

# Guide to Academic Writing

ENGLISH AND AMERICAN STUDIES [November 2019]

Academic writing is one of the most important means through which you acquire and present knowledge based on reflexivity, analysis and contextualisation. During your studies, you are expected to write essays, seminar papers, and a final thesis. This will give you the opportunity to practice academic writing. In doing so, you develop central skills in analyzing texts and sharing your research, and learn to work with the theories and methods of literary and cultural studies. Such skills will be useful in all areas of “knowledge work” – at university and beyond. Asking the right questions, finding valid answers and presenting them in a plausible and understandable way requires both careful research and effective communication strategies.

Academic writing predominantly addresses an academic audience. It presents the results of research and follows a set of rules and conventions. Although there are different conventions in different disciplines, the basic principles are the same across all fields of research: The writing needs to be clearly structured and argued, thus being transparent and accessible. The sources of all information need to be identified precisely and unambiguously.

The guidelines below introduce some of the major conventions in English and American Studies, adapted for use in courses taught at Bayreuth university. They apply to BA, MA and state exam theses, seminar papers, essays, reading reports, and response papers.

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## 1. Forms of writing: essay and seminar paper

The module handbooks of our BA, MA and teacher training programs distinguish two types of presenting your research and thinking in writing: academic essays and seminar papers. Both are forms of academic writing and therefore follow the same basic rules. An academic essay or seminar paper collects, organizes and presents **the results of your analysis of one or more primary texts, an analysis that is based on a specific research question or topic**. You need to develop a coherent and well-reasoned argument based on your analytical ideas, and provide evidence from the primary text(s) to support your claims.

However, since essay and seminar paper have a slightly different function in your studies, they also differ in some respects:

The **academic essay** asks you to practice your analytical and argumentative skills based on a focused research question. It is usually shorter than the seminar paper (2,000-4,000 words depending on the course and the number of other assignments) and does not require you to provide a full survey of scholarship on the topic. In the academic essay, you are asked to develop your own analytical argument based on selected theories and methods of literary and cultural studies. Although engaging with secondary sources is not a priority, you will need to include tertiary and secondary research to help you define your methods and concepts, and to strengthen your argument. Secondary sources are also excellent models for understanding the writing conventions in the discipline.

The **seminar paper** takes you a step further by asking you to develop your own analytical argument in the context of a broader survey of scholarship on your topic. The research question is usually somewhat broader than in an essay, requiring a longer paper to lay out your argument (usually 3,500-6,000 words, see module description). In the seminar paper, you will enter the scholarly conversation on your topic through secondary research: finding and assessing sources, and placing their claims in relation to your own argument. Secondary sources may also help you to find primary texts you had not been aware of or to understand new aspects of the texts you are analyzing. Unlike the essay, a seminar paper should be organized in sections or chapters (and, sometimes, subchapters) and contain a table of contents.

Both forms require you to organize your ideas in a way suitable to your academic audience and to meticulously document your sources.

## 2. Doing research

Before you start drafting your paper, you need to gather information and ideas that your paper will ultimately organize and present. Although there are distinct steps you will need to take in doing your research, the process is usually not perfectly linear: for example, you may need to return to searching for more sources or to redefining your research question as your essay or seminar paper develops.

### Defining a topic and a research question

To make your research more efficient, your first step should be to narrow the aspect you chose to focus on and formulate an explicit question that your research and analysis will address. The scope of your research question should correspond with the length of your essay or seminar paper.

The following types of topics may serve as a starting point for defining the focus of your projects:

**Focus on the text:** themes, structure of a work, character constellations, literary devices;

**Focus on intertexts:** sources and influences, historical analysis of themes and motifs, genre relations, intertextuality;

**Focus on contexts:** sociocultural context, functions of a work at the time of its production, conditions governing its production, history of collective mentalities;

**Focus on reception:** adaptation, reproduction or re-creation in other media, history of a work's reception or influence.

