

Guideline for the preparation of seminar papers and theses

Chair for International Security Policy
Zeppelin University

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Please read this guide carefully and contact us if you have any questions.

It is your responsibility to comply with the specifications!

1. EXPOSÉ AND CONTENT STRUCTURE OF THE PAPER

In a research paper, you should prove that you can scientifically and independently work on a topic. If you are planning to write a thesis with us, please submit a 1-2 page exposé in advance. This exposé will serve as a basis for discussion during the first meeting about your paper. The exposé is an outline of your scientific project and it encompasses a basic summary of your planned research paper (the "research design"). It is important that you develop your own suggestions and ideas on each of your points before you come to the meeting and before you start writing your paper. Your exposé should answer the following questions:

- **What** you want to investigate,
- **how** you want to investigate it, and
- **why** you want to investigate it.

Please use the following structure for this purpose:

Research problem

The starting point of a scientific paper is the identification of a problem. A research problem is usually defined by a contradiction or a puzzle that does not yet have a solution and therefore an investigation of it promises new insights. The problem can be derived theoretically (e.g., theoretical gaps), normatively (e.g., scandalization of political conditions) or empirically (e.g., novel phenomena, unexpected political developments). With the help of a concrete example, you can make your abstract problem more tangible. It is also helpful to briefly summarize the research topic in the first sentence of your exposé to concisely illustrate the research topic.

State of research

A presentation of the currently existing research about your chosen topic is intended to provide a systematic overview of the current state of research. It also helps to situate your topic in the current scientific debate. The aim is not to list the literature in a textbook-like manner, but you should rather proceed systematically, i.e., divide the state of research into different parts and show where your topic fits in or where it differs, or where there may still be research gaps. You are not required to cite every work that has ever been written on your topic. Rather, you should know the most important literature on your subject area. Therefore, a systematic literature research process is essential for this.

Research Question

The research question of your paper should follow logically from the problem and the current state of research. A scientific question is not only defined by the fact that there is a question mark at the end of the sentence. Make sure that you always ask analytical questions ("why/how?") and not descriptive questions ("what?"). Limit yourself to one question and formulate it as concisely and as precise as possible. Key terms and concepts should already be briefly defined and explained. Afterwards, you can introduce your thesis or argumentation which can possibly provide answers to the research question you initially posed. You have to decide whether you want to *explain* or *understand* the problem. In the first case ("explain") this means that you create a causal relationship between a cause (independent variable) and an effect (dependent variable): Why did X happen and not Y? Alternatively, you can also use a hermeneutic approach ("understand") to investigate certain terms and concepts or theories. You can even make these aspects the actual object of your investigation and analyze their effect on the empirical reality.

Theoretical scope

After you have worked out the problem, the research question and your main thesis (argument) you now have to choose a theoretical approach. For example, you could show the causal relationship between the concepts used in the research question, which mechanisms influence this relationship, and on which assumptions your argumentation is based on. For example, if you are asking specifically about the causes of the military intervention in Libya in 2011, then you could first look for reasons why states intervene militarily on a theoretically abstract level. In other words, you should ask yourself: What do current theoretical approaches say about my topic and how can these insights be integrated into my research design? You must explain and justify "your" theoretical approach in detail. This does not mean that you reproduce one or more theories in their entirety. Limit yourself to those aspects of the theory(ies) that seem to make the most sense for your research question.

Methodological approach

Finally, you should outline your methodological approach. Here you must make clear which data you want to use to analyze your research question, how you will evaluate and, if necessary, interpret it. In the case of theoretical work, you should show how you will evaluate and systematize your theoretical assumptions with the help of primary and secondary literature. For theory-based, empirical work, you should be able to effectively justify your selection and evaluation of your data material (e.g., documents, political speeches, newspaper articles, interviews, scholarly secondary literature). Should you work with case studies, you must also be able to sufficiently justify their selection.

