Style Guide

American Literary and Cultural Studies
How to Write a Term Paper

Advice on form and content
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Formal term papers

Margins
left 4cm, right 2cm, at the top and bottom each 2cm

Font
  • Times New Roman
  • 12 pt.
  • 1.5 line spacing
  • full justification

Paragraphs
  • every first line of a new paragraph must be indented (except when preceded by a new heading).
  • paragraphs must not be too short – no ‘one sentence paragraphs’ (at least five sentences).
  • sort paragraphs by argument, try to combine thoughts into logical units.
  • be careful to logically combine each paragraph with the next or previous one.
    Make sure that your argument is relevant and not repetitive.

Structure of your work

1. Title page
2. Declaration of authenticity (download pdf-file: http://www.iaak.uni-bonn.de/resources/resolveuid/c3dcfc6a36089e60f8f5d003c093a6e6)
3. Table of Contents
4. Introduction
5. Subdivide, where appropriate, your main part into separate chapters
6. Conclusion
7. Works Cited
8. Appendix (if applicable)
Pagination

There are a variety of ways to deal with pagination:

1.) Page numbering starts with number 2 on the second page (table of contents). Even though pagination starts on the first page (title) the first printed page number appears on page 2.

2.) Page numbering starts with page number 1 on the first page of the introduction, leaving all the preambulatory pages unnumbered.

⚠️ Please always make sure to talk to your teachers first and ask for their preferred method! ⚠️

List of Works cited

• sort in alphabetical order by author names, (no pagination or bullet points!)

• consistent citation-style e.g. author-date style or MLA

• Web sources should be regarded with extreme caution! They must occur in an academic context, therefore, websites like Wikipedia, sparknotes or the like are to be avoided. For further reference see the official MLA Style Guide →http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/

Citations

• Citations are written in inverted commas.

• Please note that in American English papers, commas and periods are incorporated into the quote, regardless of whether they appeared there in the original quote. This does not apply to colons and question marks.

Example:
"A period is incorporated into a quotation."
"If the quote is followed by a in-text citation reference, the period follows after the parantheses" (Rules 159).

• Citations longer than three lines are not included in the text body, but are

  Indented by 1.5 cm, 10 pt, single spacing, indented on the left side, simple line spacing and require NO inverted commas.

• Make sure to always indicate when you are using direct or indirect quotations from the text. Not marking paraphrases is considered plagiarism!

• Direct quotes must remain in the original language. Do not translate quotes! If you feel the need to clarify what was said, explain the quote and its meaning.
Source documentation

The following are possible formats which you may use to document your sources. Please note that individual lecturers may have alternative formal requirements.

Author-Date Style

- independent of your bibliography style, always: (surname author. Year of publication: page), thus e.g. paraphrase or “quote” (Hutcheon 1983: 40)
- normally: APA 6th ed. style guide author-date style for your bibliography and bracket-method for in-text citations
- additional information is mentioned in footnotes, so long as the content is not directly relevant for the argumentation in the text.

Example:


Footnotes in Author-Date Style:

Monographs: Surname, name. Year of publication. Title. Place of publication: Publisher, p. ##.

"quote quote quote quote quote quote quote quote quote quote quote quote quote quote quote quote quote quote quote quote quote quote quote quote quote quote quote quote quote quote quote quote quote quote quote quote quote quote quote quote quote quote quote quote quote quote quote quote quote quote quote quote quote quote "1

→ △ Footnotes must be regarded as whole sentences which begin with a capital letter and end with a full stop, cf. and ibid. begin with a lower case letter within sentences and with a Capital letter at the beginning of a sentence/footnote. △

Example Footnote:


1 Author Name Surname. Year of publication. Title, p ##.
MLA (Modern Language Association) style:
newest and current edition 7 ed, 2009

• Instead of footnotes, MLA style uses in-text citation references. "A quote is followed by the author's last name and page number in parentheses" (Doe 147)
• Footnotes are exclusively used for further information (as mentioned above).
• see MLA Style guide http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/02
Works Cited (MLA Style)

Monographs
Last name, First name. *Subtitle*. Place: Publisher, Year. Print.

Example:

Editions
Last name, First name. *Subtitle*. Year of first edition. Place: Publisher, Year. Print.

Example:

Multiple Authors
Last name, First name, and First name Last name. *Subtitle*. Place: Publisher, Year. Print.

Example:

Note that in MLA style, Cambridge University Press and Oxford University Press are abbreviated by “CUP” and “OUP” respectively.

Edited Books
Last name, First name, ed. *Subtitle*. Place: Publisher, Year. Print.

Example:

Last name, First name, and First name Last name, eds. *Subtitle*. Place: Publisher, Year. Print.
Example:


Last name, First name, First name Last name, and First name Last name, eds. *Title: Subtitle*. Place: Publisher, Year. Print.

Example:


**Articles from Books Series**

Last name, First name, and First name Last name, eds. *Title: Subtitle*. Series title and number. Place: Publisher, Year. Print.

**Article from an Edited Book**

Last name, First name. “Title of article.” *Title of book*. Ed. First name Last name. Place: Publisher, Year. Page numbers. Print.

Example:


**Essays in Journals**


Example:


**Films**

*Title*. Dir. First Name Last Name. Studio, Year. Film.

Example:
It’s a Wonderful Life. Dir. Frank Capra. Perf. James Stewart, Donna Reed and Lionel Barrymore. RKO, 1946. Film.

Internet Sources
Last name, First name. “Title of Document.” Website Name. Publisher Name, Date of posting. Web. Date of access.

Example:
Title Page

RHEINISCHE FRIEDRICH-WILHELM'S-UNIVERSITÄT BONN
INSTITUT FÜR ANGLISTIK, AMERIKANISTIK UND KELTOLOGIE

Sommersemester 20**: “Course Title” (Name of Lecturer)

Title, bold 14pt
Subtitle (if applicable), bold, 12pt

Name, Surname 12pt
2nd Semester
Matrikelnummer
Street
Area Code Place
Phone

E-Mail Address
Content of term papers

• Term papers are supposed to consist of an autonomous, selected and structured work on a topic that has been chosen on the basis of individual interest.

• Generally, a term paper should be based on current research. Contextual literature should serve to emphasize, reinforce or contradict a thesis. A given thesis can and should always be examined critically and if necessary, be proven wrong.

• Citations do not speak for themselves, but rather must be put into an explanatory context.

• Citations should not just be listed but should always be part of the line of argumentation. The quote underlines your ideas and structure of the text, but they can also introduce academic difficulties and divergences in the interpretation of certain texts.

• The biography of an author does not belong into a term paper. Exceptions are studies focusing on biographical aspects, where they are closely connected to the analysis of a text.

• Summaries of the primary text should not obtain a prominent position within a term paper. Introductory phrases according to content and/or structure are justifiable, but a whole summary is mostly unnecessary.

• Search for synonyms in order to avoid word repetition.

• Do not use contracted forms (wasn’t, it’s, isn’t, couldn’t, they’re, hadn’t, wouldn’t, etc.), but write them out (was not, it is, is not, could not, they are, had not, would not, etc.).

• In American literary and cultural studies, you are free to use personal pronouns. We prefer direct and active sentence structures like "In this paper, I will show..." etc.