### Working with sources

Your research and writing depend on a careful selection and use of sources. Be discerning with all your sources, print or online; avoid sources that do not follow the same standards of scholarship for research and documenting sources that you should use. The internet can be an excellent resource for academic research, but most general interest websites do not follow scholarly standards. **An important part of learning to do research well is to be able to distinguish different types of sources and the role they play in your work.**

#### TYPES OF SOURCES: PRIMARY, SECONDARY, TERTIARY

It is useful to distinguish three types of sources in literary and cultural studies:

There are **primary sources**, which are the texts you will analyze, for example novels, short stories, poems, or films. The main claims of your essay should make poignant statements about primary texts that are supported through textual analysis.

Furthermore, you will refer to **secondary sources**. These are works of published research such as monographs or articles in scholarly journals that deal with primary sources and the theories and methods of analyzing them. The university library website provides a number of excellent resources for finding and acquiring secondary sources.

In the beginning stages of your research, you may also want to refer to **tertiary sources**, such as specialized encyclopedias, dictionaries of literary terms, or introductions to the field you are studying. Tertiary texts summarize existing research.

#### SELECTING RELIABLE SOURCES

Your research is only as good as your use of sources. Avoid general encyclopedias and non-scholarly websites. Use the resources of the library rather than relying on a superficial web search. This will make your search for sources much more efficient and will help you avoid dubious sources such as answers.com, enotes.com, hausarbeiten.de in your term papers which are not acceptable. Wikipedia

is a general encyclopedia which many also consider unreliable because anyone can add and remove information. You may, of course, use it for gaining initial orientation about a subject, but you should corroborate all information gathered there from scholarly, peer-reviewed sources.

You will find the best and most suitable information in reference works based on the theories and methods of literary and cultural studies and written for a specialized audience of students and scholars in the field. Carefully choose your sources and spend your time reading effectively and on target rather than wading through endless websites of random information.

We recommend the following research tools:

- library and inter-library catalogues ([OPAC](#), [EZB](#) [journals], [KVK](#), etc.)
- general reference ([OxRef](#) [dictionaries etc.],\* [SEP](#) [concepts], [OED](#) [etymology etc.],\*)
- bibliographies ([MLA](#),\* ABELL [print version: UB 60/HD 105], ‘closed’: *New Cambridge Bibliography of English Literature* [print version: UB 60/HD 107-1 and following])
- search engines and research platforms ([JSTOR](#),\* [MUSE](#),\* [Google Scholar](#), [IBR online](#) [reviews],\* etc.)
- specialist resources (‘Handbooks’ and ‘Companions’ published by reputable presses, scholarly editions of primary texts, etc.)

\*campus log-in required

Source type	Admissible examples	DO NOT CITE
Dictionaries	<i>Oxford English Dictionary</i> ; <i>Webster’s New World Dictionary</i>	Students’, “Learners’”, compact dictionaries
Tertiary sources	<i>Dictionary of National Biography</i> (entries with identifiable authors only!); scholarly Introductions, Companions, and Handbooks	Wikipedia and most other general encyclopedias, including <i>Encyclopedia Britannica</i> ; students’ and compact editions
Secondary literature	Peer-reviewed academic publications researched via serious scholarly resources and from seminar bibliography	Study notes from class, web content without identifiable authors (e.g., sparknotes, enotes, etc.)
Primary texts	Most recent scholarly edition, if available; digitized versions of first editions (e.g., as provided by <i>Making of America</i> )	Web “full text editions”, ‘penny editions’ etc.

#### QUOTING FROM SOURCES AND AVOIDING PLAGIARISM

Once you have selected and read your sources, you should give them an appropriate place in your argument. Avoid using sources just for the sake of quoting, or to replace your own analysis. Use quotations sparingly and by no means as a substitute for your own argumentation. Excessive use of direct quotation from primary and/or secondary sources (“patchworking”) turns what should be your own writing into being merely a collage of quotations. Only use direct quotations when you need to comment on the way in which a particular idea was phrased or to support your analysis of a primary

text. In all other cases, you should paraphrase in order to establish a relationship between your ideas and the cited source.

