Recommendations on Scientific Working Techniques

I.Preface

Political scientists discuss their research in written and spoken form. In the course of your studies in political science at the University of Cologne, you will participate in and contribute to these discussions with term papers, handouts, exams and presentations.

This document aims to introduce you to the fundamental rules that you have to take into consideration when preparing these contributions.

The recommendations concern general questions of scientific work and communication, but also refer to the particularities of studying political science at the University of Cologne. Rules for referencing sources (as well as the consequences of neglecting these rules) form a key part of the document.

Thoroughly acquainting yourself with the formal rules of scientific work will facilitate your studies considerably and will also allow you to participate successfully in academic debates. However, keep in mind that this document cannot replace advice for example by your lecturers, librarians or – in particular – practical exercise. All these aspects are central for learning and training the "technical" aspects of working in (political) science.

II.Finding and Processing Literature

Normally, rather than lacking information, freshmen are overwhelmed with too much of it. You will notice that you will quickly have difficulties keeping an overview if you do not, for example, create summaries of your readings or sort them in a systematic way. An efficient and systematic working style is a precondition for success in scientific work.

II.1.   Gathering Literature

II.1.1. Literature

We differentiate between "primary sources" (e.g. laws, official documents, speeches etc.) and "secondary sources" or "secondary literature" (e.g. monographs and articles).

II.1.2. Selection Criteria

Usually, you have to prepare a presentation or a term paper on a specific topic. In order to search for relevant literature in a structured manner, it is useful to develop selection criteria in advance based on your topic and research question. A first orientation can be obtained when discussing the topic with your lecturer. The material identified using the structured approach described in the following paragraphs should always be checked for relevance. Do not hesitate to sort out irrelevant readings despite the time you have invested in obtaining and reading them.

II.1.3. Libraries

Libraries are ideal sources of literature (books, encyclopaedias, bibliographies, journals but also newspapers and document collections etc.). They form the "collective" memory, which

you have to use regularly. The library of the research institute in the Gottfried-Keller-Straße 6 and the university- and city library (UB) are most important for political science students.

If you investigate a very specialised research question or if there are gaps in the library stock, you may have to use special libraries or libraries of other institutes.

The stock of the libraries is accessible via the library catalogue. Nowadays, this catalogue is also available online. Online research tools allow a precise and quick search for books and journals via search criteria (e.g. author, title, tags, ISBN, ISDN, publisher or publication date).

http://www.ub.uni-koeln.de/index_eng.html

The stock of the Institute of Political Science's library is included in the Kölner Universitäten Gesamtkatalog (KUG). The KUG is available here:

http://kug.ub.uni-koeln.de/portal/kug/home.html?l=en

The institute's library is systematically structured. This means that topically related books stand next to each other on the shelves. Hence, when you borrow a book at this library, we recommend to also screen neighbouring books for further useful literature.

If you have identified an item and it is not available at any library in Cologne, you can order it for a small fee via the inter-library loan (Fernleihe). Likewise, you can order journal articles from journals only available at other German universities. A precondition for using the inter-library loan is a valid student ID. You can find information about the inter-library loan and how to access it on the homepage of the UB (the information is currently only available in German):

http://www.ub.uni-koeln.de/service/fl/

The UB furthermore provides access to different databases. The database WISO-NeT and the Social Sciences Citation Index (SSCI) within the "ISI Web of Science" are especially interesting for social and political scientists. These databases allow to research bibliographical information by using different options and criteria.

You can obtain an overview of the databases available at the UB (e.g. the access to the "ISI Web of Science" via the university network) here (the information is currently only available in German):

http://www.ub.uni-koeln.de/digital/datenbanken

You can access the database WISO-NeT SOWI directly under the following address (the database lists non-German works but is only available in German):

http://www.wiso-net.de

Search engines are an alternative to databases. There is a great variety of academic search engines. The most common one is Google Scholar. Unlike databases a search in Google Scholar does not produce a page with bibliographic data but provides a link to the homepage of a journal or to the publisher of a book. If you are looking for journal articles, you can then directly download the article as long as you are logged into the university network and the university has acquired an online subscription of the publication.

http://www.scholar.google.com

II.1.4. Handbooks and Encyclopaedias

Handbook and encyclopaedia articles provide introductions to specific topics. They are invaluable sources of information if you want to familiarise yourself with a new field. Such articles introduce the breadth of a topic and define the most important keywords. Here, you will also find first literature references that permit a more specific search for further sources.

Please consider that it is important to use up-to-date articles. An outdated handbook article is less useful content-wise and with a view to the references used.

The following box lists two examples of political science handbooks and encyclopaedias available online free of charge as licensed editions of the Federal Agency for Civic Education (Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung).

Andersen, Uwe, Woyke, Wichard (Ed.): Handwörterbuch des politischen Systems der Bundesrepublik Deutschland. 7., rev. Ed. Heidelberg: Springer VS 2013. (Online version of the Federal Agency for Civic Education in German here)

Schubert, Klaus, Klein, Martina: Das Politiklexikon. 5., rev. Ed. Bonn: Dietz 2011. (Online version of the Federal Agency for Civic Education in German here)

You may use Wikipedia and other open sources for a first overview of a topic. However, since this material can be edited by everybody these texts should be used with caution. Moreover, such sources are not suitable as references in scientific work (this also applies to printed general encyclopaedias).

