



University of St.Gallen

Guidelines for Academic Research and Writing

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Please note that each lecturer might have different preferences and rules. Therefore this guide is for students under my supervision only.

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(1) The Review Paper

Choose a recent article from a major political science journal in the field of Comparative Politics. Examples of useful journals that cover studies in Comparative Politics are: American Journal of Political Science, European Journal of Political Research, European Union Politics, British Journal of Political Science, Comparative Political Studies, Comparative Politics, Democratization, Journal of Common Market Studies, Journal of Politics, West European Politics, World Development, World Politics. Shortly summarize the article's main points and identify the study's research question, (hypo)theses, empirical approach, and overall research puzzle. Which questions/issues does it raise? Indicate what you believe to be the problems involved in the research design of the article, and specify what in your view needs to be done to further improve it.

Formal standards

- Arial (10pt) / Times New Roman (12pt), line spacing: 1.5, continuous page numbering
- Word Count: max. 2'000 words.
- All literature used – both the paper(s)/book(s) under review and supplementary sources - have to be referenced in the text. It needs to be clear whose ideas you are working with (see Plagiarism below).
- Add a bibliography/list of references of all used sources at the end of your review paper. Wikipedia may serve for background information but is generally not a reliable source and should NOT be used (and cited!).

Content

A review paper is a critical, constructive analysis of literature in a specific field of science through summary, classification, analysis, and comparison. It is a scientific text based on previously published work – i.e. the author critically engages with the given material and does not present his own data/research. While literature reviews are an integral part of seminar papers, bachelor/master/doctoral thesis or grant proposals, the review paper is a stand-alone publication. The review paper may critically evaluate one book or paper, or it may comparatively deal with several books and papers (bear in mind the seminar's exact provisions). A review serves to organize and evaluate literature, to identify patterns and trends in contemporary scholarship, to synthesize the existing literature, and to identify research gaps and recommend new research agendas.

A review consists of a title (naming the scientific literature under review), an introduction, the body, and a conclusion. Those parts do not have to be numbered as in a seminar paper. However, you must clearly structure your text along its content.

Introduction

- Introduce the overall topic of the paper(s)/book(s) under review.
- State the underlying research question of your review.
- Provide information about the context, indicate motivation for the review, define the focus and the research question, and explain the structure.
- Define the *subject background*: the general topic, issue, and overall context of the review.
- Name the *problem*: trends, new research perspectives, gaps, conflicts, etc.
- Describe the review's motivation/justification. This is your reason for reviewing the respective literature, the approach and the structure of the review.

Main body

- Structure your review (and your argument) in a coherent way. Your structure may follow the chronological/structural order of the literature under review, or you may choose to arrange your review according to your own criteria (e.g., methodological approaches, models or theories, agreeing vs. disagreeing studies, chronological order, geographical location, etc.). In any case, follow a coherent, logical structure according to the literature and topic under review.
- Cover one idea, aspect or topic per paragraph.
- Link the paragraphs, and discuss the literature with respect to the underlying research question of your review.
- If working with several studies under review, link the studies to one another. Compare and discuss the relationship of the literature covered.

Conclusion

Shortly summarize your essential argument, the answer(s) to your research question, and draw your conclusion.

Questions you might want to ask: (Note: The list is not exclusive; more and other questions can be asked as well)

- 1) What are the authors trying to demonstrate? Summarize the arguments using the following criteria:
 - a. What are the main hypotheses defended by the authors? Are there sub-hypotheses?
 - b. What are the main variables? What is the theoretical argument that links the variables?
 - c. What level of analysis is used? (Micro or macro) Who performs the action: people, institutions, states?
 - d. What is the type of analysis used (Deductive/inductive)
 - e. What kind of method is the author employing? (Case studies, comparison of many cases, qualitative, quantitative, a mix of methods)

- 2) Evaluate the theory, methodology, and analysis: Is this piece of literature convincing? Below are some examples of evaluation criteria to help you make your point. You don't need to deal with all these items at once, just those you feel are relevant to your argument. Keep in mind that mature scholarship asks not so much whether someone is right or wrong but under what kinds of circumstances a theory is useful:
 - a. Originality. New findings or theory?
 - b. Simplicity/parsimony (uses many or few variables to make a point)
 - c. Coherent/internally consistent (no propositions that contradict each other; theory – methodology – analysis are coherent)
 - d. Pertinent/useful (you can apply this to real world cases), or are too many assumptions made that remain untested?
 - e. Predictive (you can make predictions using this theory, and the predictions coming from it are validated by facts)
 - f. Is this generalizable to many cases/countries, or just applicable to a single/few cases?
 - g. Does it seem normative or objective? Do the authors speak about how things are in the real world (objective), or how thing should be (normative)?
 - h. Are the variables adequately conceptualized and operationalized? Are the concepts clear? Are the measures chosen to evaluate concepts adequate?
 - i. Was the choice of design acceptable, or could you recommend a better way to test the hypotheses?
 - j. Is the analysis presented in a transparent way? Would you have all information needed in order to reproduce the study?
 - k. Are the research techniques adequate? Is the type of data collected that you would need to test the hypotheses? Is it plausible to assume that another methodological approach would have produced different results – what does this mean in terms of the study's validity and reliability?
 - l. Are the limitations of the study identified and critically evaluated? Are the conclusions in line with the research question and findings, or do they go beyond them in an unreasonable manner?

