

General guidelines for writing seminar papers at the chair of Microeconomics:

We recommend that you write your seminar paper in English, as the scientific literature is also in English, but if you prefer to write in German then this will also be fine.

There should be a title page with the title (topic) of your seminar paper, your name and Matrikelnummer, stating if you are a Bachelor or a Master student, and an abstract (a short summary of max. 100 words) of the contents of your seminar paper. In the Abstract, try to explain what is the main question that you would like to answer in your seminar paper, or what is the main insight / what are the key findings. Following the title page, there should be a Table of Contents. You do not need to include a list of tables and figures or a list of abbreviations used in the seminar paper (but you are allowed to do so if you wish). Next, there should be an Introduction. The introduction usually includes also a literature survey. However, you can also discuss the related literature in a separate section or subsection if you like.

Then comes the main part of your seminar paper, that should focus on the main paper that you want to present. Here, you should present the main model or other research approach (e.g., experimental or empirical) in your OWN WORDS. It is important, that you do not just copy text or formulas from the scientific paper that you are discussing. Convince your reader that you have understood the material by explaining everything in your own words, and / or by presenting (numerical or analytical) examples of your own. If you include your own (e.g., intermediate) calculation steps or own examples that are not 1:1 from the research paper, then state this in your seminar paper, so that the reader of your paper will understand what comes directly from the scientific paper that you are summarizing in your seminar paper, and what you have actually done yourself. In any case, do NOT try to present everything that is in the research paper, but make a careful selection of things that you would like to present and discuss in greater detail, and other things that you leave out or mention only on the side. The research paper is most likely longer than your seminar paper, so you cannot present everything, anyway.

At the end of your seminar paper, there should be a (usually rather short) Conclusion, followed by a list of References that you have been using. There may also be an Appendix (but doesn't have to be). State the references in the same way as we do in our literature list for this seminar, for example:

Callander, S. (2008) Political Motivations. *The Review of Economic Studies*, 75, 671-697.

(The title of the journal should be in *italics*.)

Cite papers in the main text as follows (example): "As emphasized by Callander (2008, page 680), ...". We recommend you to include the page number in your citation, so that we can see that you have actually read this paper, or check your references more easily. However, it is also possible to cite a paper or other literature source without providing the page number. In the end, it is your choice. Citations are also allowed in footnotes. Note that articles published in scientific journals can often be obtained via the university library. For those journals to which the library does not have direct access, you may obtain the article(s) via "Fernleihe" at low costs. All articles that you cite, you should actually have read (at least partially). You may use other sources of literature as well, but journal articles should be the main sources for your seminar paper. We recommend you to cite at least 5 or 10 journal articles (or working papers if the paper is not published yet), but there is no strict rule on the number of citations needed for your seminar paper. It is key that the reader of your seminar paper understands well the connections between the different strands of literature related with your seminar paper.

Important: There is a **strict** size restriction for your seminar paper. The total word count for your seminar paper, full pdf file including everything (!) (title page, main text, reference list, appendix...) must NOT exceed **7500**. You can hand in a shorter seminar paper if you wish, though. Between 6000 and 7500 words is a good size. Do not inflate the size of the seminar paper if this is not helpful for what you would like to say in this paper – a shorter seminar paper is perfectly fine if it is well written. We recommend to use a font size of 11 or 12 and 1.5 line spacing, but this is up to you. We recommend that you write the seminar paper in Latex if you use formulas, and if you are able to do so. Otherwise, Word or any other program works as well. If you use Word, then we recommend that you type in the formulas yourself (e.g., with the Word formula editor). This is better than copying formulas graphically from the original paper, especially if you want to demonstrate that you can work with the model by modifying some equations or examples yourself (only do this if you really understand the material, and do not pretend to understand material that you don't understand – then better contact your instructor to see if we can find other literature for you). The final seminar paper should be submitted as a pdf file (by email). Please state the word count at the very end of your seminar paper. You should use this online tool to obtain your word count (state the "Total Number of Words"; we might check your word count!):

<https://docwordcounter.com/en/PDF-word-counter>

At the end of your seminar paper, you should also include the following declaration of authorship (in German):

"Eidesstattliche Erklärung:

Ich erkläre, dass ich die Seminararbeit selbstständig und ohne unzulässige Inanspruchnahme Dritter verfasst habe. Ich habe dabei nur die angegebenen Quellen und Hilfsmittel verwendet und die aus diesen wörtlich, inhaltlich oder sinngemäß entnommenen Stellen als solche den wissenschaftlichen Anforderungen entsprechend kenntlich gemacht. Die Versicherung selbstständiger Arbeit gilt auch für Zeichnungen, Skizzen oder graphische Darstellungen. Sofern ich KI-gestützte Hilfsmittel genutzt habe, wurden diese in einem Hilfsmittelverzeichnis nach dem Literaturverzeichnis aufgenommen. Die Arbeit wurde bisher in gleicher oder ähnlicher Form weder derselben noch einer anderen Prüfungsbehörde vorgelegt und auch noch nicht veröffentlicht. Mit der Abgabe der elektronischen Fassung der endgültigen Version der Arbeit nehme ich zur Kenntnis, dass diese mit Hilfe eines Plagiatserkennungsdienstes auf enthaltene Plagiate überprüft und ausschließlich für Prüfungszwecke gespeichert wird." (your name or signature)

Additional information for seminar papers and Bachelor / Master theses can also be found on the homepage of the faculty:

<https://www.fernuni-hagen.de/wirtschaftswissenschaft/>

From there, click through to the degree that you are pursuing to find the specific information relevant for you.