Further reading

- George, Alexander L. and Andrew Bennett (2005) *Case Studies and Theory. Development in the Social Sciences*, Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Jackson, Patrick T. (2010) *The Conduct of Inquiry in International Relations. Philosophy of Science and its Implications for the Study of World Politics*, New York: Routledge.
- Klotz, Audie and Deepa Prakash (2008) *Qualitative Methods in International Relations. A Pluralist Guide*, New York: Palgrave.
- Lynch, Cecelia (2013) *Interpreting International Politics*, New York: Routledge.

2. FORMAL STRUCTURE

The following outline is recommended for your paper:

1. Title page (*see below*)
2. Table of contents with page numbers
3. If applicable, list of tables, if applicable, list of figures (*only for theses*)
4. If applicable, a list of abbreviations (*only for theses*)
5. Text (introduction, main part, conclusion)
6. Bibliography
7. Appendix, if applicable
8. Affidavit

Page numbers should be numbered continuously in Arabic and placed at the bottom center of each page (except on the title page).

Also, pay attention to the logical and formal structure of your argument. After point 1.1, point 1.2 must follow. However, there should be no more than three levels of a structure (e.g., 1.1.3). For shorter texts (seminar papers) one or two outline levels should be sufficient.

3. LENGTH OF THE PAPER

Generally, a seminar paper encompasses around 15 pages, a bachelor thesis will encompass around 30 – 40 pages and a master thesis will span around 60 – 80 pages. The page count includes the body of text and the references (but not the cover page, table of contents and appendix).

The page count in Arabic numerals begins on the first page of the text (starting with the introduction) and also includes the bibliography. The preceding pages (beginning with the title page) contain Roman numerals (i, ii, iii, ix, etc.). The page numbering should not be displayed on the Title Page. The paper should not contain blank pages.

4. USE OF LANGUAGE

Do not use colloquial or judgmental language, but aim for a factual and formal style. Do not use the "first-person perspective" (e.g., "I think that ..." or "I believe that ..."). Avoid using verbose wording and unnecessary phrases (e.g., "broadly speaking," or "Globalization is a complex phenomenon").

5. ABBREVIATIONS

The use of abbreviations must be kept to an absolute minimum. Abbreviations must be written out in full the first time they are used, e.g., International Monetary Fund (IMF). Please do not invent your own abbreviations.

6. FOOTNOTES AND ANNOTATIONS

To facilitate the flow of reading, footnotes (not endnotes) are used to provide comments, explanations, or additional information regarding particular passages or sources in the text. However, this does not apply to quotations (these are cited in the text, see section 13 below). You can use quotations in the annotations if they directly refer to the text in the footnote.

7. DIRECT QUOTES

Quotes have a limited function and should only be used moderately. They should not be used to replace independent formulations or paraphrases or to explain facts and/or information. In the following situations, it may be appropriate to use a direct quote:

1. When the original wording is of great importance (e.g., a legislative text, contract content, government report) or when the person being quoted holds a specific functional or professional position (e.g., a government official or a recognized scholar),
2. In the course of critical discussion of a text (e.g., when analyzing and interpreting certain statements of an author are analyzed and interpreted)
3. In connection with the definition of a term.

The quotation itself must be identified as such by the use of double quotation marks (" ... ") within the text, followed by the exact citation, including the exact page number(s). A so-called "quotation within a quotation" is indicated by single quotation marks (' ... ').

You can use round brackets (...) to change the grammar of the capitalization of a quote to better fit it into your text. If necessary, you can omit parts of the quoted sentence or add new parts. However, you are, not allowed to omit or add parts of sentences that might change the meaning of a quotation (e.g., changing a quotation from "The United States will not negotiate with terrorists." to "The United States will (...) negotiate with terrorists.").

EXAMPLE: Here is an excerpt from the State of Union address from the U.S. President Barack Obama before Congress in 2011:

Original:

The future is ours to win. But to get there, we can't just standstill. As Robert Kennedy told us, "The future is not a gift. It is an achievement." Sustaining the American Dream has never been about standing pat. It has required each generation to sacrifice, and struggle, and meet the demands of a new age.