The following steps might help you to draft your review paper:

Stage	Research Step
Prepare	Select article(s)/book(s) of high standard presenting academic work that puzzles you Read, evaluate, classify and take notes Compose a working title
Develop structure	Find a structuring principle for the review (e.g. chronological, subject matter, research procedure etc.) Prepare an outline, plan the review sections and their content
Write draft	Draft the introduction Draft the main body Draft the review's conclusion Draft your title and possibly redraft your introduction
Revise	Revise your review (structure, content etc.) Revise citations and references Correct grammar, spelling, punctuation Adjust the layout

(2) The Seminar Paper

2.1 The Research Outline

The short outline of the research design for a seminar paper (but also a BA- / MA-thesis) contains the following elements in abbreviated form. When addressing each section you can also use bullet points as long as enough details are given. The outline should not exceed 2-5 pages:

1. *Topic, motivation and relevance.* A brief discussion of the proposed study's substantive importance. Why is resolving this question important (of societal and academic relevance)?
2. *Research question* (see Research Question below). Demonstrate the need for research of the type you are proposing based on a brief and purposive review of the relevant literature.
3. Short justification of the *theories* used to answer the research question. A clear and concise presentation of your theoretical framework. This includes the specification of the dependent and independent variables (definition, operationalization and measurement, if applicable).
4. *Working hypotheses* = Potential answer(s) to the research question inferred from theory. A hypothesis normally sets the output or response variables (the dependent variable) in correlation with specific explanatory variables (independent variables). Specification of the principle (testable) hypotheses. Explain the rationale that links your independent to the dependent variables.

Example

- Research question: How can the establishment of the International Criminal Court (ICC) be explained?
- Empirical relevance: strong legalization / infringement on national sovereignty / instrument to battle human rights violations etc.
- Theoretical relevance: Why do nations agree to such a loss of sovereignty? What role do norms play in this decision, what role do interests or power play?
- Hypothesis 1: The establishment of the ICC can only be explained with processes of persuasion and through the mediating role of NGOs during the negotiations of the contract (Dependent variable = ICC, independent variable = processes of persuasion, engagement of NGOs) (Cf. Deitelhoff 2009¹).
- Competing Hypothesis 2: The establishment of the ICC can only be explained with the rational interest of those nations which in recent times witnessed systematic violations of human rights, such as through civil wars. (Cf. modified hypothesis of Moravcsik 2000², independent variable = activities of nations with a past that includes civil war or genocide).

Note: Different types of research questions lead to different types of hypotheses. (See Research Question below).

5. *Operationalization* of the dependent and independent variables: How can the hypotheses be made measureable? For the example above: On the basis of what can the interests of nations be determined? And, what is meant by the "establishment of the ICC"? For each variable: What kinds of indicators are used for measurement?
6. *Methodology*: Discussion of research techniques of data collection and data analysis, eventually case selection (e.g., why these countries/years/people? What is a case (unit/level of analysis)) – try to be as precise as possible.
7. (Provisional) Outline: *Structure* of the paper
8. *Challenges*. What are likely problems you will encounter in your study? How are you going to address them?
9. A *bibliography* of the most important references and sources already collected, including the three articles/books that come closest to your planned study.

Reference

Van Evera, Stephen (1997) *Guide to Methods for Students of Political Science*. Cornell University Press.

Gschwend, Thomas and Frank Schimmelfennig (ed., 2007) *Research Design in Political Science*. How to Practice What they Preach. Sage.

¹ Deitelhoff, N. (2009): The Discursive Process of Legalization: Charting Islands of Persuasion in the ICC Case. *International Organization* 63 (1): 33-65.

² Moravcsik, A. (2000): The Origins of Human Rights Regimes: Democratic Delegation in Postwar Europe. *International Organization* 54 (2): 217-252.

2.2 The Research Question

The research question asks for the specific answers the study aims to develop and thereby determines which theories, methods, and data to use and how to structure the work. The proper formulation of an interesting research question is therefore the most basic and essential step in academic research and has to meet the following criteria:

- Precise wording
- The question is developed from an unsolved problem, a contradiction or an open question in the existing academic literature, rendering its answer relevant for your area of studies.
- You should phrase your research question as an actual question – this is, in a single sentence and with a question mark at the end.
- The question can be answered in the given page-range and timeframe, i.e. it needs to be feasible.
- There should be only one question, not multiple parts, and no statements or tautologies.

Research goals can vary; they lead to different **research questions** and require **different methods**. When phrasing your research question, ask yourself if your question is only of descriptive nature, or if it is actually addressing an analytical research puzzle (which would be better).

