

Style Sheet for seminar papers, BA theses and MA theses

English-Speaking Cultures

Literary Studies, Film Studies, Cultural Studies/History

Based on MLA style

Note: Seminar papers, BA theses, MA theses, and presentation hand-outs that fail to meet the formal requirements outlined below will not be accepted.

1. **Standards of an Academic Paper**

- well-defined purpose and relevant topic
- clear and understandable thesis and study/research questions
- critical and impartial analysis and discussion of primary and secondary sources
- consistent and coherent argumentation
- precise documentation of secondary sources

2. **Getting Started**

- choose a text and topic that interests you (select from the list of topic suggestions or follow your own initiative)
- topic and purpose of the paper must be clear to yourself and well-defined in the paper, thesis
- develop a thesis and study/research questions as guidance for your discussion
- frame and develop your arguments congruently and coherently
- secondary sources provide necessary background information on your topic
- secondary sources can help you to guide your attention to certain issues and provide incentives for your research
- do not just copy the arguments of these sources, review them critically and apply what seems useful for your argument

Note: You will need to see the instructor/supervisor at least once (during their office hours) in order to discuss your ideas and the relevant literature.

3. **Secondary Sources**

search for secondary sources:

1. In university library SuUB
2. **MLA** (International Bibliography of Books and Articles on Modern Languages and Literatures) on SuUB website:

Fachinformationen => Anglistik => Anglistik: Fachdatenbanken => MLA

<https://suche.suub.uni-bremen.de/peid=B32491339&LAN=DE&CID=&index=L&Hitnr=2&dtyp=E&rtyp=b>

Note: If you are outside the university system you have to connect via “cisco anyconnect.”

Most books can be ordered via interlibrary loan (Fernleihe) if they are not in the SuUB, this may take up to 3 weeks; articles in academic journals are often available through *JStor via the SuUB subscription*, but can also be ordered via interlibrary loan.

3. Internet: (pay attention to reliability of websites—university websites, official websites of relevant institutions etc.) do not make excessive use of websites as sources; make sure you have at least more printed sources than electronic ones; online encyclopaedias such as Wikipedia may provide useful explanations for yourself, they are not acceptable as secondary sources when comprehensive printed sources are available.

Do not drown in secondary material but choose only the most relevant, reliable (if from the internet), and up-to-date sources.

Note: Too few and too many sources are conspicuous (10-15 sources for a paper on BA level; 15-20 for a paper on MA level; 20-40 for a BA thesis; 60-100 sources for an MA thesis).

4. Overall structure of paper or thesis

Introductory part: Briefly outline your topic (why is it important?), **central ideas, research question(s), thesis statement**, arguments you are going to address, and embed these in their wider (historic, socio-political, literary) context. Refer to the overall structure of your paper, methodology, primary text materials and limit the territory you are covering in correspondence with your title.

Please note: Students are discouraged from listing biographical data of the author/director of texts or films. Short plot summaries should be provided at the beginning of the discussion.

Main part (background chapter and analytical chapters): This consists of several chapters: a background chapter addressing the historical, cultural, social, or other relevant context; several sub chapters for each text (these should be subdivided according to certain topics, issues, perspectives that guide your analysis of each text. The chapters should represent clearly delimited argumentative units and should be linked through argumentative transition.

- work closely with the primary text, meaning support your arguments with examples/quotations from the text
- draw your own conclusions like: “here the author shows ...”; “at this point the author criticizes ...”; “this stylistic means helps to achieve the effect of ...”; “this passage outlines ...”; “the passage serves to criticize ...”; “the text mocks/ridicules...”.

Conclusion: Re-evaluate your main arguments and discussion results in response to your topic and central research question(s) – make sure that your work relates explicitly to its title and the introduction. Do not bring new arguments; do not end your paper with a quote.

Bibliography:

Whenever you quote or paraphrase a source you need to **clearly acknowledge** this. Using material and ideas originally conceived and authored by others, without acknowledgement, is **plagiarism**. **All texts and sources from which you draw ideas, paraphrase and/or quote, need to be listed in a bibliography.**

Examples for bibliographical entries are listed below.

Appendix: Here you can put any empirical material to support/illustrate your arguments: e.g. newspaper articles, full-page advertisements, charts and tables, screen shots, transcripts or audio-visual material etc. Please make sure that all of your additional material are listed and commented upon throughout your term paper.

A plagiarism declaration with your signature is a mandatory addition to your submission.