Correct citation in the text:

In his 2011 State of the Union speech, President Obama pointed out:

“(t)he future is ours to win. But to get there, we (American people) can't just standstill. As Robert Kennedy told us, 'The future is not a gift. It is an achievement.' Sustaining the American Dream (...) has required each generation to sacrifice, and struggle, and meet the demands of a new age“(Obama 2011, 3).

8. INDIRECT QUOTES (PARAPHRASING)

Any statement or idea that is not your own must be accompanied by a reference. This applies in particular to third-party opinions and interpretations as well as arguments and findings.

As a rule, data and statistics (primary literature such as laws, treaties, archival material, documents, diaries, autobiographies, interviews) and/or works by other authors about the discussed topic (also known as secondary literature) can be used. Information from these sources, be it in the form of direct or indirect quotations, must be accompanied by a citation including the name of the author(s), the year of publication, and the *exact* page number(s) (see also Section 15 on references in the text and section 16 on plagiarism).

9. MARGINS AND PARAGRAPHS

Please leave a margin of 2 cm on the left side, top and bottom, and a correction margin of 4 cm on the right side of each page (except the title page). Use justification for your text and a left-justified margin for your bibliography.

The text should be logically divided into paragraphs. Each paragraph must be clearly identifiable and be marked by an **indent (tab key)**.

10. LINE SPACING

All papers must always be formatted with 1.5 line spacing. Footnotes and the bibliography are to be formatted with single line spacing.

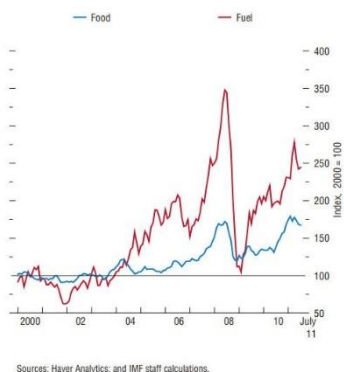
11. FONT

Please use Times New Roman 12 or Arial 12 for the body text and the bibliography. Use Times New Roman 10 or Arial 10 for footnotes.

12. ILLUSTRATIONS, GRAPHS AND TABLES

Figure 3.1. World Commodity Prices, 2000–11
(In real terms, as deflated by U.S. consumer price index)

Food and fuel prices have risen dramatically since 2000. Food and fuel prices peaked in 2008 at levels 80 percent and 250 percent above the levels in 2000. Current prices are 75 percent and 150 percent above 2000 levels, and there are concerns that structural forces will push prices higher over coming years.



Figures, graphs and tables should be clearly presented in an easily understandable way and should have a legend or an explanation attached to them. The title must be *above* (e.g., "Figure 3.1 World Market Prices for Commodities, 2000-2011") and the source *below* each table, graph, or figure (e.g., "Source: Haver Analytics and IMF calculations). Please ensure that the source, including the page number, is also listed as a complete citation in the bibliography (e.g., International Monetary Fund (2011) World Economic Outlook. Slowing Growth, Rising Risks. Washington, DC, 102). If you have created the figures, graphs or tables yourself, please mark them as "own presentation". Figures and tables should be numbered consecutively (if necessary, separate the images by figure(s) and table(s)). Please make sure that you refer to your figures, graphs and tables in the text (e.g., "cf. Table 3.1").

13. CITATIONS

References will be incorporated into the text. Please use the following citation format: (**author year, page**).

You can also use a different citation method; however, you must consistently adhere to a chosen citation scheme.

Each direct or indirect citation must be followed by a citation with a page number. It is not sufficient to refer to a source without listing the corresponding page(s) listed.