In the following we present a selection of different goals with methodology in brackets. It is recommended to focus on the second, empirical-analytical type:

1. Correct and meaningful descriptions and comparisons (comparative analyses)
 - What are differences between Swiss federalism and other types of federalism?
 - In which sense does a European identity exist and how does it vary among the EU Member states?
 - Did the Swiss political system shift from a system of consensual democracy to a majoritarian democracy within the last ten years, and what are the implications with regard to its functioning?
2. **Ascertainment of correlations and causal explanations (Correlation and causal analyses)**
 - Is a strong national identity compatible with a strong European identity?
 - Interest lies in a positive, negative, or non-existing correlation
 - Does the progress of democratic development depend on the economic welfare of a nation?
 - Interest lies in the development of democracy as the dependent variable
 - Hypotheses:
 - The wealthier a nation, the better its democracy develops. (Probabilistic hypothesis)
 - A certain extent of economic welfare is necessary but not sufficient for democratic development. (Possibilistic hypothesis)
 - Are federalist nations economically more successful than centralistic nations?
 - Interest lies in the type of political system (federalist/centralistic) as the independent variable .
3. Output evaluation (evaluative analyses)
 - Are the goals of a specific political programme (regulations / development schemes) achieved?
 - How much influence does the political programme have on the achievement of the goals?
 - What did work and what did not? How can the programme's implementation be optimized?

The following 3-step procedure might help you when drafting your research question:

- Name your topic: *I am interested in ...*
- Make your topic more specific *...because I want to find out who/what/when/where/whether/why/how...*
- Motivate your question *...in order to understand...*

The aim is to formulate research questions that are *brief, clear and precise* and that address the *what, who, where and when* of your research.

Reference

O'Leary, Zina (2014) *Doing Your Research Project*. Sage, Chap. 3.

2.3 The Review of Literature for Research and Reading Techniques

Academic research is pointless without first undertaking a comprehensive review of the literature. The literature review provides the necessary introduction and overview of the relevant scientific discourse on the topic. This discourse takes place within both monographs and academic journals in the field. Therefore, both media have to be reviewed for a comprehensive perspective. Monographs reflect the established debate while journals provide the newest perspectives. Monographs can be found in the HSG Library in its electronic catalogue <http://aleph.unisg.ch> and *Swissbib* (for several Swiss university libraries). Journals can be read online via databases to which you can access directly when working within the university network, or via a VPN connection when working outside the university campus. Given the plethora of online resources, working with journals necessitates learning and using systematised search methods, e.g. keywords and Boolean operators.

For the **review of literature** we primarily recommend the following four starting points:

- **Metasearch of the HSG Library:** The library's metasearch option offers a single access point to searching a vast range of resources as the library catalogue (including E-Books), journals and publishers' offers, all EBSCO databases, Web of Science, Scopus, JSTOR etc.
- **Google Scholar:** Looks simultaneously for various types of media (Books, Journals, and Citations) and helps to get an overview of publicly published literature. Full texts are only available for free access literature. Google Scholar is very helpful to gather bibliographical data for many texts. A downside is the lack of transparent information about which sources are searched and by which principles the search output items are ranked.
- **Article Finder:** Searches several databases (Springer, JSTOR, SAGE, Cambridge and Oxford University Press, etc.) over one single portal. As long as the HSG library provides access to the publication, the full text of the articles can be viewed directly. The article finder provides a fast first overview and also makes it easy to get access to specific articles, but for a comprehensive review the specialized databases are essential.
- **Political Science Complete:** Is part of the EBSCO databases. Those databases provide access to full text articles from various publications and journals and may be the most comprehensive reference collection for the field of political science. The EBSCO databases provide an app for mobile devices.

Further information on literature research, citation, citation management and open access at the HSG can be found online on the website of the HSG library.

For the review of a large body of texts, good **reading technique** is key. Not only fast reading but also systematic comprehension of information is needed in order to digest all the reading you will do during your studies. Depending on the text you have at hand you need to learn to apply the *examining*, the *analytic* or the *comparative* technique; also you should learn why it is not necessary to read every paragraph. When working with literature,

- try to quickly assess the relevance of what you are reading – don't spend your time on irrelevant texts
- systematically organize references, i.e. *read actively*³
- keep diligent and relevant notes; use a citation programme, e.g. Endnote, to systematically collect your sources.

Be careful how much you read for an essay. Of course you must read enough, which will involve scrutinising a number of sources, not just one or two. However, it is possible to read too much, which may reduce the time you have for writing. It may only cause confusion if you read too much and too deeply before thinking independently about a topic. You will also have to learn how not to read books. Unless your essay is based closely on particular texts, you will find that you do not have enough time to read many books right through. So you must learn how to 'gut' books. First, use the book's index; so if you are reading a book on political developments in Latin America, but are mainly interested in policies in relation to the economy, look up the entries for 'economy' and 'economic reform' in the index. Second, look at the introduction and conclusions of a book and at the opening and final paragraphs of each chapter; this will give you a good idea of both the content and the argument of the book.

References

- Buzan**, Tony (2003) Speed reading. Schneller lesen, mehr verstehen, besser behalten. Mvg-Verlag.
Stykwow, Petra, Christopher Daase, Janet MacKenzie, and Nikola Moosauer (2010) Politikwissenschaftliche Arbeitstechniken. Wilhelm Fink, Chap. 2: Lesen Lernen, Chap. 3: Vom Lesen zum Schreiben.
Wallace, Mike and Louise Pouison (2004) Learning to read critically in teaching and learning. Sage: 3-36.