II.1.5. Journals

A large part of scholarly work is first published in journals. Hence, you should always consult the latest issues of relevant journals. Besides the articles, the book review sections are useful to keep track of new publications (e.g. in the Politische Vierteljahresschrift (PVS) or in the "Zeitschrift für Parlamentsfragen"). Most journal articles are available online nowadays. The university library Cologne subscribes to a large number of journals (see the following link for an overview). The library of the institute also has a small number of (print) journal subscriptions worth checking out. Printed editions are especially interesting for articles that are not available in the online subscriptions of the library. In this case, the library may hold a printed version of the journal.

The list of journals that are electronically available in the university net due to library subscriptions can be found here:

http://www.ub.uni-koeln.de/digital/elzss/

This link to the electronic journal library leads to a page that distinguishes among several disciplines. Here, you can also find political science. Depending on the topic it may also be worthwhile to have a look at neighbouring disciplines such as sociology, law etc., although this will rather be an exception. Within each discipline, the journals are sorted alphabetically. Note that the library does not provide a full text access to all journals and all articles.

If you want to gain an overview of the top international journals in political science, you may for example use the ranking of the Journal Citation Reports published by Thomson Reuters. You can find these reports via the following link (accessible only if you are in the university net):

https://jcr.incites.thomsonreuters.com

Each publication that you find can help you to identify further relevant literature. Using the "snowball" (or pyramid) system, you search in the reference lists of publications for other relevant texts. Note that the literature that you find with this cumulative technique becomes "older" and that you might miss recent and relevant publications. Hence, when you are using the snowball technique, you should always also systematically research literature as described above.

However, some databases and search engines also offer the possibility, to turn the direction of snow balling around. For example, if you find a publication in the "ISI Web of Science" or "Google Scholar", these engines are able to show you in which later publications this one has been referenced. This instrument also does not replace the need to do some systematic research. But it provides you with the possibility to delve into scientific debates without having to start from the latest contribution.

II.1.6. (Political Science) Bibliographies

Bibliographies are systematic indexes that collect publication along different criteria. There are multiple bibliographies in the field of political science.

The chapter on databases at the university library in Cologne already mentioned some research options that can be used for bibliographic means (e.g. SSCI, cf. II.1.4). You should use them as early as possible in your research.

Further relevant indexes for political science:

"International Political Science Abstracts" - up-to-date overview of new publications, ed.: "International Political Science Association" (IPSA), bi-monthly. Signature in the library of the institute: **0311/1**.

„Neue Politische Literatur" - research and conference reports, book and literature reviews and essays on political science, sociological, historical and law topics, three issues per year. **Signature 0312/1.**

„ZPol-Bibliografie" – overview and reviews of German language political science literature. **Signature Z360** (1995 – 2007), online: „Portal für Politikwissenschaft – Die Annotierte Bibliografie" (since 2007).

"International Bibliography of Political Science" - sub-part of the larger "International Bibliography of the Social Sciences (IBSS)", yearly. **Signature 0310/1.**

You can access some of these bibliographies also online via a subscription by the university library:

- Internationale Bibliografie der Zeitschriftenliteratur
- International Political Science Abstracts
- Neue Politische Literatur (only tables of content)
- Portal für Politikwissenschaft

II.1.7. Conclusion

You should continue your search for literature even if you are already reading and using texts.

A combination of a cumulative approach with a systematic one is the safest way to a good, sovereign bibliography:

cumulative	systematic
Literature references	Bibliographies
Handbooks and encyclopaedias	Library catalogues
Recent journals	Databases (especially online portals)

II.2. Sorting Literature

After thorough research, you will quickly face a seemingly overwhelming amount of literature. In order to stay on top of your material and to properly use it, you should sort continuously and systematically. At the very least, you should catalogue the relevant books and articles for the paper you are working on (e.g. on your computer or with index cards). Nowadays, numerous computer programmes provide user-friendly possibilities of ordering your material. Over time, these programmes enable you to create your own literature database in which you can systematically store your literature and also add tags and abstracts. Some of these programmes can be expensive. For example, the widespread programme Endnote requires a license. Via the Campus Net of the University, you can obtain such a license for the duration of your studies for free. Freeware programmes on the other hand can be used permanently for free. Their capabilities are very similar to the commercial offers. The university library provides an overview of existing literature storage systems and also offers a concise advice list on how to choose the right programme for your needs.

https://www.ub.uni-koeln.de/infothek/recherche/literaturverw/ueberblick

Further information on the licenses for students in the university net is available on the homepages of the regional computer centre of the University of Cologne (RRZK).

http://www.unikoeln.de/rrzk/software

III. The Seminar Paper

III.1. Fundamentals

A seminar paper is the basic approach of dealing with a scientific problem. As such, it requires intellectual independence. That means that albeit you will use other authors' thoughts and empirical data, you must go beyond their achievements by creating (new) links under a specific research question. Accordingly, when writing a seminar paper, a draft outline including a preliminary topic, a working title and a research question should form the point of departure. All elements of the outline can and should be reworked, adapted and refined over time.

