FRIEDRICH-SCHILLER-
UNIVERSITÄT
JENA

# Style and Writing Guide for Seminar Papers and Master Thesis at the Chair of Business Dynamics, Innovation and Economic Change

## Formal Requirements

- **Front Page:** Please use the provided template (see Appendix; the use of the University logo is not allowed)
- **Table of contents:** Index of chapters, sections and subsections of the work numbered with Arabic numbers (1, 1.1, 1.1.1, etc.).
- **List of Abbreviations: (if applicable):** List only abbreviations used in text; commonly used abbreviations, such as "etc." "et al." should not be listed.
- **Lists of Figures: (if applicable):** List figures with respective page numbers.
- **List of Tables (if applicable):** List tables with respective page numbers.
- **Main text:**
  - *Margins:* above / below 2 cm, right / left each 2.5 cm,
  - *Main Text Font:* Times New Roman 12 point (footnotes, tables, captions: 10 points),
  - *Line spacing:* 1.5 times the main text (footnotes easy); justified text,
  - *Length (plain text):* approx. 15 pages (Seminar paper), 60 pages (Master Thesis),
  - *Citations:* Author-Year style (consistent use of APA citation format), see section Citation for more information,
  - *Figures and tables:* numbered with Arabic numbers,
  - *Footnotes:* in respective page (not at the end of the Thesis), only for additional information and not to quote,
  - *Page numbering:* Arabic numbers, starting on the first page of the introduction (the pages before the introduction do not have to be numbered*),*
  - *Formulas in the text:* Formulas and symbols should be in an italic font, out-of-line formulas should have some space to the preceding and subsequent text and they should be subsequently numbered.
    Example:

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

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

## Writing Style

- Write in clear and straight English, avoid expletives, flowery phrases, and buzzwords.
- Avoid too long and complicated sentences.
- Avoid normative judgments as well as a journalistic loose style.
- Ideas taken from the literature should be expressed in own words.
- Use literal quotations very scarcely, quotes are not a substitute for own explanations.
- Better deep than broad: try not to include additional material as long as you have not explained all relevant arguments fully.

## Content

- Introduction:
  - Motivation: Convince the reader of your topic.
  - Relevance of your topic: Outline the relevance of your topic, mention, e.g., current developments and/or describe the larger context.
  - Research question: Make clear, which issues are discussed and which are omitted in your paper.
  - Briefly summarize your paper.
  - Outline the structure of your paper.
- Main body:
  - The content can vary according to the type of your paper.
  - Usually there is a section that introduces the theoretical background, a section that applies this background to your particular topic and a section that outlines the results and implications.
- Conclusion:
  - Summarize and discuss your work.
  - Discuss potential limitations of your research.
  - Provide an outlook for future avenues of research.
- Bibliography:
  - List alphabetically all sources, which have been used in the main text, works of the same author should be arranged chronologically, several titles by the same author in one year should be distinguished with small letters.
  - Example:
    Menter, M. (2022a). Entrepreneurial universities and innovative behavior: The impact of gender diversity. *Economics of Innovation and New Technology*, *31*(1-2), 20-34.
    Menter, M. (2022b). Entrepreneurship and economic resilience in times of crisis: Insights from the COVID-19 pandemic. In Audretsch, D. B. & Kunadt, I. A. M. (Eds.), *The COVID-19 crisis and entrepreneurship: Perspectives and experiences of researchers, thought leaders, and policymakers* (pp. 97-104). Cham: Springer International Publishing.

## Citation

- Please use the American citation style (APA), i.e., cite in the text, not in the footnote.
- Use only the last name(s) and the year of publication.
- If you are referencing the entire article (or book) of an author, then you can omit the page number.
- 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)”.
- It is possible to bundle different sources in one citation like “(Keynes, 1938; Pigou, 1941)”.
- Always try to investigate the original source, do not cite an author who is cited in a secondary source. If this is not possible then – as an exception – you should cite like e.g., “Keynes (1936) as cited by Smith (1998)” (not: “Smith (1998)”).