³ <https://www.princeton.edu/mcgraw/library/for-students/remember-reading/active-reading.pdf> (last access: 21.10.2015).

2.4 The Seminar Paper

Formalities

- Length: max. 3'000 words; these specifications refer to the main text without title, abstract, table of contents, list of references, and appendix. The amount of words should be indicated at the end of the paper.
- Font: Arial (10pt)/Times New Roman (12pt), line spacing: 1.5, pagination: consecutive
- Title page: name of the university, paper title; name, address and matriculation number of the author; title of the course, name of supervisor; submission date, term date.
- Submission: Hand in the paper electronically as pdf-file via StudyNet (i.e. folder "Hand-in" of the respective course room). Note that a digital version allows for a check for plagiarism (See Plagiarism below). The submission deadline is specified by the supervisor and the paper is to be handed in accordingly, in due time!
- Style/mode of expression: Write in a comprehensible, clear, accessible, engaging, and gender-fair⁴ style. Be mindful of logical consistence and precise use of terms. Define key terms. Here we offer some words of advice:
 - Favour short, declarative sentences. If it is possible to break up a sentence into constituent clauses, then you most likely should do so.
 - Avoid unnecessary jargon. Define, either explicitly or contextually, necessary jargon.
 - Favour active voice, the simple past and present, and action verbs. Try to avoid passive constructions and very long and complex multi-clause sentences.
 - Use acronyms sparingly. In general, restrict yourself to widely understood acronyms, such as "NATO," "WTO," and "UN." Only in the face of inordinately lengthy, technical, and frequently repeated phrases should authors resort to neologistic acronyms.

Proceedings

- Find a topic and discuss it with the supervisor/seminar tutor.
- Develop a clear research question (see Research Question above). The research question determines which theories, methods and data are used, and how the paper is to be structured. Therefore, it must be developed at the very beginning; research questions are likely to be refined over the research course. Note that research questions should be formulated as actual questions.
 - Review of literature for research and thorough reading (see Literature Review above)
 - Choose (an) appropriate theory/theories → depends on the research question
 - Choose hypothesi/-es and methodology → depends on the research question and the theory
- Develop a research design and discuss it with the supervisor / seminar tutor (see Research Design above)
- Write the paper – good time management is essential! Subdivide the overall task into smaller ones, plan realistically and review your time plan regularly.

Content

The structure of the seminar paper should be modelled on an academic article from a peer-reviewed journal. Note though that commonly academic articles have 8'000-10'000 words. Hence, a rather narrow question is to be selected that can effectively dealt with within the available 3'000 words.

The overall rhetorical shape of the paper is that of an hourglass: broad – narrow – broad. It basically consists of three parts, each serving a different purpose, as explained below. In addition, the paper shall have a title page and an abstract. We recommend paying particular attention to abstracts and introductions. Both should include a clear statement of the paper's scope, central argument(s), findings, and wider significance. It is unreasonable to require the supervisor to read many pages into a manuscript before encountering its basic claims. Straightforward abstracts and introductions not only encourage readers to engage with the article, they help prevent them from misunderstanding the argument.

⁴ For the different possibilities to gender-fair language you might refer to the „Guidelines for Gender-Fair Use of Language“ of the National Council of Teachers of English (<http://www.ncte.org/positions/statements/genderfairuseoflang>, last access: 21.10.2015). Please note that for the German language different indications apply.

Figures and tables should be placed in-line and as close as possible to the first reference made in the text. Tables must be formatted for legibility and comprehensibility. Quantitative data and elucidate statistical models need to be presented in forms that are accessible to a general audience. Papers should include discussions of substantive, as well as statistical, significance.

- **Title page**
- **Abstract:** situated at the beginning of the paper, the abstract summarizes, in one paragraph (usually), the major aspects of the entire paper in the following prescribed sequence (max. 200-300 words):
 - The question(s) investigated (or purpose) – from Introduction and Theory. State the purpose very clearly in the first or second sentence.
 - The research design and methods used – from Methods. Clearly express the basic design of the study. Name or briefly describe the basic methodology used without going into excessive detail.
 - The major findings including key quantitative results, or trends – from empirical analysis. Report those results, which answer the questions you were asking. Identify trends, relative change or differences, etc.
 - A brief summary of your interpretations and conclusions – from Discussion. Clearly state the implications of the answers your results produced.

Limit your statements concerning each segment of the paper (i.e. purpose, methods, results, etc.) to two or three sentences, if possible. How do you know when you have enough information in your abstract? A simple rule-of-thumb is to imagine that you are another researcher doing a study similar to the one you are reporting. If your abstract were the only part of the paper you could access, would you be happy with the information presented there?