III.2. Studying Literature and Sources

It makes sense to start by having a look at the literature provided by your lecturer. Here, you should find basic information on your topic and gain an overview over facts and problems in your paper's field. Based on this information, you can begin specifying your topic. This will help you search for further literature in a systematic way (using the techniques described in Chapter I). In the course of your studies, you should be able to create a bibliography on a political science topic in a systematic and efficient way (s. II). The extent of the literature research always depends on your topic. Usually, you will face an overwhelmingly large number of publications. This requires a specific reading technique and a deliberate and efficient selection in order to cope with the material. If you create a specific research plan, it will be easier to decide which parts of the literature are relevant for your topic. In general, you should aim to incorporate recent literature. However, this does not mean that older literature is automatically "outdated".

As a precaution, you should nevertheless skim those paragraphs that you judge as irrelevant because sometimes chapter headings do not reveal the content of a text. By contrast, you should study the relevant literature carefully. It is important that you also consider footnotes,

as they do not only provide further information but also important references to additional literature.

Writing excerpts and notes while reading will help you later to focus on essential aspects of a text. This will enable you to work with a text long after you have read it. In your excerpts, you should mark direct quotes in order to display them as such in your own text. Furthermore, it is necessary to add page numbers to your excerpts. Later on, this will simplify the drafting of your seminar paper by making referencing easy. Remember that you and your readers always have to be able to understand where you obtained which information, arguments and data. As a rule, references must allow an easy backtracking of the material you used (s. IV).

III.3.   Conception and Structuring

III.3.1. Structuring

While reading, you should continuously adjust your outline. If in doubt, talk again with your lecturer. Your outline serves as a guide to assign your material to the paragraphs in your seminar paper. You can for example create a "commented" structure in which you already create notes for each paragraph, including the most important references (or even quotes). When writing your paper, you can come back to these notes.

The structure of your seminar paper should reflect your argumentation. The headlines of your structure will later become your table of contents that you have to put at the beginning of your paper. You should formulate these headlines in a way that your table of contents provides your readers with a first impression of your argument.

In general, there are multiple, equally justifiable approaches to structuring a seminar paper. It is important that you opt for a structure that is appropriate to your topic while also considering possible alternatives. However, each seminar paper has to have an introduction, a main body and a conclusion.

III.3.2. Introduction

The introduction specifies the research question of your seminar paper. You explain your approach and present your theory and method(s) (this can happen in greater detail in later chapters). Therefore, you should write the final version of your introduction after you have completed the main body. You already have to indicate your own emphasis in dealing with the topic at this stage. Avoid simply repeating the table of contents, but inform your reader about the structure of your paper.

Remember to provide reasons for narrowing down your topic.

III.3.3. Main Body

The main body consists of your examination of the material and your argument building upon it. You present the claims, arguments and results that you have found in the literature, examining and systematising them with regard to your research question. The main body is where you create an independent analytical achievement by summarising, linking and interpreting the literature, by identifying research gaps and empirical (or theoretical) contradictions and finally by arriving at a conclusion that answers your research question.

III.3.4. Conclusion

The conclusion summarises your most important results and arguments. Ideally, it also indicates areas for future research. Remember that "no" result is also a result: "The question if parties are in a fundamental crisis cannot be answered due to a lack of empirical data."

III.4.   Writing and Formulating a Seminar Paper

III.4.1. Rigour

A central difficulty of writing a seminar paper is finding an appropriate balance between an extensive and detailed description and a short and concise outline of the most important aspects.

The formulation of your arguments, descriptions and reasons should always stay close to your topic and refer to your research questions or sub-questions of it. Only with such rigour, you will avoid digressing from your topic and filling your seminar paper with superfluous parts. On the other hand, you should not worry about the word limit while formulating your sentences. Experience shows that later revisions can substantially shorten a text and increase the quality of your paper because the argument becomes more precise. It is easier to cut a longer text afterwards than coming up with the perfect wording for a thought while drafting the text.

III.4.2. Revision

We recommend that you revise your manuscript at least once, ideally multiple times before handing it in in order to find stylistic and spelling mistakes. Please allow a sufficient amount of time for this final step of the process.

During the revision procedure, be strict with yourself: is your argument really convincing or are there contradictions in it? Is the structure of the text, namely the order of your chapters and paragraphs, helpful to the reader?

III.4.3. Language

Check your language and your writing style for unclear and wrong terms. Political Science has developed its "own" language with its own technical terms that sometimes have different meanings compared to their colloquial usage. Hence, always check if you are aware of what you intend to say with your terms. Your reader shall obtain information and arguments from your seminar paper that enable him to participate in the scientific debate on your topic.

Check if you are aware of the exact meaning of a term.

Check if you have to define a term and if you can replace complicated terms by simpler ones.

You have to be aware that imprecise and colloquial language as well as superfluous words and paragraphs do not belong in a scientific paper and will leave a bad impression with your examiner.

Example for a sentence with expletives:
At the same time, the question of democracy is therefore always also linked respectively closely linked with the idea of power as such.

Example of a sentence with an insufficient language level:

> Members of Parliament who have worked up their way receive a cabinet post like also as a reward that they never said anything against government policy.