5. Revision and Proofreading

- correct misspellings, wording and syntax mistakes, have a friend or native speaker proofread the paper as well
- sloppy and colloquial wording, spelling and punctuation mistakes, plagiarism, and incomplete and inconsistent documentation **are not acceptable**
- make sure the paper is **well-structured** and has a consistent **logical line** of argumentation
- make sure your arguments are **clear** to the reader
- get rid of repetitions and contradictions
- quotes and examples should sustain your arguments
- make sure you have a **fluent text** with **smooth transitions** between sentences and paragraphs
- do not tell the reader what you will do in the next paragraph
- one paragraph should run one third to half a page, do not use short, three to five line paragraphs

6. General layout

- The paper should include a **cover sheet** (see template on faculty website) listing the name of your university, course programme, term, title of your module and of your seminar, the name of your lecturer, the title of your work, word count, your name, student number, and email address.
- For BA and MA theses: list the names of the first and second supervisor
- The second page should contain the **table of content** with Arabic digits in decimal numeration (1.;1.1.) with the corresponding page numbers listed on the right hand side.

Table of Contents

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7. The Printed Paper: General Guidelines

- Use Times New Roman, font size 12; 1.5 line spacing; justified left and right margins (Blocksatz).
 - Indent the first line of a new paragraph 0,75 or 1,25 cm.
 - Use **2,5 cm margins** on all sides; include page numbers starting on the first written page.
 - Use either straight (" ") or smart ("” ”) quotation marks and apostrophes, do not mix them in your paper, do not use the accent `´ as an apostrophe (beside the ß?-key) like in é, the apostrophe ´ is beside the ä-key.
 - Block quotations than run longer than 5 lines. Use font size 11, 1cm tab, and single space for the blocked quote.
 - Use three dots and square brackets for **omissions** in quotations [...]. If you find a mistake in a quotation, repeat it but add [sic] after the misspelled word. E.g. “The acquisition of Canadian citizenship is frequently seen [...] as a way of leaving it with an assurance of safety” (Bissoondath 1993, 382).
 - **Foreign language terms** or terms that require emphasis should be written in *italics*, and translations enclosed in single square brackets.
 - Please do **avoid unusual spacing techniques**; substantial spacing in between paragraphs or subchapters will be penalised.
 - **Footnotes** should only contain additional information, definitions, or brief explanations. Do not use the footnote documentation system.
 - Please **avoid gender discriminatory** language.
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- The paper should have a length of 10 to 12 pages at the BA level (at least 5000 words), and 15 to 18 pages at the MA level (at least 7000 words), excluding cover sheet, table of contents, and bibliography.
 - For the length of the BA and MA theses consult the E-SC website and your supervisors.
 - Send an electronic copy on the deadline day; the printed one may be handed in a few days later when there is an acceptable reason for it. Hand in the paper simply stapled, not in a plastic folder.
 - BA and MA theses should be bound.

8. In-Text Citations

The following will provide examples of how to properly do an in-text citation.

“However, the diminishing value of Canadian citizenship – the creation of the hyphenated Canadian with divided loyalties, the perception that immigration policy now allows the rich to buy their way into the country, the idea that citizenship is a natural right and not an earned privilege – means that the exact opposite has also come to be true. The acquisition of Canadian citizenship is frequently seen not as a means of committing oneself to the country but as a way of leaving it with an assurance of safety.” (Bissoondath 1993, 382)

This passage comes from: Bissoondath, Neil. “A Question of Belonging: Multiculturalism and Citizenship.” *Belonging: The Meaning and Future of Canadian Citizenship*. Ed. William Kaplan. Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 1993. 368-87.

A proper in-text citation could look like this:

It has been argued that citizenship has lost meaning and relevance to Canadians because of the adoption of multiculturalism (Bissoondath 1993, 382).

Note: This is a *paraphrase* of what Bissoondath said. I do not use his words, but mine.

A proper quotation of this passage could look like this:

Some high-profile figures have recently discussed “the diminishing value of Canadian citizenship” (Bissoondath 1993, 382).

Likewise, a proper quotation of this passage could look like this:

In a recent article, the novelist Neil Bissoondath contends that “the acquisition of Canadian citizenship is frequently seen not as a means of committing oneself to the country but as a way of leaving it with an assurance of safety” (1993, 382).

Note: Because I used Bissoondath’s name in the text, I do not have to use it in the citation.