Establishing such a relationship requires a discussion of the content of the quoted material: does that material do justice to the primary source? Why do you think it does so? What method does that material use? Is there something the author seems to overlook or to neglect?

If you choose to quote, remember that quotations are a means, not an end. Do not expect them to speak for themselves. As a rule of thumb, use at least as much space as you took to present somebody else's point of view to make use of it for your own argument. E.g., a four-line paraphrase of an opinion from the secondary literature must be followed by at least four lines of (meaningful) commentary/interpretation/criticism/application. Follow the same rule with quotations from primary texts: do not quote from them and immediately move on, but offer an appropriate amount of commentary on how the quotation works in the context of your argument.

**Sources should be referenced inline ('MLA style'**, see "Documenting Sources" below). The 'List of Works Cited' lists all your sources alphabetically at the end of your paper.

Avoid second-hand quotations, i.e., do not copy references from other sources, unless only an indirect source is available. In this case, indicate the source of your quotation, for example as follows: Cleanth Brooks claimed poems "hint at analogies that cry out to be completed" (qtd. in Culler 36). If at all possible, only cite documents you have personally validated. Failing to check sources can seriously weaken your argument, and it may constitute plagiarism. In indirect quotations (paraphrases), you need to make it absolutely clear where the paraphrase begins and ends.

#### ACTIVE READING

Reading for an essay or seminar paper should be **active reading**, for your primary and your secondary sources: prepare your reading by defining your expectations and identifying the structure and main points of the text and then take careful notes while reading. **Note-taking** is a selective process, and the easiest way to do this is to note the text that gave you an idea and then add your own comment. Do not forget to write down the source and the page number where your quote comes from. You may need this if you use a quote for your essay or for finding it again later.

During your studies, you will use many books and other sources, so try to start a **bibliography** as soon as possible. This is a booklist, either computer-based, or in the form of a card index. Every book you read should have its details listed in your master book-list, your card index, or computer file. It has to contain: **Author/s, title, publisher, date**. This is the information you have to give when quoting from a source. Here is an example of the required information about a source:

Judd, Denis. *Empire: The British Imperial Experience from 1765 to the Present*. Phoenix Press, 2001.

Jacoby, Russell. "The Myth of Multiculturalism." *New Left Review*, vol. 208, 1994, pp. 121-32.

For your own use, it is advisable to add the **call number of books** you get from the library, because that is the easiest way to find a single item again.

Reference managers (dedicated programs for keeping track of your references) are helpful especially for larger projects. If you are on a Windows based system, we recommend that you use Citavi, which is freely available to Bayreuth students from [here](#). Other reference managers include [Zotero](#) (free and platform independent), Papers, and Endnote (both commercial).

### 3. Writing your essay or seminar paper

As a general rule, you should **write for a reader who is another scholar in the field**, someone who knows the primary text and the scholarly context. Adapt your style, focus and line of argumentation to his or her interests in reading your writing: not to learn about you, the world at large or the evils of society today as you see them, but solely to **understand something new about the primary text(s) that is not obvious on first or second reading** and needs to be supported through a careful analytical argument. The essay or paper should be clearly focused on supporting your **main claim** based on your analytical ideas and should not contain extraneous information irrelevant to your reader such as excessive “background” information, author biographies and mere paraphrase of the primary source. **Anything in your writing that does not support your argument will weaken it.** Following the structural conventions of academic writing helps you write well for your intended audience.

#### Writing for an audience

Your **writing style** should suit the occasion: a neutral, objective, analytical style is best. The point is to make relevant statements about the text(s) not about yourself by showing what you personally like or dislike about a literary work. Colloquial style and slang or abbreviations are inappropriate. Furthermore, stay away from truisms, cliché, vague formulations (“somehow,” “in a certain way,” etc.), generalizations, redundancies, and metaphorical expressions. On the other hand, your writing should engage your reader and show your passion for your argument. Being ponderous or dull is not a replacement for a sound analytical argument, and passive voice is not the way to make your writing convincing. Literary and cultural studies make no claim to an objective truth. Rather, you should write with an awareness that your knowledge and argument is always positioned, i.e. coded by your own social position in terms of class, gender, age, ‘race’, ability, religion or sexuality.

