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Guidelines for Seminar Papers and BA/MA Theses

Any matters not explicitly addressed by the following guidelines can be determined at the writer's discretion. Nonetheless, the writer must consistently handle such issues throughout the paper or thesis.

1 Writing style and other general topics

- Write clearly and concisely in English, utilizing appropriate economic terminology while avoiding expletives, buzzwords, and flowery language. Additionally, aim to avoid excessively long and complicated sentences. It is essential to demonstrate competent use of economic terminology. Refrain from making normative judgments or adopting a journalistic writing style, as this is a scientific text.
- When incorporating ideas from literature, rephrasing them in one's own words is essential. Merely altering a few words in a literature source's paragraph is insufficient. You should use direct quotations only sparingly.
- Please ensure that your papers are free of grammatical and spelling errors. Papers with excessive typos/mistakes will receive a grade of 5.0, irrespective of the quality of the content. It is recommended that you collaborate and proofread each other's work.
- Scientific writing can be learned. The university offers support for improving your scientific writing skills through the website `www.schreibenlernen.uni-jena.de`.
- A scientific text must adhere to the codes of conduct for scientific practice, which includes indicating every intellectual contribution of other authors used in your work by referencing and citing them appropriately. Failure to do so may be considered plagiarism and will be assessed as an attempt to defraud, resulting in a grade of 5.0. We will also use plagiarism detection software, irrespective of any suspicion.

2 Structure of the document

- The paper's title page must include the title, name, and student ID number of the author, name of the supervisor, date of submission, and, in the case of a seminar paper, the name of the seminar. Please note that it is not permitted to use the emblem of the FSU.
- The **table of contents** consists of the numbered chapter (section, subsection, etc.) titles and page numbers in Arabic numeration like in this example:

1. The first chapter headline 1
1.1. The first section 1
1.2. The next section 2
1.2.1. First subsection 4
...

- Each chapter or section should either have no subsections or include at least two. The numbering of chapters, sections, and subsections should also be clearly indicated in the main text.
- **List of figures and list of tables** (both not mandatory in seminar papers!)
- The **main body**. It starts with page number 1, i.e. the table of contents, the lists of figures and tables do not count.
- The **bibliography** (see below).
- The **appendix** (if necessary). The appendix may be structured as A.1, A.2, ... Also, this is part of the table of contents.

3 Text formatting

- Font size 11 point. Font type Times (New) Roman (or comparable).
- Line spacing 1.5, all margins 2.5 cm, flush left and right.
- Before and after a headline there should be some space.
- A new chapter does not need to start on a new page. A page break should be done if the page is full. Please avoid pages with a lot of blank space.
- Please limit the use of footnotes to a minimum, as they should only contain additional remarks that are unnecessary for understanding the text. It is recommended to critically

evaluate whether these remarks are essential enough to be included in the main text or whether they can be omitted entirely.

4 Submission

- Please submit your seminar paper as a *PDF* file by emailing it to your supervisor or uploading it to Moodle.
- Bachelor's and Master's theses must be submitted to the Examinations Office (not to the supervisor) in electronic form as *PDF* by the deadline. Please also send your thesis as *PDF* to your supervisor.

5 Number of pages

- Unless otherwise specified, seminar papers should have a main body of 15 pages. Bachelor's theses are limited to 30 pages. The number of pages for a Master's thesis will depend on the topic and the arrangements made with the supervisor. As a rule of thumb, the recommended length is 50 pages. It's important to note that the page count only includes the main text and does not include figures, appendices, or indexes (such as tables of contents, lists of figures, lists of tables or bibliography).
- A deviation of up to +/- 10% from the standard page limits mentioned above is allowed.
- The page limits apply to the paper's main text, excluding the bibliography and appendix. If the total length of the main text and appendix exceeds the allowed deviation of +10%, the student must seek the supervisor's approval in advance. This measure is necessary to ensure that the appendix is not used to bypass the page number restriction.

6 Equations and symbols

- If you are not using text formatting software like LaTeX, you should still use a formula editor. Equations and symbols should be in an *italic font*. Out-of-line equations should have some space before and after the text. If they are referenced in the text, they should be subsequently numbered on the right margin. For example:

$$y = f(x) \tag{1}$$

so that you can refer to Equation (1) in the text.

