

**'Wissenschaftliche Arbeiten' (PS; HS; Staatsexamen) For My Courses:  
OBLIGATORY Information (*read first; ask later*) (Update November 2011)**

1. **Allgemeine Hinweise (Fristen; Formate)**

1. Hausarbeiten können **bis max. 12 Monate nach Veranstaltungsende** eingereicht werden, d.h. für Seminare des SS bis Ende Juli, des WS bis Ende Februar jeweils des Folgejahres.
2. Wenn Sie Note und Schein zu einer **HA** zu einem bestimmten Termin **-v.a. zwecks Examensanmeldung (!)-** benötigen, so müssen Sie die HA **mindestens vier Wochen vor diesem Termin** einreichen. Über Note und Abholtermin werden Sie per Email informiert.
3. Rein elektronische Versionen (Email-Attachment; CD) von HA reichen nicht aus; es muss in jedem Falle eine ausgedruckte Version abgegeben werden, entweder persönlich oder per Postfach in R. 127.
4. Eine **Staatsexamensarbeit** reichen Sie direkt beim LPA ein; von dort erhalten Erst- und Zweitgutachtende ihre Exemplare, welche sie im Anschluss wieder retournieren, d.h. die Arbeiten verbleiben beim LPA, nicht bei den Gutachtenden.
5. Wenn Sie die Note zu einer **Staatsexamensarbeit** zu einem bestimmten Termin **-v.a. zwecks Referendariatsbeginn (!)-** benötigen, müssen Sie zwischen Themenvergabe (durch Erstgutachtende(n)) und Notenmitteilung (durch das LPA) **mindestens 6-7 Monate** einplanen: **max. 3 M** Bearbeitungszeit ▶ **max. 2 M** Erstgutachten ▶ **max. 1 M** Zweitgutachten ▶ **ca. 10 Tage** Postlauf & Zeugnis-erstellung.

2. **Type of Text**

Your paper should have a clearly discernible topic, an argumentative structure, and should be based on secondary literature that must be documented in a bibliography/list of references. Your model should *not* be the 'Abituraufsatz', nor a 'Klausur' or a 'Fan Report on what XYZ means to me personally', but a scholarly article in a journal (e.g. *English Language Teaching, English Studies, Fremdsprachenunterricht, Journal for the Study of British Cultures, Journal of Narrative Technique, Modern Fiction Studies, Zeitschrift für Anglistik und Amerikanistik*), or a chapter in a scholarly book in our library. Such a research-based paper -on 'Pro-' and 'Hauptseminar' levels- should combine your own critical study of a well-defined topic with published criticism from reliable, scholarly sources.

3. **Choice of Language**

According to the 'Studienordnung', your 'Proseminararbeit' has to be written in English. Although there is no such regulation for 'Hauptseminararbeiten', English would of course be preferred. A paper in German does not automatically downgrade the marking, just as beautiful English prose does not necessarily upgrade it. When both the seminar and the better part of secondary literature are in English, the writing should not prove too difficult. If you feel that the foreign language would obstruct your argument, i.e. the (linguistic) form weaken the content of your paper, however, you had better write in German. Though *what* you have to say and *how* you say it (linguistically) are both important, the former still seems to be a (little?) bit more crucial. If you choose German, add a ~20-line abstract in English as an appendix.

In papers on the field of 'Literaturdidaktik', I see no problem in switching from English (background, theory, approach, guiding question) to German (discussion of practical classroom activities against the backdrop of, e.g. 'Richtlinienvorgaben' & 'Kernlehrpläne').

4. **How to Prepare**

Sit down and think first: What is your topic? Re-read your primary text(s), using dictionaries and relevant handbooks. Make notes about your own observations, ideas, questions, hypotheses.

Research. Thoroughly, but selectively. Become as much of an expert on your topic as your topic requires (and, possibly, a little bit more...). Use the Libraries of our Institute, our Faculty, the University and, where adequate, special bibliographies on your topic. If you use the internet, which is of course a valuable - but sometimes unreliable - source of information, do so with caution and document the precise URLs (=links) AND the date of your last access to them.

Make an outline of points you absolutely have to mention (and be aware that certain items, - like biographies of authors [unless your topic *is* that author's biographical development] - normally do not belong in your paper): Select first and then structure your material. Do not forget that you only have a limited amount of space.

Start. Do not try to find perfect and finalised ways of stating your points in the very first version. Good writing is Re-writing....