- (1) **Introduction:** Main purpose is to provide the rationale for the paper, moving from a general discussion of the topic to the particular question investigated. A secondary purpose is to attract interest in the topic; so, start with an “appetizer”.
 - Lead-in to the topic, context; show your research niche and the relevance of your topic, possibly through a hook (current fact of interest). Societal relevance: Why shall we care about this question? What is the general problem that lies at the core of the study? Academic relevance: To what bodies of the academic literature will your study contribute? Sell your work to the readers. Why is your paper a must-read?
 - Develop a research question. What is the most general question that motivates the study’s relevance? And, what is the most narrow and precise question that will be empirically explored in your study?
 - Name the (suitable) theory/theories and method(s) you use
 - Define key terms
 - Short review of the structure of the paper

- (2) **Main part:**

2.1 Theory

Introduce your topic and concrete research question through a focused and systematic review of the current state of research. You should also clarify the epistemological interest of your paper. Embed your topic theoretically and justify your choice of theory: Which theory or theories is/are utilized and why? Present and possibly adapt the theory/theories according to your research. Develop general and case-specific hypotheses on the basis of theory, i.e. what are plausible answers to your question provided by the existing literature? Note: Good papers often include a test of competing expectations regarding the question to be investigated, formulated on the basis of different theories.

2.2 Methods

Explain and justify how you are going to investigate your question and to test the hypotheses empirically, i.e. specify the techniques you use to collect and analyse your data. Define, operationalize, and specify the measurement of the independent and dependent variables. What is the unit of analysis? Reflect on the representativeness of cases and the extent to which findings can be generalized. What kinds of data are needed? How will it be collected and analysed? How will the mechanism be established? Strategy for causal inference? All steps have to be made transparent. This particularly includes information on basic population and sample, methodology and procedures used.

2.3 Empirical analysis

Describe your data – what are the main properties of the cases/variables? What expectations do you have in terms of findings? Present the analyses used to test your hypotheses in all relevant steps. Be as precise as possible. The results are generally presented according to the order of the hypotheses.

2.4 Discussion

Answer the research question. What did you find? What do the results mean for the hypotheses (support, no support)? Interpret the findings in light of existing theory. Discuss the results – were any results unexpected? If so, why might this be?

• (3) Conclusion

- Short summary of your main arguments.
- Reflect the validity and interpretation of the theoretical expectations you introduced on the basis of the empirical data. Identify the limitations of your study – If you had ample time and resources what other things would you have done to explore the research topic question?
- Raise new questions for further research.
- Do not introduce new information in the conclusion!

• References

- In the list of references you must list all books, journal articles, databases, websites etc. that you cite in the text in an alphabetical order. Quotations in the text must correspond exactly with the original in wording, spelling, and punctuation.
- A literature management program (e.g. Citavi; Endnote, Mendeley etc.) helps to manage your citations and to draft a consistent and systematic list of references.

- **Appendix** (if applicable). In the appendix you should append important documents, minutes or interview transcripts. Please provide all the empirical material you used in your study, i.e. any data files, interview guides, etc. You can also submit these materials as separate documents. Based on the material, the supervisor/seminar tutor needs to be able to replicate your study. So be as precise and transparent as possible.

The following steps might help you to draft your research article:

Stage	Research Step
Generate ideas	Narrow the topic, define points to include in the article Compose your working title
Develop structure	Construct an outline, define the sections Plan the content of your sections, mind a comprehensible and conclusive structure
Write draft	Draft a preliminary theory section, including the set of plausible hypotheses Draft the methods section Draft the results section Draft the discussion section Draft the introduction Draft the abstract Draft your title page
Revise	Revise drafts of the different sections, abstract, title, tables, figures and legends Revise citations and references Correct grammar, spelling, punctuation Adjust the layout

References

- Wolfsberger**, Judith (2010) *Frei geschrieben*. Mut, Freiheit und Strategie für wissenschaftliche Abschlussarbeiten. Böhlau.
- Booth**, Wayne, Gregory Colomb, Joseph Williams (2008) *The Craft of Research*. University of Chicago Press.

(3) Quoting (example: Harvard System)

Text sample: „Die in der Nachkriegszeit geborenen Frauen machten den ‚toten Punkt‘ (Goldberg 1979: 287), den die Männeridentität erreicht hat, unübersehbar; auch für die Männer selbst.“⁵

Direct quotes

„Die in der Nachkriegszeit [nach dem Zweiten Weltkrieg] geborenen Frauen machten den ‚toten Punkt‘ (Goldberg 1979: 287), [...], unübersehbar; auch für die Männer selbst.“ (Preuss-Lausitz 1991: 100)

Omissions:	[...]
Additions:	[nach dem Zweiten Weltkrieg]
Quoting according to third authors:	Die Männeridentität erreichte einen „toten Punkt“ (Goldberg 1979, cit. in: Preuss-Lausitz 1991: 100).

If the publication has been co-authored by several authors one only refers to the first author within the text and complements it with „et al.“: (Müller et al. 2010: 23)

Indirect quotes

Durch die Frauenbewegung gerieten die Männer in eine Identifikationskrise, da ihr Verständnis von Männlichkeit durch die Emanzipation der Frau erschüttert worden war (see Preuss-Lausitz 1991: 100).

