

Guidelines and hints for seminars at the Chair of Economics and Ethics

1 Preliminary Note

The aim of this guide is to give you a valuable assistance for preparing papers for seminars and scientific theses at the Chair of Economics and Ethics. Besides the formal requirements such a writing has to suffice, it gives hints and tips how to write such a paper.

2 Layout

- Please write your thesis one-sided and in a common font.
- Please choose 11 or 12 as your font size (i. e. default setting for your chosen font). Footnotes as well as the labels of your charts and graphics are supposed to be in font size 10. Furthermore, your major headlines should be written in front size 14 and lower as well as upper indices in formularies in font size 10.
- Please write with 1.5-line spacing and your footnotes with 1.0-line spacing.
- Upper margin: 2.5 cm. Lower margin: 2 cm. The left margin should be 5 cm and the right margin 1.5 cm.
- Use justification and hyphenation.
- Formularies and symbols ought to be italic.
- Formularies should be indented and numbered ongoing in round brackets.

3 Formal Specifications

In general, a scientific paper contains the following:

- cover page
- table of contents
- table directory
- list of abbreviations
- illustration directory
- text body
- appendices
- bibliography

The scope (number of pages) of the work will be announced by us. We strongly recommend not to deviate from this standard too much to enable a better comparability of all the performances in the course. Furthermore, it is part of your proficiency to use the space in a sensible manner. The announced scope of the work refers only to the main text body, including introduction and conclusion but excluding tables and illustrations. Deviations of about 10% are always tolerated.

3.1 Cover Page

The cover page should contain the following information:

- university, faculty, institute, chair
- name of the seminar
- name of the lecturer
- semester in which the seminar takes place
- at the bottom of the page, on the left: your address, email, the date of the day at which you hand in the paper
- at the bottom of the page on the right side: name, student ID, subject, your actual number of semesters for the subject you are currently enrolled in

Please note that you are neither allowed to use the seal of the Christian-Albrechts-Universität zu Kiel nor the seal of the Business, Economics and Social Sciences Faculty on your thesis or paper. Moreover, you should not use any other illustrations on the cover page.

3.2 Structure/Table of Contents

Your structure should emphasize how you understand your topic, the outline of your paper, which emphasizes you have chosen and which recurrent theme your paper has. Furthermore, it serves as your table of contents. Please follow thereby the following numerical scheme:

1. chapter
 - 1.2 segment
 - 1.3 segment
 - 1.3.1 subsection
 - 1.3.2 subsection

The corresponding page number should be displayed on the right hand side.

The titles of the corresponding chapter should also be present in the wording of the chapter and has to allow for a precise interpretation of the according chapter. In general, the space you devote to a single point ought to reflect the relative importance of the point for your work. Overall, the text should be structured in a sensible and balanced manner. For instance, a subsection of a length of four pages should, if possible, be separated further. Furthermore, please notice that a subsection 1.2.1 can only exist if a subsection 1.2.2 follows.

3.3 List of Tables and Figures

Please numerate all figures and tables and list them with the whole description along with the page number in the corresponding list. Tables and figures can support your text in a sensible manner. Hereby, please take care for a complete and self-explaining description. The text has to refer to any tables and figures you use.

3.4 List of Abbreviations and Symbols

Abbreviations used in the text are supposed to be listed in the list of abbreviations in alphabetical order and should be written out. Abbreviations which are common knowledge (e. g., etc.,...) are not supposed to be listed in the list of abbreviations.

In general, we recommend to use as few abbreviations as possible and we advise you against using abbreviations due to laziness.

In case you use symbols in formulas, please list them in a separate list of symbols. A list of abbreviations or symbols does not release you from the responsibility of explaining abbreviations when these occur the first time.

3.5 Introduction

Please place an introduction in front of the main body. Use this space to present your topic and the associated problem of your paper. Show why your topic is relevant and interesting. Furthermore, explain the goals of your work, mention the most important concepts and terms and give an overview about your contextual structure and the methodology of your paper.

3.6 Main Body

The main body inherits your dispute with your topic, your argumentation, explanations and insights.

Formal requirements:

Your deliberations should be linguistically as clear and precise as possible. Avoid to write unnecessarily long sentences and also avoid to write nested sentences. Strive to write in a scientific, that is objective, tone. Do not write prose. Please note that the excessive use of unusual and foreign words does not necessarily contribute to a positive overall impression. It is about content to convince, not to make every thought sound complicated.

Content:

The content of your work must be clearly structured and consistent. Your paper should be written in a way that a fellow student in the same semester can understand everything by simply carefully reading it without the aid of secondary literature. Make sure to have a common theme, so that the reader can follow the logic of your representations and reasoning structure. Always explain and / or demonstrate your statements, theories, findings and conclusions. Ideally, every single sentence helps the content to evolve. Therefore, avoid phrases, redundancies and imprecise wording without any information. Each section of your work must be relevant. Stick to the point.

3.7 Summary and Conclusion

At the end of your paper should be a final chapter, which you should label with a headline that reflects the content as close as possible. One example could be “summary and prospect” or “open questions”. Please do not call it “end”, or something like that.