Avoid confusing sentence structures.

Reflect on your audience: You do not need to repeat the basic aspects of your topic for your lecturer. On the other hand, you cannot assume such knowledge if you speak in front of your fellow students about your topic. If you read your manuscript with your audience in mind, it will be easier for you to identify shortfalls and avoid them.

> *Example for an unclear sentence:*
>
> In the system of Lindblom's theory exists a disproportional participation and it is thus polyarchic.

III.4.4. Work and Time Plan

Be honest to yourself: You cannot complete a seminar paper in one week. Continuous (daily) work over multiple weeks is a necessary condition for your success.

III.5. Criteria for the Evaluation of a Seminar Paper

On their respective homepages, the chairs in political science at the University of Cologne list their criteria for grading student papers. These criteria are also useful indicators along which you can structure your work. They might also help you to critically review your work and to identify weak parts. In some details (e.g. the right form of the affidavit, comp. IV.3) the expectations of the chairs diverge from each other. In such cases, always follow the requirements of the chair where you are writing your paper. You can find the requirements and evaluation criteria of the individual chairs under the following links (partly in German):

Cologne Center for Comparative Politics

Lehrstuhl für Politische Theorie und Ideengeschichte

Lehrstuhl für Internationale Politik (Online-Tutorium)

IV. Quoting and Footnotes

IV.1. Principles of Quoting Literature

You have to indicate each usage of intellectual property by exact quotes. This is not only a legal question. It serves two purposes in a scientific discourse. First, it allows others to verify your statements, facts and data. Second, it enables your readers and other researchers to continue work in the field you are writing about. After all, you have also acquired your literature by reading through reference lists of other publications.

You have to follow four principles in order to make your references useful: immediacy, precision, unambiguity and usefulness. First, immediacy means that your reference should be as close as possible to the original source. Hence, you should always use primary sources if your citation concerns them and not a scientific analysis. For example, you should always quote treaties and laws directly instead of referring to secondary literature. Second, precision means that your quote is a direct one. This means that you take a direct citation from a text (including possible spelling mistakes). Third, unambiguity means that you have to enable your reader to research the publications you used independently. This includes complete information about the used publications. Finally, usefulness entails that you use references in

an appropriate and meaningful manner. You should avoid both too high and too low a number of references. Although there is no rule of thumb for the appropriate number, you should in general remember that every argument made by someone else than yourself and that has a substantive function in your text and argumentation, should be clearly marked by a reference.

There are two different forms of citations:

- The **direct** citation is a direct quote of a text's passage in quotation marks, directly linked to a reference. The reference can either be a footnote or the usage of the American referencing style (s. below IV.2). It is your main task to evaluate, summarise and analyse the literature in light of your research question, reflecting upon it critically. You should do this as independently as possible. Hence, direct quotations are advisable in only two cases: (i) if you wish to present an issue as concise as possible and there is no way to do this as well or better, (ii) if certain statements or arguments are themselves an object of your study, or when you distance yourself explicitly from individual statements. You put your own additions to a direct quote into squared brackets, if you omit parts of the quote you put three dots into squared brackets ([…]). Long direct quotes often appear indented to improve readability. Generally, you should avoid them. Always check if you can transform direct quotes into indirect ones.
- The **indirect** citation quotes the meaning of a text without repeating its exact wording. A reference is necessary in this case as well.

By reading scientific literature and writing your own papers, your certainty when you have to provide references and when not will grow. Avoid to add a reference behind every word. But when you are insecure, it is better to add more than less references.

References also give you the possibility, to refer to further or controversial literature or to add comments that would not fit into the text [Cf. stands for 'Confer'].

Example

Cf. for an extensive discussion of this model Katz, Richard S.: Party Government and Its Alternatives, in: Ibid. (Ed.): Party Governments: European and American Experiences, Berlin/ New York 1987, p. 1-26.

However, avoid using references as a dump for irrelevant information. Demonstrating your erudition is only of value as long as there is an unambiguous and direct relation to the topic of your paper.

Remember that the formal aspects of your work are also a part of the evaluation. You can definitely avoid flaws if you are aware of the sense and the necessity of references. Try to see the practical aspects of references. Your sources have to be unambiguous and identifiable. As a general recommendation, read scientific texts with a view to familiarising yourself with the formal aspects of quotes.

IV.2. How to Quote

We distinguish between two formal citation styles:

- The direct (short) reference (which we will call the "American" citation style)
- A reference with a (short) reference in a foot- or endnote. Footnotes appear at the end of a page and reference the quotes from that page. Endnotes appear at the end of the chapter or of the whole text. Footnotes are more reader-friendly than endnotes, but formally, both are allowed.

The remainder of this section explains both styles and provides examples. There are different variants for both forms. Here, we present the most common usage. Before writing your paper, check what your examiner recommends.

IV.2.1. Reference List: The Complete Quote

A full quote of each publication used in your work has to appear at least once. Normally, this happens in your list of references at the end of your paper (cf. V.5). It lists all used sources alphabetically, ordered by authors' last names. In all works that you produce for the institute of political science, you have to prepare a reference list – regardless which quotation style you are using.