5. **Length and Formatting**

A 'Proseminararbeit' should have 10-12 standard pages, a 'Hauptseminararbeit' ca. 16-20 standard pages (i.e., approx. 1.800 characters per page). In the case of co-authored papers by 2 students, these figures should be roughly- doubled, but a further requirement for accepting this is that each student's contribution and workload is clearly discernible and distinct.

Use readable fonts (12 pt.) and properly spaced lines ('1,5 zeilig'). Only write on ONE side of the paper. Make sure you leave a wide margin (~3 cm) for comments either on the right or on the left. Do not forget to paginate your paper (title page and the 'Table of Contents' are not counted). Extra-Materials (e.g. maps; screenshots; student worksheets; flashcards; political speech texts; statistic figures; reprints, illustrations etc.) should go into an 'Appendix' which then gets extra Roman counting (I, II, III...).

For short quotes, use quotation marks within the body of your own text. Longer quotes (more than 4 lines) appear in single-spaced, indented blocks. When you integrate in-text quotes from another language, make sure that they are linked to your text in a grammatically correct way. In all cases, please make certain you quote correctly.

Footnotes provide additional information; you do *not* need them to indicate the source of quotes. For this purpose, parenthetical documentation in your main text (e.g., Smith 1998: 134-135) is recommended as the better option: you only state the author's or source's name, year: page number. The full title details of all your sources need then only be given in the list of references at the end of your paper.

It seems impossible to prescribe the number of secondary sources used, but a figure from experience is that you can discuss diversity of opinion - on whatever topic - much more easily with reference to 8-12 sources than to 1-2 or 35+....

6. **External Structure**

-TITLE PAGE: on the middle of the front page, type your name, the title of your paper, the kind of paper ('Proseminararbeit' etc.), and your instructor's as well as the title and semester of the relevant course. Please also include your phone number, e-mail address, and 'Fachsemester'.

-TABLE OF CONTENTS: list the subdivisions of your paper with page numbers.

-INTRODUCTION: here you explain your leading question(s) and theses. You should also give a brief description of the method or approach you use and perhaps a short survey of relevant criticism. Do not merely repeat the structure of your "Table of Contents" but start to argue your case! Develop your topic out of the literary, linguistic, didactic, cultural, media, historical, social, ..., context. Tell the reader why your topic is relevant (research situation? classroom problems?), what you intend to do (your topic version / aim of your paper), and how you intend to do it (outlining your argument structure).

-The MAIN PART of your argument, subdivided into suitable sections (with your own titles), should be keyed to the main question(s) or theses you have outlined in the introduction. Always make sure that your basic terms or concepts are clearly defined and that your argument is firmly and clearly based on evidence from your primary text(s). Include criticism in a way that makes your own position clear, but do not let it take the place of *your own* interpretive views. Define any open terms (like 'stereotype', 'Native literature', 'gender'), but avoid defining fixed literary terms (like 'alliteration' or 'symbol'). Always be to the point and evaluate your writing process continually: Do I really have to mention XYZ in order to cover my topic? Usually you do not have to include plot summaries of literary texts, since your reader is supposed to know them. Work from a suitable outline or argumentative structure ('Gliederung'). Your line of reasoning should be plausible, coherent, precise, and concise. Be careful with generalizing or ill-founded assertions (e.g. "It is clear for all readers that..." / "The flower symbol reveals the author's extraordinary love of nature..." / "All contemporary sixth-grade classrooms will share the problem of..." / "What motivated him to write this poem is definitely..."). If a problem remains unsolved, indicate in what way.

-CONCLUSION: here you give a brief summary of your paper, an evaluation of your thesis, and/or outline unresolved questions and possibly indicate what follow-up research could be undertaken in the future ("Where do we go from here?"). Find a way of responding to the question(s) you posed in the introduction.

-LIST OF REFERENCES: this list should be divided into primary and secondary literature, i.e. the literary/political/linguistic/historical/non-fictional texts/sources you analysed in the paper, and the secondary, scholarly texts/sources you consulted as help tools for your analysis. Arrange your sources alphabetically under the author's name; if you quote several works from one author, arrange them chronologically (Miller 1988, 1989a, 1989b etc.). Only list titles you have actually used and/or referred to in your paper!

## 7. How To Revise

Check your language (spelling, esp. unwanted weak forms and capitalization; conversational turns; lexis, esp. false friends; grammar, esp. verb agreement; pronoun reference; conjunction adequacy; comma splices; 'dangling' participles; balance of active and passive verbal forms).