#### Outlining

Though academic writing follows tight rules and conventions, it is also a creative process and every writer develops his or her own procedures and strategies of invention. However, regardless of what strategies you use, it is advisable to **plan and structure** your essay or seminar paper before you start writing. You may start by gathering all the notes you have collected in your research. Read through these, write new ones and rewrite old ones if more or different ideas come to your mind, and make sure each of them has a label or heading. Put the headings together in a logical order (headings, sub-headings, sub-sub-headings) on a sheet of paper in the form of an **outline** of the essay. The outline is your “map” of the essay, and this map shows you how to arrange the information and ideas you have on your slips. It is not identical with the table of contents that you will put together once you have finished your paper. Arrange the slips in the order of the outline. Assemble the pile of slips, the outline, and blank paper (or a blank word-processor screen) in front of you. Write the essay by going from heading to heading and slip to slip.

#### Paragraphs

The paragraph is the basic structuring unit in the essay or paper. Basically, every paragraph is a building block, and it should represent and flesh out a heading or sub-heading in your outline. There are some rules for writing paragraphs, concerning style and consistency. A paragraph should be at least a third to half a page in length. Avoid one-sentence paragraphs. Also, avoid over-long sentences in general. Each paragraph should present one idea and present this idea fully. Therefore, the paragraph should have what is known as a ‘topic sentence,’ near the beginning, which announces the main subject of the paragraph. The paragraph should not deviate from this argument or introduce any new ones. The first sentence should be linked to, or contrast with, the last sentence of the previous paragraph. This helps to make each paragraph a solid unit that develops a clearly announced sub-topic of the essay.

Do not, however, write subheadings before every paragraph. Also, do not diverge from your larger topic. For each paragraph you write, ask yourself: How does this paragraph contribute to my argument at large?<sup>1</sup>

## Structure of the essay or term paper

### INTRODUCTION

A seminar paper (like an essay) revolves around a particular issue or research question, which is first laid out in the Introduction. The Introduction should clearly announce the topic (*what* is the essay about?) and a research question or problem. Then, it will explain the significance of the topic/research question: it may, for instance, contain particular difficulties or apparent contradictions, or it may be especially important for an understanding of the primary texts (*why* is the topic relevant?). Then, it should explain your method in approaching the topic, and why you chose this method (*how* are you going to approach the topic?). You need to give your reader a clear sense of where you are going, and to maintain that sense throughout the essay or paper. In the further course of the paper, you should follow through the requirements and meet the expectations raised in the Introduction.

### MAIN PART OF THE PAPER

This consists of an in-depth, coherent, and logically consistent analysis of one or several (literary, visual) texts. It is organized by thematic headings. A clear structure of argumentation is important: a logical development of thoughts (concept of order), a connection of thoughts, sentences, paragraphs and sections by suitable logical connectors (concept of coherence), and a focus of each paragraph and section on one major sequence of ideas (concept of unity). If you make a claim, make sure to provide evidence for it. Make sure to develop conclusions from premises based on analysis of your primary sources, and to do so without internal contradictions and in a manner that is intersubjectively verifiable. This involves the fairly precise and consistent use of terminology. It will usually be necessary to provide a theoretical and methodological framing before entering the analytical argument. Such framing includes definitions of key concepts and terms, and it may also include historical, literary, or philosophical contexts required for your argument. In larger term papers and your final thesis you may provide this framing in a separate chapter. You should only give as much information as is relevant for your analysis (i.e., that is referenced later on). Revise this part of your paper when the main (analytical) part is finished and remove any redundant 'background' information.

Provide evidence for ideas and arguments by means of quotations from your primary sources. Please make sure that you work with each quotation you make; do not expect quotations to speak for themselves. As far as possible, also try to consider evidence that apparently does not match or seems to contradict your arguments. All arguments and results must be open to possible falsification by reference to the primary sources. Make use of relevant secondary literature (see above): as far as possible, for a seminar paper gain information about the present state of research on your topic. Collect research sources that appear helpful for your understanding of the topic and that are easily accessible. You should include quotations from secondary sources in your main text especially when you find contradictory statements or when you discuss such statements.