1. From monographs

In the list of references:	In the text:
Benhabib, Seyla (2004): <i>The Rights of Others: Aliens, Residents, and Citizens</i> . Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.	(Benhabib 2004: 171)

2. From edited volumes, handbooks

In the list of references:	In the text:
Saward, Michael (2008): <i>Democracy and Citizenship: Expanding Domains</i> . In: Dryzek, John, Bonnie Honig and Anne Philipps (eds.): <i>The Oxford Handbook of Political Theory</i> , Oxford: Oxford University Press, p. 400-422.	(Dryzek et al. 2008: 405)

3. From journal articles

In the list of references:	In the text:
Rigstad, Mark (2011): <i>Republicanism and geopolitical domination</i> . In: <i>Journal of Political Power</i> 4(2), 279-300.	(Rigstad 2011: 281)

4. From internet sources

In the list of references:	In the text:
EvB (n. d.): <i>Europe-wide resistance against Syngenta's patent on pepper</i> . URL: http://www.bernedeclaration.ch/media/press-release/europe_wide_resistance_against_syngentas_patent_on_pepper (last access: 17.09.2014)	(EvB n. d.)

Internet sources must be dated with the last actualisation date of the website. If this is not evident, use “n. d.” (no date).

Note: It is possible to use a different citation method, as long as it is applied *consistently* throughout the whole document.

Useful links:

Harvard-Style: <http://www.bournemouth.ac.uk/library/how-to/citing-refs-harvard.html>.

Chicago-Style: http://www.press.uchicago.edu/books/turabian/turabian_citationguide.html.

Several citation methods: http://www.ub.fu-berlin.de/service_neu/einfuehrung/bookmarks/zitieren.html.

Automatic bibliography maker: bibme.org.

⁵ Text example is taken from the following edited volume: Preuss-Lausitz, Ulf (ed.) (1991): *Kriegskinder, Konsumkinder, Krisenkinder. Zur Sozialisationsgeschichte seit dem Zweiten Weltkrieg*. 3rd, unmodified edition, Weinheim; Basel: Beltz.

(4) Plagiarism

Plagiarism is academic theft. It is the stealing of other people's ideas, and then claiming those ideas as your own. The most common form of plagiarism is the copying out of sections of someone else's written work into a seminar/review paper (either changing some words or leaving it in the original). Another form of plagiarism ('auto-plagiarism') is the submission of the same paper to two different courses. In both cases the student is trying to get academic credit without doing the work required. Plagiarism is one of the few University rules that lecturers in the School of Politics and Economics (SEPS) really care about. It is deemed a major offence in SEPS. The punishment for a major offence can be as much as expulsion from the University.

The good news is: Plagiarism is easily avoided. Always use speech marks when using a direct quote, and always cite an author when using someone else's ideas. It is **very important** to remember that papers should be more than a collection of quotes, even if they are properly cited. **Seminar/review papers should be substantially in your own words.** Facts in the common domain need not be cited, however. Here are a few examples of what is and is not plagiarism:

Example I: stealing a text word for word.

The following is a quote from David Held:

There is nothing more central to political and social theory than the nature of the state, and nothing more contested.

The correct ways to incorporate this into your paper is either to quote it directly, or to put the idea in your own words while making reference to the author:

According to David Held there "is nothing more central to political and social theory than the nature of the state, and nothing more contested" (Held 1983: 1).

Or:

David Held believes that, while the nature of the state is central to the theory of politics, it is also the most contested concept in the discipline (see, for example, Held 1983: 1).

This, however, would be plagiarism:

I believe that there is nothing more central to political and social theory than the nature of the state, and nothing more contested.

Or to change many of the words, so that the words are no longer Held's but the idea still is, remains plagiarism:

While the nature of the state is fundamental to the theory of politics, it is also the most contested concept in the field.

A common form of plagiarism is when a student hands in a paper which has been copied out from another work. Remember it is still plagiarism if you have the author's permission to use their work! Copying out a colleague's work and submitting it as your own is still plagiarism, and can get both of you into serious trouble.

Example II: stealing someone else's idea.

The anarchist writer Pierre-Joseph Proudhon believed that there was a difference between property and possession. Something was your possession when you made use of it. By contrast, something was your property when you owned it, but someone else made use of it and you raked in the profit from its use. This led him to declare that property was theft. Stealing Proudhon's idea would look something like this:

It is possible to make a distinction between property and possession. A possession is something that someone owns and uses. Property is something that someone owns, but does not use. Instead they rent it out to someone else to use. An example of this would be a factory, in which the owner does not work in it, but hires workers to work it for him. The factory owner then lives off the work of the factory workers. This is theft.

To avoid plagiarism this passage should read:

Proudhon made a distinction between property and possession. A possession is something that someone owns and uses. Property is something that someone owns, but does not use. Instead they rent it out to someone else to use. An example of this would be a factory, in which the owner does not work in it, but hires workers to work it for him. The factory owner then lives off the work of the factory workers. This, according to Proudhon, is theft (see Proudhon, 1890: chap. 5).

Sometimes students accidentally leave out a reference in a paper. Don't worry, you will not be penalised for a genuine error.

Example III: information in the common domain.