Try to write coherently and clearly, both in terms of vocabulary and syntax. Do not overstate; avoid jargon or 'purple prose'. Use technical terms consistently and properly. When in doubt about certain words or phrases, check a decent monolingual dictionary, a decent grammar, and a good glossary of critical terms. Most online dictionaries, such as 'Leo', have a tendency of providing you with the wrong translation of a word if you simply take the first one offered.....

Revise until you get a result you and your reader can be satisfied with. Proofread carefully.

## 8. How to Document Sources

Make especially clear whether a source is independent (book, magazine, journal, film; all of these must appear *in italics*) or a part of a larger publication (article, essay, book chapter, poem; these appear "recte between inverted commas"). Here are some examples and corresponding explanations:

Songtext ► the composer does not need to be mentioned:

The Beautiful South, "Manchester" [from *Superbi*, 2006, Lyrics by Paul Heaton]

Poem ► the year [in brackets] indicates the year of first publication:

Eliot, T.S. 1963. "Rhapsody on a Windy Night" [1917]. In: *Collected Poems 1909-1962*. London: Faber & Faber, 26-28.

Article in Journal ► the volume number of the journal is given, *not* the publishing place and house:

Nünning, Vera. 1994. "Die Feminisierung der Kultur. Zum Wandel der Wertschätzung der Frau im England des 18. Jahrhunderts." *Archiv für Kulturgeschichte* 76, 135-163.

Article in Edited Book:

Volkman, Laurenz. 2008. "Acting out. Möglichkeiten des darstellenden Spiels mit englischen Texten von der Unter- bis zur Oberstufe". In: Ahrens, Rüdiger, Maria Eisenmann & Matthias Merkl (Hgg.), *Moderne Dramendidaktik für den Englischunterricht*. Heidelberg: Winter., 425-450.

Chapter in a Book ► the author's name is not repeated:

Higgins, Christina. 2009. "New Wor(l)d Order." In: *English as a Local Language. Post-Colonial Identities and Multilingual Practices*. Bristol: Multilingual Matters, 148-156.

Anonymous works ► "n.a." is used for "no author"; "n.d." for "no date":

n.a.; n.d.: "Brown v. Board of Education". In: Bey, Julia & Herbert Geisen (Eds.). 2008. *America. A Reader*. Stuttgart: Reclam, 260-262.

Edited Book:

Schuck, Peter H. & James Q. Wilson (Eds.). 2008. *Understanding America. The Anatomy of an Exceptional Nation*. New York: Public Affairs.

Primary Literary Works ► 'classic' literary works are given with their original date of publication:

Defoe, Daniel. 1722. *Moll Flanders*. Harmondsworth: Penguin

Shakespeare, William. 1597. *The Merry Wives of Windsor*. Oxford: Arden.

Books ► the <sup>high number</sup> indicates the edition used in the case of updated titles [= year of original publication]:

Crystal, David. <sup>2</sup>2002 [<sup>1</sup>1988]. *The English Language*. London: Penguin.

Lang, Sean. 2004. *British History for Dummies*. Chichester: John Wiley.

Ministerium für Schule, Jugend und Kinder NRW (Ed.). 2004. *Kernlehrplan für die Realschule in Nordrhein-Westfalen. Englisch*. Frechen: Ritterbach.

Movie ► director's name is given:

*United 93* (Flug 93). Dir. Paul Greengrass.

Website ► it is important to be precise and unambiguous here: "o.J." is used for "ohne Jahr":

Europarat. o.J. *Gemeinsamer Europäischer Referenzrahmen für Sprachen: Lernen, lehren Beurteilen*.  
<http://www.goethe.de/ZI50/commeuro/i3.htm> (abgerufen am 24.04.2009).

[www.macs.hw.ac.uk/britishisles/](http://www.macs.hw.ac.uk/britishisles/) (last accessed Aug 28, 2008)

"Yorkshire Airlines" at: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=6VLYpKGVBUg](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6VLYpKGVBUg) (last accessed Aug 28, 2009)

## 9. How to Fail

Your paper will be checked VERY intensely for signs of plagiarism (e.g. against webpages such as 'slashdoc', 'hausarbeiten', '123helpme', 'Barron's Notes', 'Brodie's Notes', 'essayhelp', 'gradesaver', 'collegenet' etc.). **Internet searches and possibly plagiarism detecting software may be used.**

No webpage from the world of "wikipedia" is an acceptable source, as all its information is purely individual, subjective and prone to daily changes by millions of users.