

LITERATUR- UND KULTURWISSENSCHAFT

LEIBNIZ UNIVERSITÄT HANNOVER

ENGLISCHES SEMINAR

MAY 2017

GUIDELINES FOR WRITING ESSAYS AND FINAL PAPERS (STYLE-SHEET)

The following information should be complemented by advice available through the office hours of academic staff.

STAGES IN PUTTING EVERYTHING TOGETHER

- choosing an independent theme and conducting bibliographical research
- reading and re-reading primary text(s) with precision; taking notes
- developing and substantiating **key questions** or a **thesis**
- reading and evaluating secondary literature; refining or changing the key question
- **analysis** and **interpretation** of the literary text(s) or cultural phenomenon should be foregrounded, not the reproduction of primary and secondary literature
- analysing and interpreting the function of aesthetic elements instead of merely describing them
- final checking of quotations, spelling, punctuation and grammar
- **Essay/term paper**: 5000 words
- **Bachelor thesis**: 30-40 pages (approx. 400 words per full page); two bound copies to be left in the secretariat before the deadline, pdf-document to be sent to office@engsem.uni-hannover.de before the deadline
- **Master's thesis**: 50-60 pages (approx. 400 words per full page); two bound copies to be left in the secretariat before the deadline, pdf-document to be sent to office@engsem.uni-hannover.de before the deadline

EXTERNAL FORM

- papers normally to be written in English (see exam regulations)
- formal presentation in conformity with the latest MLA style sheet (<https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01>)
- 1.5-line spacing, pages numbered consecutively, paragraphs with inset first line except for the first paragraph of each chapter
- each essay to comprise title page, contents page, main text, bibliography, plagiarism declaration

1. TITLE PAGE

The following details should appear on the title page:

- name, address (incl. telephone and matriculation number), e-mail address, degree course and subject, semester
- exact title of the paper (choose general formulations, such as “Constructions of Gender in George Eliot’s Novel *Middlemarch*”)
- title of the seminar, semester, lecturer, name of module (for seminar papers)

2. CONTENTS PAGE

The contents page shows the structure of the paper, with sections and subsections, each with the page number. Identical formulations should appear on the respective pages as chapter titles. The titles should give a concise indication of the essential gist of the respective chapter or section (e.g. 3.2. “*1984* as a Dystopian Novel”).

Example of a clear structure:

1. Introduction
(thesis and/or research question, structure, the state of research as justification for the chosen theme)
2. Theory and method section
(basic theoretical approach and appropriate method(s), definition of main terms and relevant theoretical concepts from Literary or Cultural Studies)
3. Main section
(analysis and interpretation of the literary text or cultural phenomenon subdivided in accordance with the thematic aspects and theoretical concepts)
4. Conclusion
Bibliography

3. MAIN TEXT

This is where the **argumentation** is conducted. Your **Introduction** and **Theory and Method section** will already have stated what you intend to scrutinize and the method by which you will underpin your thesis. The **Conclusion** should summarize the most important findings and/or indicate further possible aspects of the theme.

Remember that your **reader** is your lecturer. It is normally unnecessary to repeat the contents of the literary works you are writing about, because you can assume the lecturer is already familiar with them. Short biographies of authors are also superfluous unless they are directly relevant to your inquiry. If in doubt, ask your lecturer, because not everything you read for your own information has a place in your paper.

3.1 STYLE

Write mainly in short sentences with active verbs, and give verbal constructions preference over noun phrases. Avoid repetition. Write clearly, academically and precisely. To make a text coherent, it is important not to jump abruptly from one thought or topic to the next, but to link them by signposting the connections (e.g. “One may conclude from that...”; “In contrast...”).

3.2 QUOTATIONS

Shorter quotations (up to three lines) need to be grammatically integrated into the running text – even if they are in another language – and framed by double quotation marks. Note the difference between the German („...“) and the English (“...“) way of writing and printing them. Distinguish any direct speech within the quotation by single quotation marks. For example: “‘Cheer up, we won’t bite,’ their smile seemed to say.” (Mansfield 39)

Longer quotations should be inset. Since this already signals quotation, double quotation marks should not be used.

Quotations must correspond exactly to the original, omissions being marked with three periods preceded and followed by a space: Brackets around ellipses are usually not needed, unless they clarify the use of omissions. Additions are marked by square brackets (e.g. “In recent years it [i.e. Decadence] has attracted the attention of critics.”). Quotations should not be italicized, except for italic printing in the original (in which case you should write “emphasis in the original”) or to emphasize particular words (in which case you should write “emphasis added”).