The following paragraphs provide you with the most common forms to quote literature, proceeding along the different publication types. In longer texts, reference lists are sometimes sorted along publication types (e.g. monographs, newspaper articles, internet sources etc.).

- *Monographs*

Name, first name, year: title, edition, place of publication.

> *Example*
>
> Rudzio, Wolfgang, 2003: *Das Politische System der Bundesrepublik Deutschland*, 6. rev. ed., Opladen.

- *Edited Volumes*

Name, first name (ed.), year: title, edition, place of publication.

> *Example*
>
> Zippel, Wulfdiether (Ed.), 1999: *Die Mittelmeerpolitik der EU*, Baden-Baden.

- *Articles in Edited Volumes*

Name, first name, year: Title, in: first name, name of the editor(s) (ed.), title of the edited volume, publication place, page numbers of the article (p. x-y).

> *Example*
>
> Monar, Jörg, 1999: Die interne Dimension der Mittelmeerpolitik der Europäischen Union: institutionelle und verfahrensmäßige Probleme, in: Wulfdiether Zippel (Ed.), *Die Mittelmeerpolitik der EU*, Baden-Baden, p. 65-90.

- *Journal Articles*

Name, first name, year: Title in: Journal Name, year/volume, number, page numbers of the article (x-y). Note that p. for page is often omitted.

> *Example*
>
> Holland, Martin, 1998: Vices and Virtues: Europe's Foreign Policy and South Africa 1977-1997, in: *European Foreign Affairs Review*, Vol. 3, Nr. 2: 215-232.

- *Newspaper Articles*

You can quote newspaper articles in different styles. If the article provides the name of the author(s), you should provide this information together with the title of the article. You should put the title in quotation marks. As a minimum requirement, you should always provide the name of the newspaper together with the date of publication. You can use the common

abbreviations of newspapers (e.g. NYT, FAZ etc.). If you use a greater number of newspaper articles, we recommend you to create a separate section in your list of references.

If the author is known

Name, first name: "title of the article", in: name of the newspaper, date, page number.

> *Example*
>
> Hefty, Georg Paul: "Europäische Identitätsarmut", in: FAZ, 16.06.2003, p. 1.

If the author is unknown

"title of the article", name of the newspaper, date, page number.

> *Example*
>
> "Dennoch ein Erfolg", FAZ, 16.06.2003, p. 3.

- *News Agencies*

You can also use sources from (specialised) news agencies or press services. Here, you have to add the name of the news agency or the service and the exact date. Like with newspapers, you can use known abbreviations (such as AP for Associated Press or DPA for Deutsche Presse-Agentur).

> *Example*
>
> „Tax havens specifically targeted in country-by-country tax transparency", Agence Europe, 09.04.2016.

- *Internet Sources*

You quote sources from the internet in the following style:

Name, first name: title, publishing date, on: ULR-address (date of your latest access).

> *Example*
>
> Comp. Hassner, Pierre: The new NATO, under http://www.ifri.fri/hassner.nato.htm, p.15 (last accessed on 10.02.1997).

A common challenge when quoting internet sources is to find an exact page number. Often, these documents are a continuous text. Moreover, different screens and printers have different resolutions and thus the page numbers of a document can vary. Therefore, page numbers are often neither possible nor desirable. In those cases, you should not quote page numbers but the whole document (as long as it is not too long). If it is too long, you can refer to chapters or subchapters within the document.

Nowadays, the internet offers many print versions of documents for example in the PDF format. In such documents, page numbers are fixed and you can quote them precisely. In some cases, these documents omit graphical elements (e.g. tables, figures etc.) from the continuous text. You should mention this when you quote such documents.

Be aware that these aspects only refer to documents that are exclusively available on the internet. E-books, electronic versions of printed documents and journal articles that you find in the internet should be quoted as their printed counterparts (except that you might add the URL).

IV.2.2. Some general rules for items in the list of references

- If a publication has more than three authors or editors, you only mention the first author or editor and abbreviate the other names with "et al.".

> *Example*
>
> Grabitz, Eberhard et al.: Direktwahl und Demokratisierung, eine Funktionenbilanz des Europäischen Parlaments nach der ersten Wahlperiode, Bonn 1988.

- If a publication does not indicate a year or a place of publication, you use instead n.d. (no date) or n.p. (no place).

- Publications with multiple books require that you specify which book you quote. If you refer to all books in the series, you have to provide the numbers of books.

> *Example*
>
> Galtung, Johan: Methodologie und Ideologie, Aufsätze zur Methodologie, Bd. 1, Frankfurt a.M. 1978, p. 183ff.
>
> Beyme, Klaus von: Politikwissenschaft, Eine Grundlegung, 3 Bde., Stuttgart et. Al. 1987.

- If a publisher published a book at more than three places, you indicate the first one and abbreviate the others with et.al..

> *Example*
>
> Beyme, Klaus von: Politikwissenschaft, Eine Grundlegung, 3 Bde., Stuttgart et al. 1987.

- If you quote periodical publications (yearbooks etc.) over a timespan of multiple years, you provide the year of the earliest publication you use and add "ff." behind it.

> *Example*
>
> Weidenfeld, Werner/ Wessels, Wolfgang (Ed.): Jahrbuch der Europäischen Integration 1996/97ff., Bonn 1997ff.