EXAMPLES:

Reference to a single author:
(Hastedt 2008, 22)

Reference to two authors of the same work:
(Mearsheimer/Walt 2007, 33)

Reference to more than two authors of the same work:
(Deutsch et al. 1957, 5)
(Please do not use 'et al.' in the bibliography, but instead, list all of the authors).

Reference to multiple works by the same author:
(Nye 2002, 21 & 2004, 45)

Reference to several works by the same author from the same year:
(Braml 2004a, 67 & 2004b, 87).

You can also directly refer to an author or another source (e.g., an international organization) in the text and follow it with a quotation or a paraphrased sentence, for example:

Nye (2004, x) defines power as "the ability to get what you want through attraction rather than coercion or payments."

According to Kollmann (1998, 8), "outside lobbying" involves both communicating with and as well as influencing the public.

The World Trade Organization concludes that the motives for the global proliferation of preferential trade agreements go far beyond the reduction of tariffs (WTO 2011, 153).

14. BIBLIOGRAPHY

All sources cited in the text must be listed in alphabetical order (according to the last name of the author) in a bibliography at the end of the paper. You should carefully check the completeness and coherence of the bibliography with the information in the text. The literature references should be as detailed and precise as possible. Please use single line spacing here, left alignment and a Times New Roman font in size 12.

a. For **monographs and edited volumes**, please use the following formatting:

EXAMPLES:

Hunt, Michael H. (1996) Crises in U.S. Foreign Policy. An International History Reader. New Haven/London: Yale University Press.

Hocking, Brian and McGuire, Steven (eds) (2004) Trade Politics. Second Edition. London/New York: Routledge.

b. Contributions in **academic journals**:

EXAMPLE:

Hodson, Dermot and Maher, Imelda (2001) The Open Method as a New Mode of Governance, in: Journal of Common Market Studies 39(4): 719-746.

c. Contributions in **edited volumes**:

EXAMPLE:

Peterson, John (1999) The Politics of Transatlantic Trade Relations. In: Hocking, Brian and McGuire, Steven (Ed.) Trade Politics. Second Edition. London/New York: Routledge, 36- 50

d. **Newspaper articles**:

EXAMPLES:

Washington Post (2007) Forget the Israel Lobby. The Hill's Next Big Player Is Made in India, 30 September, 5.

The Economist (2011) The Craze for Flat Taxes. Republican Candidates Are Competing to Race to the Lowest Point, 29. Oktober, 21.

e. **Reports and working papers**, whether published or not, should follow the formatting for monographs as closely as possible.

EXAMPLES:

Congressional Research Service (2011) China-U.S. Trade Issues. Washington, D.C.

Mosbacher, Robert Jr. (2010) A New Strategy to Leverage Business for International Development. Working Paper 41. Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution.

U.S. Department of State (2010) Country Reports on Terrorism 2010. Washington, D.C

f. Internet sources

Only if the work cited exists exclusively on the Internet (e.g., website content, online newspapers, social media, or an online blog), should it be cited as an internet source. Please note that blogs and contributions on social media are only considered reliable scholarly sources under very rare circumstances. However, they can certainly be used as a source of data.

EXAMPLES:

World Trade Organization (2011) The Case for Open Trade, http://www.wto.org/english/thewto_e/whatis_e/tif_e/fact3_e.htm.

The Economist (2011) The Economist Stress Tests Dodd-Frank, November 2. <http://www.economist.com/blogs/freeexchange>.

Norbert Röttgen (@n_roettgen) (2019) "In his op-ed commemorating the fall of the #BerlinWall Minister @HeikoMaas failed to explicitly mention the #USA for their contribution to German unity in his gratitude. This does not do justice to history and constitutes a historic mistake, which is completely incomprehensible". Twitter, Nov. 5, 14:44 Uhr, https://twitter.com/n_roettgen/status/1191712895480074240?lang=de.

g. **Unpublished conference papers, congress reports** (so-called "grey literature") should be kept to a minimum and should be cited as follows:

EXAMPLE:

Cheng, Leonard K.H. (1995) U.S. Attitudes and Policy Towards Investment in China. Paper presented at the International Conference on Sino-US Economic Relations. Hong Kong, 21-23 June.