- Consistency in the usage of symbols is crucial in scientific writing. Therefore, if you use equations from a cited text, you should adapt the symbols to those in your text. This includes the correct use of mathematical symbols and operators and the notation of variables and parameters. For example, if you denote the exchange rate as w in one chapter, you should not use e to represent the same variable in a later chapter. However, it is essential to note that even if you change the symbols, the cited equation still represents the intellectual work of the original author.

7 Citation

- The required standard is the American citation style, i.e. you cite in the text, not in the footnote. Use only the last name(s) and the year of publication. A direct quote is cited like in the following example:

  > "It is often claimed that long-run per capita output growth is the only measure of economic performance that really matters." (Obstfeld/Rogoff (1996), p.429)

  Please use direct quotations very scarcely. An important part of your work is to explain contents in your own words. If you refer only generally to the literature source, but express the author's ideas in your own words, then you cite according to the following example:

  > Most economists agree that the per-capita output growth is an essential indicator of economic performance (see Obstfeld/Rogoff (1996), p.429).

- If you are referencing the entire article (or book) of an author, then you can omit the page number as in the following example:

  > We compile a balanced panel dataset of 13 advanced economies from 1917 to 2016 using data from Jorda et al.'s (2017) Macrohistory Database. We identify discretionary government spending changes by restricting the contemporaneous response of government spending to economic activity in close analogy to the Blanchard and Perotti (2002) approach.

- In case of more than two authors it is allowed to cite only the first author, followed by "et al.", such like "Mankiw et al. (2002)."

- If a longer paragraph draws heavily on one literature source, it is sufficient to cite the source once using a phrase like "(cf. in the following, Mankiw et al. (2002))" at the beginning of the paragraph after the first sentence. There is no need to repeat the citation for every sentence or idea taken from that source within the same paragraph.

- It is possible to bundle different sources in one citation like "(see Keynes (1938), Pigou (1941))."
- Be aware that ideas and formulations taken from the literature which are not cited by giving the reference are classified as plagiarism. This does not apply to commonplace content such as "World War II ended in 1945" or other statements without significant intellectual content. However, it is essential to note that plagiarism will result in a failing grade.
- Consider that if you want to cite an original author who is cited in a secondary source, it is always preferable to investigate the original source. However, if this is not possible, then you should cite the source as follows: "Keynes (1936) as cited in Smith (1998)" (not ' ´Smith (1998)" because it is the intellectual work of Keynes, not Smith) If you cite only the original source ("Keynes (1936)") then we have to assume that you read the original source. If you have not, however, you will run into troubles if the secondary source has cited in a wrong way, and you are not aware of this.

8 Sources which can be cited

- Books, articles from academic journals or edited collections, working papers, and other periodical proceedings (such as newspapers and magazines) can be cited.
- We accept only sources in German or English language.
- To conduct comprehensive research, use the extensive resources available through the library (ThULB), including databases such as EconLit. While EconLit provides access to numerous academic journals, you should also explore other licensed online resources available through the ThULB, such as `springerlink.com` and `sciencedirect.com`. These resources are only accessible within the university's IP address room. If you are working remotely, you must use a VPN to access them. Additional recommended resources include the databases JSTOR (`jstor.org`) and RePEc (`ideas.repec.org`), as well as Google Scholar (`scholar.google.com`). Avoid relying solely on internet search engines like Google for your research.
- When using internet sources, you have to distinguish the following cases:

  a) If you obtain e.g. working papers or periodical proceeding like ECB reports from the internet, then these sources exist in a printed version as well. In these cases the sources are not really "internet" sources although you have used the internet for accessing them. You have to cite them like any other printed source.

b) Some internet sources do not exist in a printed version but are a regular electronic publication with an ISSN, URN, or DOI number, e.g. our faculty working paper series "Jena Economics Research Papers." Also in this case, the citation is like for any other printed source.

c) Internet sources in a narrow sense which do not belong to the categories mentioned above should be cited only if really necessary, and if these sources are from reliable (mostly: public) institutions. In this case you have to provide the URL and the date of access in the bibliography.