- Later editions have indications whether they are revised. You have to add this to your reference.

> *Example*
>
> Rudzio, Wolfgang: Das Politische System der Bundesrepublik Deutschland, 6th revised Edition, Opladen 2003.

IV.2.3. Quoting in the Text

IV.2.3.1.   The American Citation Style

The "American" or "Harvard" citation style inserts short references directly in the text. You add the name of the author together with the year of publication and a page number in brackets directly after the quote. These brackets appear always before the punctuation mark. This system uses foot- and endnotes only for additional remarks but not for references.

In brackets: Name Year: Page number (only the number without any abbreviation for page like p.).

> *Example*
>
> There are different reasons for this perspective (Scharpf 1994: 35).

If you quote several works published by the same author in the same year, you indicate this with a lowercase letter after the year. You start alphabetically with an "a" and continue this way.

Beispiel
(Wessels 1999a)
(Wessels 1999b)

This citation style has a number of benefits. First, you save space on each page because you do not need it for footnotes. Second, you make your text easier to read. The eyes of your reader do not have to wander to the footnote in order to find the reference, creating a better reading flow. However, this style does not provide immediate detailed information on each reference. Therefore, a reference list at the end of your paper is indispensable. (This is also the case if you decide for the footnote style in your seminar paper. Only a few published scientific articles with full references in the footnotes do not repeat all references at the end. The American citation style requires it in all cases).

The list of references for the American Citation Style differs in some details from its counterpart when foot- or endnotes are used (see also V.5).

IV.2.3.2.   Quotes with Foot- or Endnotes

Footnotes are always superscript numbers. If the footnote refers to a part of a sentence, a whole sentence or even a whole paragraph, you put the footnote behind the punctuation mark (full stop, comma, semicolon etc.). More rarely, if you quote directly or give the general sense of an author's argument and the footnote shall thus only refer to a part of the sentence, you put the footnote directly behind the quote (and thus before the punctuation mark).

You always number footnotes consecutively. The "real" footnote at the foot of the page repeats this number and is followed by the full reference or note.

Example
Extract from a seminar paper:
This approach presupposes strict autonomy of foreign policy. Thus, it places the nation and its sovereignty in its centre. Despite open solidarity addresses with western nations, one cannot speak of integration here. The emphasis of national defence capabilities as the most important political element makes an integration in a military alliance basically impossible.[1]
Footnote at the end of the page:
[1] Grosser, Alfred: Das Bündnis. Die westeuropäischen Länder und die USA seit dem Krieg, München/Wien 1978, p. 259-61.

If you quote a title for the first time, you have to provide all details. Here you provide a complete reference like in a reference list. The only difference is that you put the year at the end of the quote (instead of putting it behind the author's name). Moreover, you have to complete the quote with the page number of the quote.

Example
Scharpf, Fritz W.: Optionen des Föderalismus in Deutschland und Europa, Frankfurt a.M. 1994, p. 65.

When you cite a publication multiple times (in the footnote citation style), you do not need to repeat the whole reference. Instead a short reference suffices. There are different styles to do this. We recommend the following short reference:

Name, short title, quoted page.

Example

> Niedermayer, Die Entwicklung der Öffentlichen Meinung zu Europa, p. 431.
>
> Croft, Guaranteeing Europe's security?, p. 112.

If you quote the same author with a different publication in two consecutive footnotes, you do not need to provide the author's name again. It suffices to write ibid. (lat. ibidem) instead of the name. All other aspects of the (short) reference remain the same.

If you quote the same author with the same publication in two consecutive footnotes, you do not need to provide a short reference. In this case ibid. and the page number suffice.

> Example
>
> Comp. Niedermayer, Die Entwicklung der Öffentlichen Meinung zu Europa, p. 431.
>
> Comp. Ebd., p. 435.

If you quote multiple pages, provide the exact page numbers. Some authors also use "f." (for the following page) or "ff." (for the following pages). If possible, avoid such imprecise indications.

> *Example*
>
> better: p. 134-136. Instead of: p. 134ff.

The general rules used for the list of references apply.

IV.2.3.3.   References for Tables, Graphics and Figures

If you use elements such as tables, graphics and figures from other texts in your seminar paper, you have to provide an immediate reference to those texts below the element. If you change any aspects of the element, you have to indicate this as well.

Source: Reference (according to publication type, including an exact page number); if necessary an indication of changes. For tables, graphics and figures of your own design, you can include a corresponding reference (Source: own design).

IV.3. Plagiarism and Dishonesty

If you quote a text or an argument directly or adopt the sense of another author's text, you are obliged to provide a reference. Otherwise, you will create the impression that you are the creator of this content, statement or argument. This represents theft of intellectual property and is called plagiarism.

Caution: if you try saving time by simply copying other people's texts into your seminar paper or even your thesis (e.g. by using the internet), you risk disciplinary action for plagiarism. If found guilty of conscious plagiarism, you will receive a "fail" on your seminar paper or your thesis. The faculty may also consider juridical steps.

Dishonest behaviour such as manipulating sources or data will be sanctioned in the same manner as plagiarism.