### CONCLUSION

In your Conclusion, you should summarize results and perhaps give an idea of aspects you could not adequately consider in your paper and that might need further discussion in a larger context. In other words, the conclusion is in dialogue with the introduction: it should begin with a rephrasing of your main claim and delineate how your analysis has responded to the research question. You can also open new areas of inquiry that have emerged in the course of your analysis. It should be no longer than one tenth of your paper.

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<sup>1</sup> On organizing paragraphs, please see ["On Paragraphs." Purdue Online Writing Lab.](#)

## LIST OF WORKS CITED

The List of Works Cited contains **all** texts quoted for writing your paper, including precise references for your primary sources. These texts are listed in alphabetical order of the authors' last names. The citation standards are those of the MLA (see below).

## STATEMENT ON PLAGIARISM

The following text must be included, under the heading "Statement on Plagiarism", at the end of your paper. You must read and sign it.

I hereby declare that the attached text is the product of my own independent scholarly work, and that any use it makes, by quotation or paraphrase, of the intellectual property of others (including, but not limited to, work published in books, journals, encyclopedias, and on the internet) has been clearly and unmistakably indicated as such. I have not used materials other than those indicated, and this paper has not been previously submitted for examination purposes at any institution of education, nor published in any other form.

[Place, date, signature]

## 4. Documenting your sources: Style Sheet

This style sheet outlines the formal and structural requirements for essays and seminar papers. It follows the standards of form and citation of the Modern Language Association (MLA), which we have supplemented with our own examples for purposes of illustration. Wherever deviations from the MLA standard have prevailed in Germany, we have marked them as such. For more detailed questions not answered in this style sheet, we refer to the Modern Language Association's *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*, 8th ed. (MLA, 2016).

**MLA Style is the mandatory style for writing papers in English and American Studies courses.** Being able to meet the formal requirements is an integral part of writing a good academic paper, so please make sure that your paper is formally consistent. Please also note that the formal presentation of your paper will play a role in its evaluation!

### Citing sources

Any use you make of other people's ideas or words must be clearly and unmistakably marked as such. If you fail to provide clear and unmistakable documentation, your essay will automatically fail, and you may face legal consequences. Read the chapter on "Plagiarism and Academic Integrity" in the *MLA Handbook*. If in doubt about how to reference a source, ask your instructor.

Whenever you use phrases, sentences and passages from other texts, you have to mark them as quotations. If you paraphrase ideas and arguments you find in secondary texts, you need to carefully document them as well (see "Quoting from Sources and Avoiding Plagiarism" above), giving not only the source but also the exact location of the idea you used.

Short **verbatim** quotations are enclosed in double quotation marks (" . . ."), quotations within quotations in single quotation marks (" . . . ' . . . ' . . . "). Longer quotations of more than three lines – block quotations – are **indented and not enclosed in quotation marks**. This also means that parenthetical references will here be placed after the quotation's concluding punctuation mark. The first line of the paragraph following an indented quotation is not indented.

Do not quote text that you do not absolutely need for your argument. All changes you make in verbatim quotations must be marked as such. Use square brackets for additions and changes and three

full stops (periods) within brackets [...] for ellipses. Usually, you will not need [...] at the beginning or end of verbatim quotations. You are free to begin and stop quoting where you please, unless this changes the meaning of the quotation. If you want to emphasize a word or a phrase, italicize it and mark the emphasis as yours after the quotation.

Some examples:

“The continual reference in [contemporary] critical debate to a distinction between structuralism and post-structuralism has several unfortunate effects” (Culler 28).

“The continual reference [...] to a distinction between structuralism and post-structuralism has several unfortunate effects” (Culler 28).

“The continual reference in critical debate to a distinction between structuralism and post-structuralism has *several* unfortunate effects” (Culler 28, my emphasis).