15. ACADEMIC HONESTY AND PLAGIARISM

We expect students to perform their academic duties in an honest and transparent manner. Examples of violations of academic integrity are plagiarism (use of wordings, text passages, concepts or argumentation of another author without appropriate reference), the submission of work that is not your own, submission of the same work in different courses, or the use of material from the internet without proper citation of the source.

Plagiarism is a serious academic offence. An author who uses formulations and ideas of others and presents them as their own is guilty of plagiarism. **If systematic plagiarism is identified, you will receive a grade of 5.0 and may be subject to additional sanctions.**

EXAMPLE:

Here is an example from the original text: Woods, Ngaire (2006) *International Political Economy in an Age of Globalization*. In: Baylis, John and Smith, Steve (eds.) *The Globalization of World Politics. An Introduction to International Relations. Third Edition*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 325-348, 345.

Globalization increases the challenges faced by all actors in the world economy: states, firms, transnational actors, and international organizations. Strong states are trying to shape institutions to manage financial crises, powerful NGOs, and globalizing firms. Weak states are trying to survive increasingly precarious and changeable economic circumstances. Common to all states is the search for greater stability and predictability, although governments disagree over how and where this should be achieved.

The following text shows an inacceptable form of paraphrasing, which would be classified as plagiarism:

Globalization raises the challenges faced by all actors in the world economy: states, firms, transnational actors, and international organizations. While strong states are trying to shape institutions to manage financial crises, powerful NGOs, and globalizing firms, weaker states are trying to survive increasingly precarious and changeable economic circumstances. The search for greater stability and predictability is common to all states, although governments disagree on how to achieve this.

In this case, the author has merely changed individual words and the order of the sentence and did not cite the original source. If you do either or both of these things you have plagiarized.

The following is an acceptable paraphrase of the original text in which the author reproduces the essential content of the paragraph in his own words.

While the challenges resulting from processes of globalization vary according to the power position of individual states, there is a common desire to manage a growing number of non-state actors as well as an increasingly unpredictable economic environment (Woods 2006, 345).

16. SUBMISSION

A **digital version** of the paper as a PDF file must be submitted by the stated deadline via email to the lecturer and papers@zu.de .

17. GRADING CRITERIA

Research design (40%)

- ✓ Is there a relevant and justified problem?
- ✓ Is the research question precisely formulated?
- ✓ Has it been located in the scientific literature/debate?
- ✓ Is the choice of theory relevant to the research question and is it well justified?
- ✓ Is the methodological approach appropriate and well justified for the problem?

Argumentative stringency (40%)

- ✓ Is there a central argument?
- ✓ Do the individual argumentation steps logically build upon each other?
- ✓ Are the individual steps of the argumentation supported by sufficient evidence?
- ✓ Does the research question run through the entire paper?
- ✓ Are descriptive text passages avoided?

Formal standards (15%)

- ✓ Are the sources cited correctly?
- ✓ Is the type and amount of literature sufficient?
- ✓ Is formatting and the spelling correct?

Originality (5%)

- ✓ Is there a novel aspect/perspective?
- ✓ Are innovative theoretical approaches or methods used?

18. AFFIDAVIT

The affidavit shall be attached as the last page of the paper.

Sample cover page:

**Zeppelin University
Department of Political and Social Sciences
Chair of International Security Policy**

<place, date>

<Title of paper>

<subtitle, if applicable>

<Type of paper> (e.g., seminar paper, bachelor's thesis, master's thesis)

<Title of seminar> (if applicable)

Submitted by:

<first and last name>

<street>

<zip code and city>

<email address>

Matriculation number:

<insert matriculation number>

Field of study:

<please insert field of study>

Lecturer or supervisor:

<name>

Winter/summer semester:

<please insert semester and year>