In order to detect plagiarism and dishonest behaviour, the chairs and the WiSo-Faculty regularly review seminar papers and theses. When you work empirically, it is obligatory that you hand in an electronic file with your paper or thesis that contains the used data sets.

In case of a seminar paper, each student must attach a signed declaration of authorship: *„Hiermit versichere ich, dass ich die vorliegende Arbeit selbstständig und ohne die Benutzung anderer als der angegebenen Hilfsmittel angefertigt habe. Alle Stellen, die wörtlich oder sinngemäß aus veröffentlichten und nicht veröffentlichten Schriften entnommen wurden, sind als solche kenntlich gemacht."*

In case of the B.A. or M.A. thesis, each student must attach a signed statutory declaration of academic honesty: *„Hiermit versichere ich an Eides statt, dass ich die vorliegende Arbeit selbstständig und ohne die Benutzung anderer als der angegebenen Hilfsmittel angefertigt habe. Alle Stellen, die wörtlich oder sinngemäß aus veröffentlichten und nicht veröffentlichten Schriften entnommen wurden, sind als solche kenntlich gemacht. Die Arbeit ist in gleicher oder ähnlicher Form oder auszugsweise im Rahmen einer anderen Prüfung noch nicht vorgelegt worden. Ich versichere, dass die eingereichte elektronische Fassung der eingereichten Druckfassung vollständig entspricht.“*

Failure to conform with the statutory declaration of academic honesty may result in criminal charges.

Please note that the formal requirements for a seminar paper differ in between chairs. Hence, it is imperative that you inform yourself about the formal requirements of the chair where you are writing your paper before starting to work on it. You may find the links to the formal requirements of the political science chairs in section III.5.

V. Formalities of a Seminar Paper or Final Thesis

V.1.   Length

Regarding seminar papers, your lecturer will indicate a maximal length that your paper may not exceed. This limit refers to text pages and does not include the table of contents, the reference list and the title page.

Bachelor seminar paper	approx. 8-12 pages
Master seminar paper	approx. 15-18 pages

For the final theses, in line with exam regulations, there is no binding minimum or maximum page limit. As the length of a thesis depends on the research design chosen, the Institute provides no general recommendation in that regard. As a non-binding orientation mark: MA theses at the Institute are often around 60 pages and BA theses around 40 pages long, but feel free to discuss alternative plans with your supervisor.

V.2.   The Text

You have to hand in a computer-typed and printed version of your seminar paper following these formal standards:

- **Paper size DIN A 4**
- **1,5 line spacing**
- **12er font size**
- **In footnotes and in the reference list: single spacing, smaller font size possible**
- **Edges: right 3 cm, left 2 cm (for corrections).**
- **continuous paging; title page and table of contents without page numbers**

V.3.   The Title Page

The title page contains the title of your seminar paper, information about you and the visited seminar. This is an example of how to structure the title page:

INSTITUTE OF POLITICAL SCIENCE AT THE

UNIVERSITY OF COLOGNE

The Electoral System in the United Kingdom
Legal Foundation, Consequences and Reform Proposals

Seminar Paper in the Seminar
"Introduction to the Political System of the United Kingdom"
Summer Semester 2015
Course Instructor: Dr. L. Lecturer

Presented by
Sarah Student
2. Semester, Bachelor / Master Subject
Matrikelnummer: 452369

mailadresse@smail.uni-koeln.de

Köln, the 29.6.2015

Each chair provides instructions on the design of the title page. Please follow those instructions. The examination office of the WiSo-Faculty also provides a sample title page.

V.4.   Table of Contents

The table of contents represents the final version of your structure. It illustrates your train of thoughts. Accordingly, you should choose concise and comprehensive chapter headings. For example, the heading "main body" for the main body does not make sense. The indention of sub-points increases the clarity of your table of contents.

You are free in choosing a structure as long as it is helpful to the reader. You should provide the page numbers for each section in your structure. The counting of page numbers starts with the first page of your text. Make sure that the chapter headings correspond with the page numbers provided in the table of contents before you hand in your seminar paper.

V.5.   List of References

Your reference list has to include all publications that you quoted with complete citations. Page numbers of your quotes are however not required (because you provide those in the text or in footnotes). Journal articles and articles in edited volumes require the page ranges of the respective article. Sort the list of references along the last name of the authors in alphabetical order. If your reference list has many pages, you may consider splitting it into sub-categories such as primary and secondary literature.

As already mentioned, the list of references looks different depending on the academic tradition. The major difference stems from the citation style you are using. If you use footnotes, the year of publication is at the end of the reference, if you use the American citation style, the year of publication follows the name(s) of the author(s). The format of the examples below is popular but not mandatory.

Example for a reference list extract when using foot- or endnotes:

Barber, Benjamin R.: "The Undemocratic Party System: Citizenship in an Elite/Mass Society", in: Goldwin, Robert A. (Hrsg.), *Political Parties in the Eighties*, Washington 1980, S. 34-49.

Blank, Robert H.: *Political Parties. An Introduction*. Englewood Cliffs 1980.

Conradt, David/Dalton, Russell J.: The West German Electorate and the Party System: Continuity and Change in the 1980`s, in: *The Review of Politics*, Jg. 50, Nr. 1, 1988, S. 2-28.