Do not quote without first checking if it is absolutely necessary. **Paraphrasing with source reference** is often enough. When you use quotations, incorporate them into your argument with appropriate formulations (e.g. “Miller convincingly argues that...”; “I have reservations about Morrison’s argument that...”). Make sure that one quotation does not directly follow another. Show that you are **working with the quotations**. Distinguish clearly between your own thoughts and those of someone else. Even if you are indebted in a general way to a secondary source or if you express thoughts of someone else in a slightly different way, it is important to provide a source reference, such as (*cf.* Brown). Failure to do this exposes you to suspicion of **plagiarism**.

3.3 FOOTNOTES

The *MLA Handbook* gives details of two basic but quite different methods of adding notes.

With the variant of **parenthetical citation** that the MLA prefers, footnotes are not used for providing bibliographical details but only to add allusions and explanations that would interrupt the main text (e.g. “In her remarkable study, Armstrong adds another important point when she writes...”) or which refer to other publications of

interest. Quoted or paraphrased sources are indicated by the author's name and the page reference in brackets in the running text. If you are referring to more than one work by the same person, you should clarify which work you are referring to at any one time by means of short titles (e.g. Hutcheon *Politics*, 56). This method derives from the natural sciences and saves space and effort.

For **note references** (humanities style), literary references are provided in foot- or endnotes. The form consists of the author's first name and surname, the title of the work, with the place of publication, publisher and date of publication in brackets, followed by the page reference, whereby this differs from the form of documentation in the bibliography. After the first full reference to a source and in immediately subsequent references to the same source, it is enough to give minimal details for unambiguous identification of the source, e.g. the author's surname and the page reference.

Clarify the formal requirements for the paper with your lecturer and, after deciding upon one system, **adhere to it throughout**.

4. BIBLIOGRAPHY

The bibliography contains **full bibliographical details** of all works that have been consulted in writing the paper. Ensure that the bibliographical details are equally thorough for sources that are not complete books (e.g. give the page numbers of articles). For sources from edited collections, it is important to list each separate article – the name of the volume and its editors will not be enough. The bibliography must be set out **alphabetically by authors' surnames**, which is why the surname here precedes the first name. The following list shows examples for compiling a bibliography for an English-language paper according to the MLA stylesheet:

Armstrong, Nancy. *Desire and Domestic Fiction: A Political History of the Novel*. Oxford University Press, 1987. (= example for the work of an author)

Broich, Ulrich, and Manfred Pfister, editors. *Intertextualität: Formen, Funktionen, anglistische Fallstudien*. Niemeyer, 1985. (= example for an edited collection of essays)

Brontë, Charlotte. *Jane Eyre*. Edited by Richard J. Dunn, Norton, 1971. (= example for a more recent critical edition; editor and publication year should be given)

Schwarzkopf, Jutta. "The Relationship of History to Cultural Studies." *Journal for the Study of British Cultures*, vol. 20, no. 1, 2013, pp. 43-54. (= example for a contribution to a journal)

Keats, John. "A Song About Myself." *John Keats. Selected Poems*, edited by John Barnard, Penguin, 1988, pp. 112-14. (= example for a poem in an anthology)

Pride and Prejudice. Directed by Joe Wright, performances by Keira Knightley, Mathew Macfadyen, Universal Studios, 2006. (= example for a film)

St. James Encyclopedia of Popular Culture. Gale eBook, Gale Virtual Reference Library, 2003, <http://www.gale.com/gvrl>. Accessed 10 Oct 2005. (= example for an article in an electronic medium, e.g. ebook)

Sundquist, Eric J. "Realism and Regionalism." *The Columbia History of the American Novel*, edited by Emory Elliott, Columbia University Press, 1991, pp. 501-24. (= example for a contribution in a reference work)

"Treehouse of Horror." *The Simpsons*, directed by Wesley Archer, Rich Moore and David Silverman, 20th Century Fox Television, 1990. (= example for an episode in a television series)

The access date (when you consulted the source, e.g website) of electronic media and the details of the electronic publication (medium and – optional – URL) must be specified.

FURTHER READING

Barry, Peter. *Beginning Theory. An Introduction to Literary and Cultural Theory*. 3rd ed., Manchester University Press, 2009.

Broders, Simone. *Wissenschaftliches Arbeiten in Anglistik und Amerikanistik*. Wilhelm Fink (UTB), 2015.

Franck, Norbert, and Joachim Stary. *Die Technik des wissenschaftlichen Arbeitens: Eine praktische Anleitung*. 16th ed., Schöningh (UTB), 2011.

Gibaldi, Joseph. *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*. 8th ed., MLA, 2016.

Mautner, Gerlinde. *Wissenschaftliches Englisch. Stilsicher schreiben in Studium und Wissenschaft*. UKV Verlagsgesellschaft (UTB), 2011.

Siepmann, Dirk. *Wissenschaftliche Texte auf Englisch schreiben*. Ernst Klett Sprachen, 2012.

Siepmann, Dirk, et al. *Writing in English: A Guide for Advanced Learners*. 2nd ed., A. Francke Verlag (UTB), 2011.