3.8 Appendix

The appendix serves to collect content which is relevant for the subject but cannot be included in the text body because they are too much or do not fit. Examples might be mathematical derivations, large tables or data. All the items listed in the appendix must bear a reference to the subject and must be referred to in the text. An appendix is not compulsory.

3.9 Footnotes

You can use footnotes to give further information or explanations to the contents which would not fit (contextually) in the text. This can include steps of mathematical derivation, deviating definitions by other authors, further arguments, and so on. Footnotes have to be numbered consecutively, separated by a line on the bottom on the page, and understood as a complete sentence (i. e. capital letter in the beginning, full stop at the end). Footnotes are not compulsory but can make a meaningful addition to your work if used economically.

3.10 List of References

The list of references should list all of the references made in the text (but only these!).

4 Citation

You must cite all the literal and analogous quotes you used in the text. Most of your work will be based on references. Should you use and not cite a reference this will be regarded as plagiarism and will not be tolerated.

Use Harvard or APA style of citation. We refrain from explaining these styles in detail here. Inform yourself.

Please stay consistent with one kind of citation method throughout your work.

Not quotable are (among others):

- Wikipedia
- lecture slides or manuscripts
- common economic knowledge which you can assume to be known by your fellow students
- Other seminar papers

5 Miscellaneous

5.1 Time Management

In general, the time you have for writing your paper is more than sufficient. How to use and schedule this time is of course your responsibility as long as you meet all deadlines. But it is

strongly recommended to start as early as possible because especially the literature review, scheduling the work and finally formatting the paper usually consumes more time than expected. Furthermore, it is your responsibility to consider an increased workload due to other obligations.

5.2 Literature Research

A sensible and abundant literature research is part of your work and to be done on your own.

Helpful links for a successful literature research are listed below

<http://www.econbiz.de>

<http://www.zbw.eu>

<http://www.jstore.org>

<http://www.sciencedirect.com>

<http://econpapers.repec.org>

<http://www.econlit.org>

<http://scholar.google.de>

<http://springerlink.metapress.de>

<http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/>

5.3 Selection of Literature

It will be part of your work to select the literature you work with. Which literature you choose is up to you and of course depends on the topic at hand as well as on the approach. Generally, it is recommended to stick with publications of internationally known journals. Citing working papers from other authors should only be a second option. Always cite the newest version of the working paper. The answer to the question how much literature is sufficient depends on the topic. If it produced hundreds of citable publications it will not be sufficient to just cite five to ten of them. On the other hand, if there are just five to ten publications, it will probably not make sense to cite 30 different sources. Avoid trying to inflate your literature index by citing a different paper for every thought if you can also find it in a paper you already cited.

5.4 Discussion of the Structure

You will be informed whether a discussion of your structure with your supervisor is compulsory. If so, you should make sure to agree on a meeting before the deadline for the discussions. You should prepare the following things for a meeting:

- Read relevant literature regarding your topic.
- Build a preliminary structure that shows the content you want to work on. Part of this should be to think about the methodological approach of your work.
- Make a list with some key literature your work will be based on.

If a discussion of the structure is not compulsory, it is nevertheless a good idea to meet and prepare the things mentioned above. This can protect you from deviating from the topic. All the contents of this preliminary discussion can of course be changed or completed with additional content.

5.5 Handing in Your Work

Make sure you keep the given deadlines in mind. Hand in two printed copies of your work. There is no need for a professional binding, a thin folder that makes sure your work stays in order is sufficient. However, do not use a big folder, e.g. ring folder. Additionally, send a copy of your work as a pdf-file to your supervisor.

Without any exceptions, not meeting the deadline means failing the seminar.

6 Tips and Hints

It is useful to install a vpn-client for instant access to the network of the university. Please consult the homepage of "Rechenzentrum" for further information. It can facilitate the literature review a lot.

If you consider it useful, you can make yourself familiar with the use of a citation software (e.g. Citavi or Zotero).

Accept arguments, results and conclusions of other authors never without questioning them. If you do not understand an argument or a conclusion, even after reading it repeatedly, it does not necessarily imply that you are not able to understand it. Always consider the possibility of

methodological mistakes as well as mistakes regarding the content, especially when dealing with working papers.

Please make sure to write orthographically correctly. A paper with many orthographical mistakes does leave a bad impression, even if the content is brilliant. If you do not consider yourself able to take care of that, please consult a second party to correct the paper (for instance your fellow students).

After writing your paper, you are very familiar with your topic. In that situation, it might be difficult to imagine that it could be hard to follow your explanations. Make sure that fellow students can follow your deliberations. Give your paper to a fellow student and ask her whether the arguments and conclusions are concise and reasonable.

Lastly, a little checklist before handing in your work:

- Are all orthographical mistakes corrected?
- Are all necessary parts of your work included?
- Is the numeration of your footnotes correct?
- Are all sources listed in the bibliography?
- Are there still sources in the bibliography which have not been cited in the text?
- Are the number of pages correct in your table of contents?
- Do the headlines in the table of contents and in your text coincide?

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