## Submission

- Please submit your seminar paper or master’s thesis as a PDF file via email to your advisor and CC the Examination Office.
- Please also submit a ZIP file containing all sources used (in PDF format) via email.
- Master’s theses must be submitted in bound form (one copy) to the Examination Office.

## Sources and Research

- Use the IP address of the university to gain access to scientific journals.
- Consequently, if you do your research at home, you need a VPN connection to the university network.
- Potential databases are, e.g., EconLit, ScienceDirect, JSTOR, Google Scholar
- We accept only sources in German or English language.
- Books, articles from academic journals or edited collections, working papers, and other periodical proceedings (incl. press) can be cited.
- If you find more than one version of a paper, please note that the version which is published by a journal should always be preferred over a working paper.

## Plagiarism

Using the words or ideas of others without acknowledgement is plagiarism. If you are quoting the words of someone else make this clear. Similarly, if you paraphrase the words of someone else make this clear. There is nothing wrong with substantiating your argument through reference to other people's work. It is wrong not to acknowledge that this is what you are doing. Plagiarism is a serious offence, a severe form of cheating and will be heavily punished. You will be asked to sign a declaration that your work does not contain plagiarized material (see section Declaration). Remember that whoever marks your essay will have an excellent knowledge of the relevant literature, so that plagiarism will be easily detected. The simple rule to follow is always to acknowledge your sources.

## Oral Defense (see PowerPoint Template)

The thesis also requires an oral defense. This consists of a 15-minute presentation of the thesis, followed by a 15-minute question-and-answer session and discussion. During the presentation, students should justify and explain their research question and its relevance; outline their theoretical and methodological approach; and present their thesis's key findings and resulting conclusions. During the subsequent discussion, students should be prepared to answer questions about how they derived their research question, their conceptual, theoretical, and methodological decisions, how they interpreted the results, the limitations of their thesis, and the implications of their research for future research and practice.

## Declaration

In the last page the following statement must be signed (also available at the website of the University):

**Declaration of Academic Integrity**

1. I hereby confirm that this work — or in case of group work, the contribution for which I am responsible and which I have clearly identified as such — is my own work and that I have not used any sources or resources other than those referenced.
   I take responsibility for the quality of this text and its content and have ensured that all information and arguments provided are substantiated with or supported by appropriate academic sources. I have clearly identified and fully referenced any material such as text passages, thoughts, concepts or graphics that I have directly or indirectly copied from the work of others or my own previous work. Except where stated otherwise by reference or acknowledgement, the work presented is my own in terms of copyright.
2. I understand that this declaration also applies to generative AI tools which cannot be cited (hereinafter referred to as 'generative AI').
   I understand that the use of generative AI is not permitted unless the examiner has explicitly authorized its use (Declaration of Permitted Resources). Where the use of generative AI was permitted, I confirm that I have only used it as a resource and that this work is largely my own original work. I take full responsibility for any AI-generated content I included in my work.
   Where the use of generative AI was permitted to compose this work, I have acknowledged its use in a separate appendix. This appendix includes information about which AI tool was used or a detailed description of how it was used in accordance with the requirements specified in the examiner's Declaration of Permitted Resources.
   I have read and understood the requirements contained therein and any use of generative AI in this work has been acknowledged accordingly (e.g. type, purpose and scope as well as specific instructions on how to acknowledge its use).
3. I also confirm that this work has not been previously submitted in an identical or similar form to any other examination authority in Germany or abroad, and that it has not been previously published in German or any other language.
4. I am aware that any failure to observe the aforementioned points may lead to the imposition of penalties in accordance with the relevant examination regulations. In particular, this may include that my work will be classified as deception and marked as failed. Repeated or severe attempts to deceive may also lead to a temporary or permanent exclusion from further assessments in my degree programme.

Place, Date Signature