An improper in-text citation looks like this:

Some people say that the idea that citizenship is a natural right has led to the diminishing value of Canadian citizenship (Bissoondath 1993, 382).

Note: Two passages from the text are included in the sentence, but neither one was placed in “quotation marks.” *The idea that citizenship is a natural right* and *the diminishing value of Canadian citizenship* are direct quotes. As such, they must be placed in quotation marks. **You must use quotation marks, even if you have listed (Bissoondath 1993, 382) in the citation.**

Likewise, an improper quotation of this passage could look like this:

It could be argued that holding Canadian citizenship is, for some people, an assurance of safety (Bissoondath 1993, 382).

Note: The last part of this sentence – “an assurance of safety” – is a direct quote. It is not enough to simply acknowledge Bissoondath in the citation. I used his words without crediting him, and that is plagiarism. **The following is acceptable:**

It could be argued that holding Canadian citizenship is, for some people, “an assurance of safety” (Bissoondath 1993, 382).

More advice:

- Quotes must be marked by **double quotation marks** (“example”). For reference use the author date system (Name Year, page number/s).
- If the quote is run in the text, meaning shorter than 5 lines, the full stop comes after the citation brackets: E.g. ...safety” (Bissoondath 1993, 382).

Quotation marks in the original will transform into single quotation marks.

- No quotation marks for a block quote, the blocked style indicates that this is a quote; the full stop comes at the end of the sentence before the citation brackets: E.g. ...safety. (Bissoondath 1993, 382)

Quotation marks in the original will remain double quotation marks.

- When citing classic verse plays or poems (e.g. Shakespeare’s *Hamlet*), use divisions (act, scene, part etc) and line numbers rather than page numbers.

E.g.: In *Hamlet* the tragic hero seems resolute when he asserts: “The play’s the thing / Wherein I’ll catch the conscience of the King” (2.2.633-34).

- You can drop the name of the author if you indicate the name in the text:

E.g.: In *Bleak House* Dickens suggests a degree of confusion in society with his famous observation that there is “Fog everywhere” (1).

- Sometimes you might quote **indirect sources**: use the abbreviation qtd. in (“quoted in”). For instance, if you wanted to use a quote from Edward Said that Peter Barry records in his book *Beginning Theory*, you might write:

E.g. As the postcolonial critic Edward Said insists: “We cannot easily say that since *Mansfield Park* is a novel, its affiliations with a particularly sordid history are irrelevant or transcended, not only because it is irresponsible to say that, but because we know too much to say so without bad faith” (qtd. in Barry 200).

- Your bibliography, filmography and internet sources should be arranged **alphabetically** starting with the latest. If you use more than one work by a particular author, arrange his or her works by publication year. The titles of books, newspapers or journals should be in *italics*. Titles of journal articles, articles in books, encyclopaedia entries, and poems should be in “quotation marks,” not italics.
- When quoting from an **article in an edited collection**, you must give the article’s author’s name and list the article in the bibliography, instead of simply giving the names of the editor(s) and corresponding page numbers.
- Please be advised to use **web sources** only if printed sources are not available. Any general encyclopaedic or historic fact, theoretical concept and the like can be found in books. At least more than half of your sources should be printed ones.

9. How to list sources

BOOK

Foucault, Michel. *The Birth of the Clinic: An Archaeology of Medical Perception*. New York: Vintage Books, 1975.

Osteen, Mark. *American Magic and Dread: Don DeLillo's Dialogues with Culture*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2000.

Said, Edward W. *Orientalism*. New York: Vintage Books, 1979.

EDITED BOOK

Armstrong, Jeannette, and Lilly Grauer, eds. *Native Poetry in Canada: A Contemporary Anthology*. Peterborough, ON: Broadview Press, 2001.

Bannerji, Himani, ed. *Returning the Gaze: Essays on Racism, Feminism and Politics*. Toronto: Sister Vision Press, 1993.

BOOK ARTICLE OR CHAPTER

Bentley, Nancy. "Edith Wharton and the Science of Manners." *The Cambridge Companion to Edith Wharton*. Ed. Millicent Bell. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995. 47-67.

Deloria, Vine, Jr. "The American Revolution and the American Indian: Problems in the Recovery of a Usable Past." *Spirit & Reason: The Vine Deloria, Jr., Reader*. Eds. Barbara Deloria et al. Golden, CO: Fulcrum Publishing, 1999. 206-222.

Howells, C. A. "Fictional Technique in Radcliffe's *Udolpho*." *The Gothic Novel: A Casebook*. Ed. Victor Sage. Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1990. 10-18.