It is *not* plagiarism if you quote a commonly known idea, argument or fact that is not specific to any writer or set of writers. For example, to say that elections are central to democracy is not going to be your original idea, but nor is it anyone else's. It is obvious and does not require a citation. Equally, most people are aware that Barack Obama is the President of the USA. It is unnecessary to find a source to state this. You may know that the Irish flag is a tricolour consisting of green, white and orange vertical stripes. **Obviously you do not need to reference something that is in the common domain.** You would only need to add a reference here if you decided to take a direct quote. For example:

According to Article 7 of the Irish constitution the 'national flag is the tricolour of green, white and orange'.

It would also be fine to write, without any reference:

The Irish flag consists of green, white and orange vertical stripes.

Equally, be careful that you do not assume that certain assertions are commonly held beliefs because you believe them. For instance,

'One of the main reasons the SVP won seats in the 2015 election is because they had better immigration policies than the other parties' (wikipedia.org).

There are many problems with this sentence. Spot them. However it is not obvious or in the common domain that the SVP has better a better immigration stance than competing parties, or if it were true that this had an impact on the SVP's result. It would be more acceptable in this form:

'According to the Financial Times, the strengthening of support for the SVP provides an initial indication of the political fallout arising from asylum seekers fleeing the war in Syria. The SVP result is "an indication of what will happen" in other regions of Europe, and a possible consequence could be deteriorating relations with the EU, said Patrick Emmenegger, a political scientist at the University of St. Gallen (Financial Times, 2015).

Obviously you would need to properly reference this in the bibliography.

Here is another example of a statement that needs a source or some evidence to support it.

'One problem that causes offence to many is articles that are heavily influenced by catholic social thought.'

If the author of this line from an article knew that certain articles caused offence to many s/he should have shown how, either by referring to a relevant opinion poll, or if s/he had done original research, showing how s/he gathered this information.

In sum, you do not need to reference everything you read, but only those quotes or ideas that are clearly the intellectual property of someone else, and those statements that are not obvious. If you are unsure, it is wisest to err on the side of caution and add a reference anyway. No one is going to penalise you for being over-cautious. On the other hand, it would be absurd to reference *every* point you make just in case.

Example IV: Coming up with the same idea independently.

Human history is full of examples of people who came up with similar or the same ideas without realising it. The theory of evolution, for example, was developed by a number of researchers independent of each other, and a debate still rages about whether or not it originates with Charles Darwin. It is *not* plagiarism if you come up with an idea, only to find out later that someone else has already written it down. It is only plagiarism if you knowingly steal it. Having said this, if a student was to submit an article in which they claimed the whole of Karl Marx's theory of surplus value as their own, the lecturer would obviously not believe it!

The bottom line here is that you do not have to worry, when making claims in your work, that someone else may have already said it. If you write an article claiming that the power of the state is necessary to control our violent natures, only to find out later that Thomas Hobbes had already said it in the seventeenth century, this is not plagiarism. It would, of course, be plagiarism if you had read Hobbes previously, or if you quoted directly from Hobbes without referencing him. However, papers should be based on whatever relevant literature exists. For an article on the state and the nature of the state you will be expected to have read Hobbes or read of Hobbes' ideas. Not knowing what he has said on the subject will indicate a poorly researched paper.

Summary: a checklist for avoiding plagiarism.

1. Always put direct quotes (sections of text that you are quoting word for word) in inverted commas, and always add an appropriate reference to the work cited at the end of the quote.
2. If you are using someone else's idea in a review/seminar paper, and that idea is not in the common domain, always add a reference to the author of the idea. It is also often helpful to point out, in your text, that the idea is someone else's (e.g., 'Marx believed that').
3. Never copy out a piece of text from a book or article and hand it in as your own work. It is too easy to get caught. The writing style of the plagiarised text may give you away, and also there is a good chance that the lecturer already knows the passage that has been stolen. There have even been cases of students trying to steal passages from their lecturer's own published work! Lecturers find it easy to recognise their own style.
4. Never hand in the same review/seminar paper for different courses. Lecturers have a habit of talking to each other when not in class, and if you are discovered they are unlikely to show mercy.
5. Never allow another student to take one of your texts and hand it in as his or her own work. If this is discovered both of you will face disciplinary action.
6. Students have been known to download whole sections of text from the web, and to hand it in as their own work. Remember, lecturers also have web access!

In the end, the work necessary *to get away* with plagiarism (setting aside the risks involved) adds up to the amount of work you would need to write your own non-plagiarised piece of work in the first place! In addition, you have come to University in order to learn. Writing your own texts is part of the learning process. Plagiarism disrupts that learning process.

(5) Style in academic writing⁶

Researching for and writing essays and dissertations are among the most important skills you will develop in university. In almost any job one takes up after graduation, the ability to convey what one means in the written form is always necessary. In order to convey what you want, it will be useful to follow some rules and attempt to develop an element of style.

Perhaps one of the world's greatest essayist, George Orwell, provided six elementary rules for writing non-fiction:

1. Never use a metaphor, simile or other figure of speech, which you are used to seeing in print.
2. Never use a long word where a short word will do.
3. If it is possible to cut out a word, always cut it out.
4. Never use the passive where you can use the active.
5. Never use a foreign phrase, a scientific word or a jargon word if you can think of an everyday English equivalent.
6. Break any of these rules sooner than say anything outright barbarous.