### In-text citation (‘MLA Style’)

In-text citation (‘MLA style’) requires you to document your source directly within the text. More precisely, you insert the author’s last name and the page number in parentheses right after the quotation, as in the following example:

“The continual reference in critical debate to a distinction between structuralism and post-structuralism has several unfortunate effects” (Culler 28).

(Note that the concluding punctuation mark is placed after the reference, *not* within the quotation.) For better readability, you may also integrate the author’s name in your text:

It is certainly true, as Culler maintains, that “[t]he continual reference in critical debate to a distinction between structuralism and post-structuralism has several unfortunate effects” (28).

If you cite several works by the same author or several authors by the same last name, include a short version of the title. It is separated from the author’s name by a comma:

“The continual reference in critical debate to a distinction between structuralism and post-structuralism has several unfortunate effects” (Culler, *On Deconstruction* 28).

“Structural and thematic values combine in this most profound level of narrative self-analysis” (Matlack, “Voices” 352).

Indirect quotations are also given within the text:

Derrida develops some of his central ideas in his discussion of Saussure’s linguistics (Culler 97-102).

When you cite from poems and verse plays, you should use line instead of page numbers. To avoid misunderstandings, insert the word “line(s)” when you first cite from a poem. When you cite from verse plays, give the act, scene, and line numbers.

“And when a dark ship arrived, / I entered that water” (Magdaleno lines 12-13).

Meander’s “he was never sprung of human race” shows the Persians’ respect for Tamburlaine’s superhuman traits (Marlowe 2.4.11).

## Preparing a list of works cited

At the end of your paper you need to list all the titles of the sources that you used to prepare your paper (those from which you have quoted and those whose ideas you have paraphrased or otherwise used to develop your own ideas – all of these will have been referenced in the running text!). Important: Do not forget to specify precisely the edition of the primary source you are using. Do not differentiate between ‘primary’ and ‘secondary’ texts in your list of works cited. Give all your sources in a single list ordered alphabetically by the last names of the authors.

### GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

It is crucial to provide unambiguous and clear information on the exact sources you used in developing your ideas. The list of works cited provides easily accessible, exact bibliographic information. This is why it is important to follow the guidelines of the style sheet (the rules for formatting the paper and how you provide bibliographic information) precisely. The following brief overview provides examples for the most commonly used types of sources; it is based on the current *MLA Handbook*. If you are uncertain about how to cite a source and do not find an answer here, please consult the *Handbook*, a copy of which you can find in the library.

**Format:** For readability the list of works cited uses “hanging indent”, meaning all but the first line of an entry are indented. Where there are three or more authors or editors, list only the first of them, followed by “et al.” Anonymous works are listed by title. If you have cited several works by the same author, list them alphabetically by title. Give the author’s name in the first entry only; in the following entries, replace it with a dash (see Morrison example below).

Publisher’s names are given in full, except for business words such as Company (Co.), which are dropped. The term ‘University Press’ is usually abbreviated ‘UP’: ‘Brandeis UP,’ ‘U of California P.’ If you cite websites, give the date at which you accessed it as well as the date of the ‘publication’ of said website. Provide all the bibliographical information available on the site.

**Cite web sites as you would any other publication** and list them alphabetically by the last name of the author or the title along with the print sources. If you cite websites, give the date on which you accessed them as well as the date of the ‘publication’ of said website. Provide all the bibliographical information available on the site.

### MONOGRAPHS AND OTHER BOOKS

Culler, Jonathan. *On Deconstruction: Theory and Criticism after Structuralism*. Cornell UP, 1982.

Morrison, Toni. *Beloved*. Knopf, 1987.

—. *A Mercy*. Knopf, 2008.

Heise, Ursula. *Sense of Place and Sense of Planet: The Environmental Imagination of the Global*. Oxford UP, 2008.

Marlowe, Christopher. *Tamburlaine the Great*. 1587, edited by John D. Jump, Part 1, U of Nebraska P, 1967.

### ANTHOLOGIES AND COMPILATIONS

Baym, Nina, et al., editors. *The Norton Anthology of American Literature*. 6th ed. 5 vols., Norton, 2003.