Ortiz, Simon. "Always the Stories: A Brief History and Thoughts on My Writing." *Coyote Was Here: Essays on Contemporary Native American Literary and Political Mobilization*. Ed. Bo Schöler. Aarhus, Denmark: University of Aarhus Press, 1984. 57-69.

JOURNAL ARTICLE

Jones, Carolyn M. "Southern Landscape as Psychic Landscape in Toni Morrison's Fiction." *Studies in the Literary Imagination*. 31.2 (1998): 37-48.

Knopf, Kerstin. „Geschichte filmen: Die Perspektive kanadischer indigener Filmemacher(innen).“ *Zeitschrift der Gesellschaft für Kanada-Studien*. 19.1 (1999): 175-84.
[this is a German title, therefore the quotation marks appear as in German language texts; but you can also put them at the top and turn them around as the ones in English language texts]

Silberman, Robert. "Gerald Vizenor and *Harold of Orange*: From World Cinemas to Real Cinema." *American Indian Quarterly*. 9.1 (Winter 1985): 5-21.

NEWSPAPER OR MAGAZINE ARTICLE

Brian Laghi. "PM offers \$20,000, apology for head tax." *The Globe and Mail*. 22 June 2006: A1.

Monk, Katherine. "Real native culture shines through Smoke Signals." *The Vancouver Sun*. 17 July 1998: C3.

ENCYCLOPEDIA ARTICLE

Chaput, Catherine. "Hyperreality." *Encyclopedia of Postmodernism*. Eds. Victor E. Taylor and Charles E. Winquist. London: Routledge, 2001. 182-84.

GOVERNMENT PUBLICATION

Canada. Parliament. House of Commons. Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage. *A Sense of Place, a Sense of Being: The Evolving Role of the Federal Government in Support of Culture in Canada: Ninth Report*. Chair Clifford Lincoln. Ottawa: The Committee, 1999.

THESIS

Knopf, Kerstin. "Decolonizing the Lens of Power: A Study of Indigenous Films in North America." Diss. University of Greifswald, 2002.

Marsden, John Lloyd. "After Modernism: Representations of the Past in the Novels of Graham Swift (Nineteen Eighties Realism)." Diss. University of Ohio, 1996.

FILM

The Decline of the American Empire. Dir. Denys Arcand. Writ. Denys Arcand. 1986. DVD. Séville, 2001. 120 min.

The Sweet Hereafter. Dir. Atom Egoyan. Writs. Atom Egoyan and Russell Banks. 1998. DVD. New Line, 1998.

INTERNET SOURCE

"Lightfoot News," accessed 26 June 2006: <<http://www.lightfoot.ca/news.htm>>

Seah, Gilbert. "On the Corner," accessed 28 February 2016:
<http://www.cinemaeye.com/index/reviews/rev_more/on_the_corner_1_2/>

Totaro, Donato. "*Birth of a Nation* Viewed Today: Form as Ideology." *Off Screen*, accessed 17 Nov. 2014: <<http://offscreen.com/view/birthofnation#fn760862604551ebb93aa23d>>

For academic **articles on the web**, better give the doi source. E.g.:

Banerjee, Mita. "Biopiracy in India: Seed Diversity and the Scramble for Knowledge." *Phytomedicine*. 53 (2019): 296-301. doi: 10.1016/j.phymed.2018.10.017.

Note: Remove hyperlinks.

Here is what your Works Cited/Bibliography page should look like:

Works Cited/Bibliography

- Armstrong, Jeannette. *Slash*. Penticton, BC: Theytus Books, 1985.
- . *Whispering in Shadows*. Penticton, BC: Theytus Books, 2000.
- Banerjee, Mita. "Biopiracy in India: Seed Diversity and the Scramble for Knowledge." *Phytomedicine*. 53 (2019): 296-301. doi: 10.1016/j.phymed.2018.10.017.
- Bentley, Nancy. "Edith Wharton and the Science of Manners." *The Cambridge Companion to Edith Wharton*. Ed. Millicent Bell. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995. 47-67.
- Deloria, Vine, Jr. "The American Revolution and the American Indian: Problems in the Recovery of a Usable Past." *Spirit & Reason: The Vine Deloria, Jr., Reader*. Eds. Barbara Deloria et al. Golden, CO: Fulcrum Publishing, 1999. 206-222.
- "Jeannette Armstrong (Interview)." *Contemporary Challenges: Conversations With Canadian Native Authors*. Ed. Hartmut Lutz. Saskatoon, SK: Fifth House, 1991, 13-32.
- Jones, Carolyn M. "Southern Landscape as Psychic Landscape in Toni Morrison's Fiction." *Studies in the Literary Imagination*. 31.2 (1998): 37-48.
- Knopf, Kerstin. „Geschichte filmen: Die Perspektive kanadischer indigener Filmemacher(innen).“ *Zeitschrift der Gesellschaft für Kanada-Studien*. 19.1 (1999): 175-84.
- Lutz, Hartmut. *Approaches: Essays in Native North American Studies and Literatures*. Augsburg: Wißner-Verlag, 2002.
- Lutz, Hartmut, ed. *Contemporary Challenges: Conversations With Canadian Native Authors*. Saskatoon, Sask.: Fifth House, 1991.
- Mackey, Eva. *The House of Difference: Cultural Politics and National Identity in Canada*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2002.
- Medres, Israel. *Montreal of Yesterday: Jewish Life in Montreal 1900-1920*. Trans. Vivian Felsen. Montreal: Véhicule Press, 2000.
- O'Grady, Brendan. *Exiles and Islanders: The Irish Settlers of Prince Edward Island*. Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2004.
- Ortiz, Simon. "Always the Stories: A Brief History and Thoughts on My Writing." *Coyote Was Here: Essays on Contemporary Native American Literary and Political Mobilization*. Ed. Bo Schöler. Aarhus, Denmark: University of Aarhus Press, 1984. 57-69.
- Said, Edward W. *Orientalism*. New York: Vintage Books, 1979.
- Silberman, Robert. "Gerald Vizenor and *Harold of Orange*: From World Cinemas to Real Cinema." *American Indian Quarterly*. 9.1 (Winter 1985): 5-21.

Filmography

The Decline of the American Empire. Dir. Denys Arcand. Writ. Denys Arcand. 1986. DVD. Séville, 2001.

Smoke Signals. Dir. Chris Eyre. Writ. Sherman Alexie. 1998. DVD. Shadow Catcher Entertainment, 1998.

Internet/Web Sources

Seah, Gilbert. "On the Corner," accessed 28 February 2016:

<http://www.cinemaeye.com/index/reviews/rev_more/on_the_corner_1_2/>

"Traces of Missing Women," CBC News, accessed 28 February 2016:

<<http://www.cbc.ca/sunday/missingwomen.html>>

Totaro, Donato. "Birth of a Nation Viewed Today: Form as Ideology." *Off Screen*. 17 Nov. 2014, accessed 28 February 2016: <<http://offscreen.com/view/birthofnation#fn760862604551ebb93aa23d>>

Won, Shirley. "Cost of living in Canadian cities on the rise." *The Globe and Mail*. 26 June 2016. accessed 28 February 2016:

<<http://www.theglobeandmail.com/servlet/story/RTGAM.20060625.wcostss0625/BNSStory/Business/home>>

Failure to use spell check, adhere to consistent formatting, and secondary referencing will all be penalized with a reduction of marks. Failure to reference correctly will result in a major deduction from your grade. Plagiarism will result in an automatic fail.

All term papers and theses must include a plagiarism declaration with your signature. You can download a copy from the faculty webpage:

<http://www.fb10.uni-bremen.de/service/formulare/bescheinigungen/allgemein.aspx>

You find regulations regarding plagiarism in faculty 10 (08.07.2015) "Zum Umgang mit Plagiaten und PlagiatorInnen" here: http://www.fb10.uni-bremen.de/verwaltung/pdf/Zum_Umgang_mit_Plagiaten_und_PlagiatorInnen_Beschluss.pdf

Your seminar paper or thesis paper might be scanned with a plagiarism software, should there be an indication of doubt. Please find information on this here: <https://www.uni-bremen.de/de/qm-portal/downloads/>

Further Reading:

Aczel, Richard. *How to write an Essay*. Stuttgart: Klett, 2006.

Meyer, Michael. *English and American Literatures*. Marburg: Francke Verlag, 2004.

MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers. 8th ed., MLA, 2016.

Pope, Rob. *Studying English Literature and Language: An Introduction and companion*. 3rd ed. London: Routledge, 2012. 48-59.

Taylor, Gordon. *A Student's Writing Guide: How to Plan and Write Successful Essays*, Cambridge University Press, 2009.