- Lecture scripts and other educational material are not allowed to be cited. They can, however, be useful as a starting point for your work.
- In case of dictionaries or encyclopedia you should use only academic encyclopedia or dictionaries such like the New Palgrave Dictionary, but not general purpose sources like the Encyclopedia Britannica, and especially **not Wikipedia**!
- Exam papers like seminar papers or BA / MA theses are not allowed to be cited. A PhD thesis, however, can be cited because this is a regular publication.

9 Bibliography

There is no normative prescription for the number of sources in the bibliography. This will depend on the degree of difficulty of the sources and your paper/thesis topic. The well-known rule-of-thumb "one source per page" may be a reasonable empirical description, but we explicitly do not support this as a normative prescription!

In your bibliography, make sure to list all sources you have used in alphabetical order. Avoid creating separate bibliographies for different types of sources. If you choose to use abbreviations for authors' first names, be consistent throughout your bibliography The bibliographic data of each entry should be structured as follows:

- In the case of a book:

  Bernanke, B.S., Abel, A.B. (2005), Macroeconomics. 5th ed., Boston et al.: Pearson.

- In the case of journal articles:

  Krainer, R. (2009), Portfolio and financing adjustments for U.S. banks: Some empirical evidence. Journal of Financial Stability 5(1), pp. 1–24.
  [5(1) means volume 5, issue 1.]

- In the case of working papers:

  Keiser, T., McAndrews, J. (2009), Why Are Banks Holding So MuchExcess Reserves?, Working Paper No. 380, Federal Reserve Bank of New York Staff Reports. *[You have to mention the providing institution!]*

- In the case of contributions in collections/proceedings:

  Frey, B.S., Stutzer, A. (2008), Environmental Morale and Motivation. In: Lewis, A. (Ed.), The Cambridge Handbook of Psychology and Economic Behaviour, S.406-428. Cambridge University Press.

- In the case of Internet sources:

  OECD (2013), The Global Forum on Tax Transparency welcomes Romania as new member. `https://www.oecd.org/newsroom/theglobalforumontaxtransparencywelcomesromaniaasnewmember.htm` (accessed at 2013-01-24)

- If you have multiple entries of the same author from the same year, you add a letter to the year, e.g.:

  Schmidt, H.-G. (2001a),...
  Schmidt, H.-G. (2001b),...

  Of course the citation in the text must then be consistent ("cf. Schmidt (2001a)").

- Check, that every source cited in the text is included in the bibliography and also vice versa.

- In some cases, there may be no author (e.g. newspaper articles or internet sources). Here you should use "N.N." instead of an author's name. In case that the source is provided by an organization (see example above), you use the name of the organization (such like "OECD") instead of the author's name.

10 Figures and tables

- Figures and tables should be placed in the main body of the document if they are important for the comprehensibility of the text. If you have extensive data material which is not so important for the reading of the text, then you can put large tables or statistical material into the appendix. Also additional calculations, derivations, formal proofs, etc. could be placed in the appendix. Figures should appear only in the appendix if they illustrate facts mentioned in the appendix, or if they are not important for understanding the text (then, however, they could be omitted).

To make it easy to refer to figures and tables in the text, they must be numbered consecutively. Additionally, it is important to provide a list of figures/tables, except for seminar papers.

- Self-provided figures and tables (using software) have better printing quality. Furthermore, you can adapt the symbols to be consistent with the text, and you can add important details or cancel less important ones. Of course, this may be a very demanding task for large and complex figures. In these cases, you may scan the figures or tables and import them into the text. Please note that the symbols may eventually differ from those used in your text. You should then adapt this or at least explain this in the text. You always have to provide a reference to the sources (comparable to citations in the text) since figures/tables are also the intellectual efforts of other authors. In the case of self-provided figures, which are based on existing figures in the literature, you have to cite like "(self-provided figure according to Smith (2001), p.11)."

11 Declaration of academic integrity

For seminar papers, Bachelor's and Master's theses, a signed declaration of academic integrity must be attached on the last page. The current version can be found on Hanfried. Please also note the declaration of permitted resources for the use of AI. Please contact your supervisor in this regard.