linguistic usage and common abbreviations in the specific field.

1.1.5 Text

Of course, the text is the core of the paper. In this part, the author deals with his/her topic in an explicit way. One should strive for a precise scientific formulation. Parts of the text, ideas and ways of description that are adopted have to be explained clearly and to be cited by references to the original sources.

1.1.6 Bibliography

The bibliography lists all cited references – but only these – in alphabetical order according to the author's surname. If one author is cited several times, his publications are put in chronological order. These Publications (of the same author, of course) if they have the same year of issue, are graded alphabetically according to their title. Thereby definite or indefinite articles are disregarded ("The Phillips Curve" is classified at letter P).

1.1.7 Appendix

The appendix covers background information that cannot be integrated easily into the text for lack of space (Tabulations, charts, diagrams etc.). However, presentation in the text is to be preferred as far as possible. The main text should avoid multiple consecutive pages of tables or figures.

1.2 Technical Details

1.2.1 Layout

For the text, font size 12 should be chosen, footnotes should be written in font size 10. Line-spacing of 1.5 is recommended. The margin on the left side of the page should measure 4 to 5 cm to leave room for annotations and corrections.

1.2.2 Footnotes and Quotation

In scientific papers, footnotes represent the most frequently used form of notes. They serve as a reference to information that would disrupt the text's coherence if placed directly, such as references to sources or supplementary literature, references to other parts of one own's manuscript and deviations from the main line of arguing.

For reasons of readability, it is recommended to employ footnotes only for documentation of sources, do not use footnotes for long explanations of marginal problems. The spot of reference in the text should be marked by a superscript Arabic numeral. The text of the footnote should be placed on the bottom of the same page. The footnotes are to be numbered consecutively.

It is also possible to put short references to sources in the text, if full identification of the sources is provided in the appended bibliography. These short references generally contain the author's last name, year of publication and page number/section referenced. If the title is not given in the main text, one should clearly distinguish between several references of the same author or distinct authors by the same name.

Example: B. Friedman (1983, pp.154-155)

One has to distinguish between two types of quotation: verbatim quotes and analogous statement.

In case of verbatim quotation, the quote appears in inverted comma. The intentional omission of one word is denoted by two dots, the omission of several words is shown by a triple-dot. Deviations from the original source have to be marked clearly. The reference to the source is located directly behind the quote. It contains the author's last name, year of issue and page number (where the quote can be found) in parentheses. Several authors of one source can be separated by a slash or connected by "and". If more than three authors are mentioned, only the first one is given with the addition "et al."

Example: (Friedman, 1983, p.154)

Analogous quotes are marked by a reference in parentheses, that appears subsequent to the issue correspondingly quoted. In case of longer explanations it is placed preliminary to the section concerned. The reference starts with the abbreviations "cf." or "see" followed by the author's last name, year of issue and page number.

Example: (cf. Friedman, 1983, p.154)

1.2.3 Formulas

Symbols used in mathematical formulas are defined clearly at their first appearance in the text. A consistent notation of formulas enhances readability. As far as required, the used symbols can be summed up in a list of symbols at the end of the paper. To enable cross references between distinct formulas, they should typically be numbered. The numbering should appear consistently on either the left or right side of the text. Formulas should be positioned center justified and offset from the text by blank lines.

1.3 Information in the bibliography

Standard information for a monograph covers last name, first name of the author, year of issue, title, possibly name of the series, volume, edition (if its not the first one), place of issue.

For papers in a collected volume, information contains last name, first name of the author, year of issue, title of the article, in: first and last name of the editor, title of the book, possibly name of the series, volume, edition (if its not the first one), place of issue, page reference.

Articles published in journals are labeled with first and last name of the author, year of issue, title of the article, journal, volume, page reference.

If more than three authors, editors or places of issue are mentioned, only the first one is referred to followed by the addition “et al.” when citing the reference in the main text. All authors are to be mentioned in the bibliography. Sources with unknown author are listed according to their title with the annotation “author unknown”.

Examples:

Monographs:

Koenker, Robert (2005), *Quantile Regression*, Cambridge University Press, United States.

Collected Volumes:

Chib, Siddhartha (2001). “Markov Chain Monte Carlo Methods: Computation and Inference.” In J. Heckman and E. Leamer (eds.): *Handbook of Econometrics*, Volume 5, Amsterdam: Elsevier Science, 3569-3649.

Journals:

Wunsch, C. and M. Lechner (2008). “What Did All the Money Do? On the General Ineffectiveness of Recent West German Labour Market Programmes.” *Kyklos*, 61, 134-174.

References to internet pages are only acceptable in exceptional cases, when their use is inevitable (an exception to this rule are regular online publications with digital identification DOI). Utterly unspecific internet references to

the homepage of a department, professorship or else are strictly forbidden. One should include preferably published works in the bibliography and avoid unpublished sources.

1.4 Yet another good advice

If you are doubtful or insecure about some formalities, it is advisable to have a look at current papers in the profession (e.g. as published in leading journals) and follow these references.

1.5 Information on literature research

Start your literature research on certain topics preferably with survey articles in renowned handbooks, appropriate textbooks, or articles in leading international journals, that have appeared recently. In general, it is easy to find earlier published literature on the topic by means of these works' bibliographies.

As starting point for literature research, anthologies in the library are suitable. Please pay attention to the year of issue. The definitive book is

- Eatwell, John (1990): *The New Palgrave*. London (Macmillan). 4 volumes.
- Also the *Handbooks in Economics* published by North-Holland are recommended.

Search also in the following Databases:

- EconLit (via EBSCOhost): is containing all important English journals.
- SSCI (Social Science Citation Index): bears the particular advantage that one can search for sources, that cite a certain paper.