Although Orwell's rules should be enough to get most students on the road to achieving a sufficient style of their own, what follows is an attempt to provide a broader yet still brief account of how one may improve the form of ones writing.⁷

In making any argument the way in which it is presented will affect how persuasive the argument is. A drunken man slurring his words may have a valid point to make but his appearance may give us less confidence in his opinion. Equally if we cannot understand what he means, his point will be lost. The same can be said for a messy essay. A reader forced to trudge through grammatical errors will find the argument more difficult to follow and less persuasive.

Very few people write good essays without really trying. You learn by experience and effort. You also learn by reading other people's work and following aspects of their style. Read your essay out loud, or better still, ask a friend to read it to you before you submit it. (When you read silently to yourself your brain acts efficiently and tends to skip mistakes when the brain figures it knows what is meant to be said.) If you, or your friend, find the essay hard to read at a particular point, then reword that sentence/paragraph. Reading essays, particularly out loud, always reveals weaknesses of style. Do not get lazy, or sell yourself short, by leaving in a sentence that you or your friend find unclear. Sloppy writing is indicative of sloppy thinking and gets you little other than poor marks.

You will be writing review papers, seminar papers, and perhaps one day even a dissertation or thesis, and you must follow some academic conventions (a few of which are mentioned below). But you should also remember that you are writing for other human beings. A few 'principles' of style might be

1. Do not be too stuffy. So use a simpler word where appropriate (prefer let instead of permit, people to persons)
2. Do not be hectoring or arrogant. You are trying to convince someone of an argument. People are less likely to be convinced if they feel they are being spoken down to.
3. Do not be too pleased with yourself. If you have something original to say, say it, but do not label others as stupid for not thinking it. A writer who criticises others and seems to enjoy it is more difficult to bear.
4. Never be too chatty. You should aim to write professionally, so do not write phrases such as 'surprise, surprise'.
5. Do not be sloppy in the construction of sentences. When a sentence, even one that is grammatically correct, is difficult to understand the average reader will either ignore the point or assume what they think you mean. This may not be in your interest.

⁶ This style guide is not wholly original, and based in part on other people's work for some content (primarily Neil Robinson from UL, Kaare Strøm from UCSD, and David Doyle of Oxford University (and formerly of DCU).

⁷ If one wants to study this in more depth, two excellent writers of style guides are Kate Turabian and Howard Evan

Below are some common problems that you should avoid:

1. Sentences. Generally, in English, if your sentences make a simple point and sound right individually when spoken aloud, they will probably be grammatically correct. Sentences should normally be short and to the point. Winston Churchill said that no sentence should contain more than nine words. Of course, that is an excessive stricture, but it is worth bearing in mind. There is a famous sentence, written by Bernard Levin, which contains 450 words and reads well. Do not try to break this record. Sometimes a sentence needs just a verb and a subject ('Jesus wept'). Brevity can be your friend, and it can also be quite effective.
2. Paragraphs. Written texts consisting of more than a few sentences are divided into paragraphs. These usually focus on one particular topic or point. There is no perfect length for a paragraph- it is not about size. However, very short paragraphs, perhaps of two brief sentences, are unusual in non-fiction. Similarly, if a paragraph lasts more than a page it is, almost certainly, too long. A paragraph should contain one main point, although sometimes it might include one or two minor qualifications of that point. As soon as you are making another point you should open another paragraph.
3. Clichés, metaphors and figures of speech. They are to be avoided like the plague, also because they might not make sense if translated from another language. Or better still, just avoided. So rather than saying 'Germany got back on its feet' say 'Germany recovered'. Remember Orwell's first rule.
4. Slang and abbreviations. Avoid slang (and swear words except when they are in quotes) and do not use abbreviations such as 'don't' or 'won't', 'shouldn't' or 'wouldn't'. Other abbreviations such as Nato, Unesco, Mercosur (ones that can be pronounced do not need full capitalisation). Others should have capitalisation throughout, so TDs, MPs, BBC etc. If an abbreviation is not commonly understood or could be one of many organisations, spell it out in full first. So you may wish to say London School of Economics or the London Stock Exchange before using LSE.
5. Dictionary definitions. Too many students, particularly in first year, begin essays with dictionary definitions of terms in the question. In the event that there is an academic controversy about the definition of a term or concept, then the definitions should be used only as part of a discussion of this controversy. The definition(s) should be from an academic source.
6. Unnecessary words. You will usually have a word limit for your paper/thesis. It is important that you make the most of each word. Often we include words that add nothing to the sentence- cut them out.
7. US or European English? Feel free to use either, but make sure you use it consistently. You should not refer to 'labour union advisors', or 'analyzing the UK Labour Party'.

A good style, like most things in life, is something that involves work. Of course, writing does come easier to some people than others, but everyone can improve. By following all or some of this advice, a little research, and plenty of practice (which the University will be happy to provide!), you will be certain to develop your own unique and effective style.