A list of references in the American citation style may look like this:

Example for a reference list extract when using the American citation style:

Barber, Benjamin R. (1980): "The Undemocratic Party System: Citizenship in an Elite/Mass Society", in: Goldwin, Robert A. (Hrsg.), *Political Parties in the Eighties*, Washington, S. 34-49.

Blank, Robert H. (1980): *Political Parties. An Introduction*. Englewood Cliffs.

Conradt, David/Dalton, Russell J. (1988): The West German Electorate and the Party System: Continuity and Change in the 1980`s, in: *The Review of Politics*, Jg. 50 , Nr.1: 2-28.

V.6.   Check List for the Final Draft of a Seminar Paper (B.A. or M.A. thesis)

In its final draft, your seminar paper has to contain the following parts (in this order):

☐   **Cover page**

☐   **Table of contents**

☐   **Text**
- **Introduction**
- **Main body (with subchapters)**
- **Conclusion**

☐   **List of references**

☐   **Signed declaration of authorship (statutory declaration of academic honesty)**

Please hand in as many copies of your seminar paper or thesis as is required by the examination office or your chair. Using a filling clip for your paper is the most functional solution. Do not simply staple the paper or use a paper clip. You have to hand in an electronic (.pdf-file) version of your paper that is not password protected. We will use this for plagiarism checks. Given that many lecturers primarily demand an electronic version, the printed version serves mainly as an insurance in case there are problems with the electronic one. Please ask for a notice of receipt by your lecturer when submitting only an electronic version of your paper.

VI. Other Forms of Scientific Work

VI.1.   The Handout

A handout contains the most important results, conclusions, open questions and predictions of a paper in a very concise form (1-2 pages max). It can also include your own opinion. The handout shall enable the reader to gain an overview of the central aspects and problems of a topic without any knowledge of details. Usually, the handout is supposed to kick-start a seminar discussion. Thus, you should try to formulate your arguments problem-oriented and to focus on open and controversial questions. Avoid lengthy chronologies, detailed explanations, confusing tables or self-evident conclusions.

VI.2.   The Presentation

Every speaker is more or less nervous when it comes to his or her presentation. The following tips might help you to deliver a successful presentation.

First, a presentation aims to deliver information and illustrate the major issue areas of a topic. Your presentation shall inform the course participants about essential aspects of a topic and create the basis for a discussion about it. You will have a time limit for your presentation which you should strictly observe. This requires you to reduce the content to the essential points. Also, you have to take the ability of your audience to process new information into account. The more concise and precise your presentation, the more the whole seminar will benefit. Always remember that you are addressing not only the lecturer but also the other participants of the seminar. Your presentation shall speak foremost to your fellow students.

Avoid to read your presentation word by word from a script. Instead, try to speak freely and stay in eye contact with your audience. It is pivotal that you systematise your presentation. A

short, but well-prepared manuscript with the most important keywords will lead to a systematic presentation.

Introduce your topic and its problems at the beginning of your presentation. In the course of your presentation, whatever you say should always relate to this central topic. Furthermore, try to present your central points in a concise and summarising form throughout your presentation. Avoid lengthy digressions. End your presentation with a conclusion, the open questions and (if appropriate) with your central arguments.

If you use visual material (e.g. PowerPoint, an overhead projector, tables or board drawing), make them simple so that they support your arguments (instead of watering them down) and do not distract from your presentation. In order to prepare a balanced, convincing presentation that keeps the time limit, it is imperative to practice it alone or (ideally) in front of third parties at least once.

VI.3. The Protocol

Unlike verbatim minutes, a scientific protocol (e.g. a seminar protocol) adheres to the following criteria:

- It provides information about the event (type of event, title, chair of the session).
- It provides information about the protocol writer.
- It summarises the arguments and problems discussed during the meeting.
- It structures the discussion along topical criteria and not necessarily in a chronological order (it is a systematic summary of arguments).
- It presents the central arguments and results.
- There is the possibility to enclose materials such as papers or presentations as an appendix to the protocol.

VII. Conclusion

These 'recommendations on scientific working techniques' are neither complete nor law-like. They shall guide you when writing scientific papers, but scientific plurality also extends to techniques. You will certainly encounter alternative citation styles, title page designs and so on. Thus, when participating in scientific discourse with your papers, presentations and handouts, a good understanding about the rationale for certain formal rules is more important than the strict adherence to them.

These recommendations aim to amalgamate the requirements of the subject political science, the faculty, the institute and its students. They shall not replace your autonomy but support it. We are grateful for comments and constructive criticism. Please turn to your lecturer or to the employees at the institute.

Finally, we would like to refer to useful literature that specifically deals with writing scientific texts. We recommend the following publications:

Plümper, Thomas (2012): Effizient Schreiben. 3. überarb. Auflage München: Oldenbourg.

Minkoff, Scott L. (2018) "A Guide to Developing and Writing Research Papers in Political Science", updated Version, available at http://scottminkoff.com/.

We furthermore recommend to attend a course on scientific working techniques at least once during your bachelor studies, for example in the Studium Integrale framework. Several chairs regularly offer courses on scientific working techniques.