Hubert Zapf, editor. *Kulturökologie und Literatur: Beiträge zu einem transdisziplinären Paradigma der Literaturwissenschaft*. Universitätsverlag Winter, 2008.

## ENTRIES IN ANTHOLOGIES AND COMPILATIONS

Hassan, Ihab. "Toward a Concept of Postmodernism." *A Postmodernism Reader*, edited by Joseph Natoli and Linda Hutcheon, State U of New York P, 1993, pp. 273-286.

Magdaleno, Rita. "The Leaving." *iFloriculto Si!: A Collection of Latina Poetry*, edited by Bryce Milligan, Mary Guerrero Gilligan, and Angela de Hoyos, Penguin, 1998, p. 157.

Nabokov, Vladimir. Pnin. *The Portable Nabokov*, edited by Page Stegner, Viking, 1968, pp. 362-512.

## ARTICLES IN JOURNALS

Matlack, James H. "The Voices of Time: Narrative Structure in *Absalom, Absalom!*" *Southern Review*, vol. 15, 1979, pp. 333-54.

Steinberg, Marc. "Inverting History in Octavia Butler's Postmodern Slave Narrative." *African American Review* vol. 38, 2004, pp. 467-476.

## ARTICLES IN NEWSPAPERS AND MAGAZINES

Bisky, Jens. "Seit zehn Jahren zu innovativ: Eine Jubiläumsfeier am Zentrum für Literaturforschung." *Süddeutsche Zeitung* 19 May 2006, p. 18.

Peterson, Peter G. "Public Diplomacy and the War on Terrorism." *Foreign Affairs* Sept./Oct. 2002, pp. 74-94.

## ARTICLES IN REFERENCE BOOKS

"travois | travoise, n." *OED Online*, Oxford University Press, July 2018, [www.oed.com/view/Entry/205305](http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/205305). Accessed 14 October 2018.

Schulz, Dieter. "Emerson, Ralph Waldo." *Metzler Lexikon amerikanischer Autoren*, edited by Bernd Engler and Kurt Müller. Metzler, 2000.

## REVIEWS

Pizer, Donald. Rev. of *Stephen Crane in Transition: Centenary Essays*, ed. Joseph Katz. *Studies in the Novel*, vol. 5, no. 2, 1973, pp. 261-62.

Little, Jonathan. "Erasing the Buddha." Rev. of *Charles Johnson's Fiction*, by William R. Nash. *Contemporary Literature*, vol. 44, 2003, pp. 743-47.

## WEB SITES, ARTICLES IN ONLINE PERIODICALS AND REPOSITORIES

Broeck, Sabine. "When Light Becomes White: Reading Enlightenment through Jamaica Kincaid's Writing." *Callaloo* 25 (2002): 821-843. *JSTOR*. [www.jstor.org/stable/3300119/](http://www.jstor.org/stable/3300119/).

Folsom, Ed and Kenneth M. Price, editors. *The Walt Whitman Archive*. Center for Digital Research in the Humanities at the University of Nebraska–Lincoln, 2018. Accessed 10 Oct. 2018.

Menzel, Christopher. "Possible Worlds." *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, edited by Edward N. Zalta, Winter 2017 Edition, Metaphysics Research Lab, Stanford University, 2017. <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2017/entries/possible-worlds/>. Accessed 10 Oct. 2018.

## FILMS

Emmerich, Roland, director<sup>2</sup>. *The Day After Tomorrow*. Performance by Dennis Quaid, 20th Century Fox, 2004.

<sup>2</sup> The person you identify as the "author" in citing a film or television show depends on what your discussion focusses on: e.g., the director, the screenwriter or an actor. If your discussion does not focus on the contribution by an individual, give the title of the film first and the contributors with their roles after the title.

