

## Appendix 4

### Important tips for writing a term paper

#### 1. Guidelines

- 1) Extent of term paper:
- 2) Formatting
  - Text size:
  - Line spacing:
  - Margins:
- 3) Parts of a term paper and their included information:
  - Title page: title of the term paper, information about the seminar/lecture, information about the author, etc.
  - Table of contents: title/subtitles of each section of the term paper and page number
  - Text: introduction, main body, and conclusion
  - Bibliography: information about used literature
  - Appendix (if necessary)
- 4) Due date:

#### 2. Structural aspects:

- 1) Introduction: You introduce your reader to the topic. You should consider the following points:
  - Explain what your term paper is about (topic) and why you believe the topic is worthy of discussion.
  - Formulate a concise research question that you want to precisely examine (research question).
  - Explain how you will methodically proceed in order to answer your research question (research method).
  - Outline what steps you will take to answer your research question (outline).
- 2) Body: This section is the main part of your paper. The research topic you introduced in the introduction will be handled extensively in this part. You should consider the following points:
  - Outline the body in logically organized subtitles.
  - Connect the individual chapters, subchapters, and sections, e.g. with transitions between sections.
- 3) Conclusion: Summarize the findings that were explored in the main body.
  - Create references to the research question presented in the introduction.
  - Summarize important results from your term paper and make conclusions based on these.

- Mention open points.
- Possibly, make suggestions for further research.

### 3. Content aspects:

1) **Abilities to demonstrate:** When writing a term paper, you are supposed to formulate a question from the topics handled in the seminar and answer it in an academic context. You should demonstrate the following abilities:

- You can give an overview of exemplary reading of the subject area.
- You can clearly present and critically evaluate theories, hypotheses, or studies.
- You are familiar with subject-specific methods and are able to apply these.
- You can develop an argument by logically organizing the individual steps of a thought process.
- You can give a justified evaluation, judgment, or opinion.

#### 2) Points to consider:

- Limit the chosen topic so that it can be dealt with in the assigned time frame.
- Discuss the topic **in an embedded theoretical context**, e.g. by giving an overview of the topic with exemplary reading. You should carefully consider the relevance that chosen literature has to the discussion of your topic.
- When reporting the relevant literature, don't reproduce the content without reflection, **critically evaluate** it.
- When using or referring to other academic works, mark them as such and provide the source, i.e. you should give explicit references to the source from which the information came. **(Citation)**
- Avoid a listing of assertions, instead develop **a coherent argument**.
- **Justify** decisions, e.g. why a certain method was used, why certain literature was used, why the research question was chosen, how you came to the conclusions, etc.<sup>1</sup>
- When expressing your own opinion, make it clear on which basis you are able, or want, to assert this. You can use, for example, current theories, other academic works, or empirical data as support. **(Proof)**
- To avoid ambiguity regarding terminology, which can lead to confusion regarding the entire text, **define** important terms.
- When using **illustrations** like tables, diagrams, graphics, pictures, etc., explain the information provided by them in the text.

#### 3) Stylistic aspects:

- Pay attention to an appropriate academic style. You implement this, for example, by using typical formulations for certain purposes in certain text parts:

---

<sup>1</sup> From: Kruse, Otto 2000 Keine Angst vor dem leeren Blatt. Ohne Schreibblockaden durchs Studium. Frankfurt/New York: Campus Verlag.

Text part	Action	Formulation
Introduction	Introducing term paper and leading to topic	For German academic Texts <sup>2</sup> : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>In der vorliegenden Arbeit geht es um ...</i></li> <li>- <i>Diese Arbeit beschäftigt sich mit ...</i></li> <li>- <i>Diese Arbeit setzt sich mit ... auseinander.</i></li> <li>- <i>Im Mittelpunkt dieser Arbeit steht die Frage ... usw.</i></li> </ul>
		For English academic Texts <sup>3</sup> : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>This paper will focus on/examine/give an account of...</i></li> <li>- <i>This essay seeks to remedy these problems by analyzing the literature of...</i></li> <li>- <i>The objectives of this research are to determine whether...</i></li> <li>- <i>This paper seeks to address the following questions:</i></li> </ul>

<sup>2</sup> From: „Formulierungshilfen zum Thema „Hausarbeiten“ in G. Mehlhorn 2005 Studienbegleitung für ausländische Studierende an deutschen Hochschulen. Teil 1: Handreichungen für Kursleiter zum Studierstrategien-Kurs. Teil 2: Individuelle Lernberatung - Ein Leitfaden für die Beratungspraxis". Iudicium: München.

<sup>3</sup> From: „Academic Phrasebank“ of University Manchester: <http://www.phrasebank.manchester.ac.uk/introductions.htm> (05.03.2011)