

# Guideline for writing a term paper

## Dr. Rita Vallentin

### 1. What is a term paper?

Students should learn to present facts and arguments scientifically by writing a term paper. In doing so, one or more questions are systematically worked out on the basis of scientific literature and methods of scientific writing are learned.

Further information on preparing and writing a term paper can be found on the website of the Viadrina Writing Center:

<https://www.europa-uni.de/en/struktur/zll/institutionen/schreibzentrum/Links-and-Ressources/index.html>

### 2. Topic identification/literature research

Discuss your interests, main topics and central questions with the lecturer in the consultation hour.

The Viadrina University Library offers links for advanced literature search. Among others to the Interlibrary Loan *KOBV*, document delivery service *subito* and the Viadrina's electronic periodicals database.

For more information, please visit the University Library's website:

[https://www.ub.europa-uni.de/de/externe\\_recherche/index.html](https://www.ub.europa-uni.de/de/externe_recherche/index.html)

### 3. Volume

The number of pages of the term paper depends on the size of the term paper.

"Small" term paper: 10-12 pages, 6 ECTS

"Large" term paper: 20-25 pages, 9 ECTS

Title page, bibliography and appendix do not belong to the number of pages.

### 4. Formalities

Font = Arial, font size = 11, line spacing = 1.5,  
margins = top, left 2.5 cm, right 3 cm; bottom 2 cm

### 5. Citation

The literal quotation as well as the analogous quotation must always be marked with source information!

#### 5.1 Direct quotation (=literal quotation)

Literal quotations must always correspond exactly to the original and are marked with quotation marks ("...").

- If words are underlined, *italicized* or **bolded** in the original, they are taken over in this way. In addition, errors or other conspicuous features from the original are not corrected, but are marked directly after e.g. the incorrect word with a [sic!] (means "really like this").
- If there is a quotation in the citation, it is represented by single quotation marks ( ,...').
- If a part of the quote is omitted, this is marked by three dots in square brackets [...].
- If a literal quotation is longer than three lines, it is indented slightly on the right and left and reduced to font size 10.

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- Additions in the quotation are bracketed [ ] and the author's initials are indicated. (e.g.: ".... [..., RV]..." .) Ex:  
"there is no given identity [and belonging, RV] that we as analysts can refer to unless we can demonstrate *that* and *how* just this social category that we have picked out has become interactively relevant *in* the data themselves" (Hausendorf 2004, 243, emphasis in the original).

#### 5.2 Non-literal/analogous quotations (=quoting according to meaning)

- The analogous reproduction of the thoughts of others must also be indicated by naming the author.
- The source reference can be integrated into the text or marked with a "cf." (compare!).

Ex. to mention in the text: Tajfel (1974, 68) takes the position that...

Ex. cf.: Social advancement is possible only if the original group can be left (cf. Tajfel 1974, 68).

## 6. Sources/references

- Directly to the quotation, name, year, and page number are given in parentheses. "Citation" (Tajfel 1974, 68).
- If the quotation continues in the original on the following page (e.g. because the quotation begins on one page and ends on the following page), an "f" (= following) is added to the number of pages. " Citation " (Tajfel 1974, 68f).
- If an author, having been cited shortly before, is cited again on the same page of the same work the source citation may be described by a simple (ibid.). If the page of the same work has changed, the citation is marked with (ibid.+page number). "Citation" (ibid.) or " Citation " (ibid., 69).

## 7. Bibliography

All the information about the literature is given in the bibliography at the end of the paper. It is important, that the references are consistent and in alphabetical order.

### Monographs:

Last name/comma/first name (editor- (ed.), if no author is available)/bracket open/year/bracket close/colon/book title (italics)/dot/place of publication/colon/publisher/dot.

Ex:

Vallentin, Rita (2018): *Belonging and Language Use. Local Categories and Practices in a Guatemalan Highland Community*. Berlin: Peter Lang.

### Collected works and journals:

Last name/comma/first name/bracket open/year/bracket close/colon/quotation mark/title of article/quotation mark/dot/In:/editor's surname/comma/editor's first name/bracket open/ed. or eds./bracket close/colon/book title (italic)/dot/place of publication/colon/publisher/colon/page to page/dot.

Ex.

Vallentin, Rita (2015): "Linguistic Strategies of Constructing Durable and Permeable Ethnic Boundaries in a Brazilian Quilombo Community". In: Jungbluth,

Konstanze/Rosenberg, Peter/Zinkhahn Rhobodes, Dagna. (Eds.): *Linguistic Construction of Ethnic Borders*. Frankfurt a.M.: Peter Lang: p. 33-53.

In the case of journals, the "In:" is omitted and the title of the journal is given after the title of the article without the editor.

For internet sources, the URL should be given. Since internet pages change, it is important to indicate the date of the last access.

If there are several authors, editors or places of publication, they are listed with a comma or a semicolon, in the order in which they appear on the book cover or in the title of the essay. If there are more than three authors or editors, "et al. " may follow the first author. If there are more than two places of publication, only the first place may be listed.

## **8. Footnotes**

Footnotes may be used to add notes, information or references to other texts that may lead away from the text. Each footnote/annotation is terminated with a period.

## **9. Structure of a term paper**

### *9.1 Title page*

Title of the paper, first and last name, EUV email address, matriculation number, title of the seminar, seminar leader, semester, subject of study, information about the desired certificate and module (e.g. 6 ECTS, specialization in linguistics).

### *9.2 Abstract*

The abstract is a short summary of the content of the paper. The reader should be informed what to expect in the text. What is the aim of the text? What methods were used? What are the results and conclusions of the work? The abstract consists of approximately 150-250 words and is written in a different language than the term paper (a language of your choice).

### *9.3 Table of contents*

The table of contents gives an overview of the content of the paper. It is numbered and the subchapters and page references can also be seen.

### *9.4 Introduction*

In the introduction, the topic and the question are briefly introduced and the procedure is explained. Individual chapters of the thesis and research methods can be discussed.

### *9.5 Main part*

The main part is usually divided into a theoretical and a methodological part. Among other things, this is the place where the state of research to date, the relevant models and theoretical approaches to the topic and the own methodical approach is presented. Findings from theory or the analysis of (own) data belong here as well.

### *9.6 Summary and conclusion*

In the summary, the individual components of the thesis are briefly recalled. In the conclusion the results are briefly summarized. Personal statement, outlook on considerations, further research questions or "open" questions end the work.

### *9.7 Bibliography*

See above.

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9.8 *Appendix*

If necessary, additional information on data collection and analysis is placed here (for example, transcripts, questionnaires, interview questions, overview of subjects, etc.).