## VISUAL ART

Turner, J.M.W. *Slavers Throwing overboard the Dead and Dying—Typhoon Coming On*. 1840. Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, 2018. <https://www.mfa.org/collections/object/slave-ship-slavers-throwing-overboard-the-dead-and-dying-typhoon-coming-on-31102>. Accessed 10 Oct. 2018.<sup>3</sup>

## 5. Formatting your essay or seminar paper

Once you have your final draft, you need to produce a copy that your instructor can read well and that physically (or electronically) presents your work in the clearest and most accessible manner. Ask your instructor how to submit your paper: most instructors prefer a printed and an electronic version (pdf format) of your final paper, some may only require an electronic submission.

## SPELLING

Do not mix spelling standards: use **either** American **or** British English. The use of any other variety of English must be cleared with the instructor in advance! Carefully check your paper for grammar and spelling mistakes before handing it in.

## TYPOGRAPHY

Please avoid straight quotes ("). Please also note the following typographical conventions:

**Wrong:** Iago's plot **or** Iago`s plot (do not use accent marks instead of apostrophe)

**Wrong:** Iago's plot (language set to German)

**Correct:** Iago's plot

**Wrong:** Othello trusts in `honest Iago`. (accent marks again)

**Wrong:** Othello trusts in „honest Iago“. (German again)

**Correct:** Othello trusts in "honest Iago".

## SPACING AND MARGINS

Though the style sheet of the department uses MLA style, some of the formatting differs because of different paper sizes. Please use 1.5 line spacing and leave margins of 2 cm on the left and 4.5 cm on the right. Justify your lines at the left and right margin (*Blocksatz*) and indent the first line of each paragraph by 0.5 cm. Pagination starts with page 1 on the first page of the body of the paper (i.e. with the introductory chapter).<sup>4</sup>

## TITLES AND HEADINGS

Titles of monographs, collections, journals, films, and works of art are italicized; titles of articles, essays, poems, and short stories are enclosed in quotation marks. Words and phrases in foreign languages are italicized as well, except within quotations. In headings and titles, all words are capitalized except articles ("the"), short prepositions ("of"), conjunctions ("and"), and particles ("to"). The first and last words of a title are always capitalized.

<sup>3</sup> Unless you experienced the work of art first hand also give the book or website in which you consulted it.

<sup>4</sup> For information on how to use sections in Microsoft Word to start with page number 1 on the first page of text please refer to "How to create a Word document that uses different page numbering formats." Microsoft Support. 1 Feb 2007. Microsoft. 7 Nov 2019 <<http://support.microsoft.com/kb/326536>>

#### TITLE PAGE

The title page provides the following information: top left, the names of the university and the field (English Literature / American Studies / Anglophone Literatures), the title of the seminar, the lecturer's name, and the semester in which the seminar was offered; in the center, the title (and subtitle) of your paper; bottom right, your name, student ID, and address (including email), your current semester, course of studies (BA, MAIAS, LA etc.), and subject (*Studienfach*) (include: HF – major; NF – minor), the module for which your essay/*Hausarbeit* will obtain credit, and the date when you submitted the paper.

#### TABLE OF CONTENTS

The Table of Contents lists all chapter and subchapter headings, including the Introduction, the Conclusion, the List of Works Cited and the Statement on Plagiarism (do not forget to add their respective page numbers!). Make sure that the headings and page numbers you list in the Table of Contents exactly correspond to those found in the body of the text. It gives the initial page number for each section, without additional information (no “p.”, no page ranges such as “1–3”). Pay attention to correct **capitalization** in headings!

For a short essay (up to 2,000 words), no Table of Contents is required.

## 6. Recommended further sources on academic writing

Booth, Wayne C., Gregory G. Colomb and Joseph M. Williams. *The Craft of Research*. 3rd ed. U of Chicago P, 2008.

Hayot, Eric. *The Elements of Academic Style. Writing for the Humanities*. Columbia UP, 2014.

*MLA Handbook*. 8th ed, Modern Language Association, 2016.

*Purdue Online Writing Lab*. Ed. by Linda Bergmann and Tammy Conard-Salvo. Purdue University, 2018. 6 July 2018, [owl.purdue.edu/owl/purdue\\_owl.html](http://owl.purdue.edu/owl/purdue_owl.html)