

## Handout: How to Write an Exposéé for the Seminar Paper

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### Seminar paper:

The paper can be theoretical or empirical, but needs to discuss one of the course's topics, refer to the seminar discussions and some of the literature we have discussed in the seminar. You will likely also need to find relevant literature yourself. The expectation is that you develop an original (research) question and craft a paper with a strong line of argument. The paper needs to be about 3.000 words (plus/minus 200 words).

### Goal of the exposéé

Outlining, structuring and formulating the research question and structure of your seminar paper based on first ideas and thoughts on your topic. The exposéé serves as an orientation and guideline for students and lecturers and will be the basis for further work on your seminar paper.

### Content of the exposéé (approx. 500 words)

- **Please name your document: Yourlastname\_Yourfirstname\_Gender\_Exposee**
- Name, course title
- Working title
- Brief description of your topic (1-2 paragraphs)
- Formulation of your research question (with a question mark) and thesis.
- Outline of the theory and methods
- If you plan to use data, what is the material you will analyze and interpret?
- Literature: What academic literature will be used and why?
- Structure of paper: Outline with specific subheaders
- Literature review: Please include at least 10-15 academic references, in peer-reviewed journals and/or book chapters. Some of these may and should include the readings from the seminar.

### Timeline

- **Optional communication/meeting to discuss the topic (by email or via webex):** Office hours <https://kathrinzippel.youcanbook.me>, Mondays 14:30-15:30, via Webex <https://fu-berlin.webex.com/meet/k.zippel> **until the end of the semester.**
- Oral presentation of your topic ideas in the seminar on February 13, 2023
- A 500-word proposal/exposéé is due to be uploaded to Blackboard by 6 pm on Thursday, February 16, 2023, for approval.
- You are expected to integrate feedback you receive on the proposal/exposéé into the final paper.
- Research and writing period
- Optional: if needed, set up a meeting with a teaching assistant to discuss any questions and problems concerning your topic or the writing process ([shk-gender-soz@polsoz.fu-berlin.de](mailto:shk-gender-soz@polsoz.fu-berlin.de)).
- Proofreading (by peers), incorporate corrections
- **Deadline: Friday, March 31, 2023, 6 pm via Blackboard for the final seminar papers.** Please note: seminar papers are the basis for your module grade
- Written feedback or set up a meeting to discuss the paper with Professor Zippel.

## Oral presentation in seminar (February 13, 2023)

Prepare an oral presentation of no more than 3-5 minutes to present your ideas for the research paper. Think again about the main questions that your audience will ask:

- What is your paper about?
- How is it related to our seminar on gender, knowledge, science and power?
- What is your (research) question?
- What is your thesis?
- Why is it an important/significant research question?
- What is the main evidence you used/data etc.?
- What do you expect your key findings to be/potential implication of your findings?

## Criteria used to grade the seminar papers

**Topic:** Is the paper sufficiently related to topics covered in the seminar materials? Does it apply concepts and theories that we have discussed in the seminar? Are these concepts clearly defined?

**Thesis:** scope, clarity, originality, good synopsis of the paper

**Analysis:** Does the analysis show critical thinking, logic, and is it persuasive?

**Evidence/support:** Does the paper provide examples, citations, data and facts used to back up major points or arguments?

**Organization:** How well is the paper structured, what is the logical progression, strong topic & concluding sentences, good paragraph transitions, "flow"?

**Quality of writing:** clarity, grammar, style

**Referencing and reference page:** useful, sufficient, consistent style, academic peer-reviewed articles and book chapters.

### *Do check before handing in your paper:*

1. Does your paper have page numbers, and please include a word count.
2. Did you use spell check/grammar check? We suggest that you read the paper aloud one last time.

### **Tips:**

#### **Types of coursework in the MA Sociology**

The study guide provides information on the different types of coursework/assessments in the master's program. You can also find a detailed explanation of how to write an academic paper in four steps:

<https://wikis.fu-berlin.de/display/ifs/Types+of+Coursework>

#### **Writing Center Studierendenwerk Berlin**

The Writing Center is happy to assist you in developing and improving your writing skills. You can make an appointment for an individual counseling session (online, at the office at Thielallee/Hardenbergstraße or over the phone) or get feedback for a paper that you are working on. In addition, the Writing Center offers workshops and writing groups.

<https://www.stw.berlin/en/counselling/writing-consultation/>

The Writing Center also offers self-study materials for planning and writing papers

<https://www.stw.berlin/en/counselling/writing-consultation/self-study-materials/>

**Writing Center George Mason University: How to Write a Research Question**

A guide on how to formulate good research questions, including important criteria and examples

<https://writingcenter.gmu.edu/writing-resources/research-based-writing/how-to-write-a-research-question>

**Academic English UK: Academic Paragraphing**

Video and explanation on how to write an academic paragraph, including topic sentence, development, example, and summary

<https://academic-englishuk.com/paragraphing/>

**Harvard College Writing Center: Topic Sentences and Signposting**

An explanation of different types of topic sentences and signposting that can help you structure your paper

<https://writingcenter.fas.harvard.edu/pages/topic-sentences-and-signposting>