



Institut für
Wirtschaftswissenschaften

Guidelines for scientific theses

INSTITUTE OF ECONOMICS
— ULM UNIVERSITY —

Version from 2014-10-13

Contents

1	Structure	1
1.1	Front page	1
1.2	Table of Contents	1
1.3	List of figures/tables	1
1.4	Table of Abbreviations	1
1.5	Introduction	1
1.6	Main part	2
1.7	Conclusion	2
1.8	Bibliography	2
1.9	Statement of Authorship	3
2	Formalities	4
2.1	Formating	4
2.2	Citations	4
2.3	Calculations	6
3	Tips & Tricks	6
4	Additional Remarks Regarding Seminar Theses	7
4.1	Extent and Scope	7
4.2	Registration	7
4.3	Submission	7
4.4	Presentation of the Thesis	7
5	Additional Remarks Regarding Bachelor and Master Theses	8

1 Structure

1.1 Front page

The front page of your thesis covers the complete title (as defined by the chosen topic or discussed with the referee), the name of the referee(s), the submission date as well as your name and your matriculation number. The use of [the official template of the university](#) is recommended.

The front page contains no visible page number.

1.2 Table of Contents

The table of contents references the different chapters and subsections by page number. In addition, it contains a reference to the table of figures, the list of tables and the bibliography. The table of contents does not reference itself.

The page number of the table of contents is the roman enumerator "II". In the rare case of a multi-page table of contents the page number is incremented according to the roman counting system with capital letters.

1.3 List of figures/tables

Directly following the table of contents the list of figures and the list of tables are located. On possibility is to number the different figures (or tables) consecutively using arabic numbers. Alternatively you can sort them by chapter. An example for the second method is

2.1 Ice-cream cone	5
--------------------------	---

The page numbers of the list of figures/tables resume the numbering of the table of contents using roman numbering.

1.4 Table of Abbreviations

It is normally not necessary to construct a table of abbreviations. In those case, where abbreviations are sensible, they should be explained in the context of their first incidence. For example:

... The *Quarterly Journal of Economics* (QJE) was founded in the year 1886. ...

1.5 Introduction

The introduction not only presents the topic of the thesis, but contains a short overview about the most important results of the thesis. At the end of the introduction you should

give an overview about the structure of your thesis. It is recommended to use additional sources to flesh out your introduction.

The page number of the introduction starts with an arabic 1. The rest of the thesis is numbered in consecutive arabic numbers.

1.6 Main part

The core of your thesis consists of an review of the existing literature. The goal is to present the basic literature in a clear and understandable fashion.

The literature gives you an orientation regarding the choice of your arguments. If it uses theoretical model, regressions or tables, you should too. As a general rule it is not necessary to deduce theorems or estimators. You should discuss the topic using economic arguments and not calculations.

Select the necessary literature by yourself. If that proves too difficult, you may ask your referee for assistance. It is not necessary, though recommended, to use additional literature.

1.7 Conclusion

The target of the conclusion is to tersely summarize the most important results of your thesis. In addition you may bring up interesting open questions and individual thoughts about the topic. The conclusion profits from additional sources, just as the other parts of the thesis.

1.8 Bibliography

The Bibliography displays all used sources clear and alphabetically, sorted by author. You may not list sources which were not otherwise references in the thesis.

The page numbering stays arabic. A bibliography could be constructed as in the following example:

References

- Chamberlin, E. H. (1950). "Product Heterogeneity and Public Policy". In: *The American Economic Review* 40.2, pp. 85–92.
- Kahneman, Daniel and Amos Tversky (1979). "Prospect Theory: An Analysis of Decision under Risk". In: *Econometrica* 47(2), pp. 263–91.

1.9 Statement of Authorship

In the case of a bachelor or master thesis you have to include a statement of authorship. You find a template for the [statement of authorship at the homepage of the university](#) at page 2. The page number stays arabic.

2 Formalities

2.1 Formating

Use the following styling guides:

- Margins: top: 2 cm, bottom: 2 cm, right: 2.5 cm, left: 2.5 cm
- Font size: 11 or 12
- Line spacing: 1.25
- Consistent font throughout the whole document — to maximize readability you should use a font with serifs.
- Activation of automatic hyphenation and justified text formatting
- Correct orthography and punctuation
- Foreign technical terms, if not translatable, should always be written in italics (compare section 1.4).
- The integration of figures and tables should minimize blank spaces.
- It is not allowed to formulate in bullet points.

2.2 Citations

You have to consider the following notes regarding citations:

- All used sources have to be named. In those cases where a complete section makes use of a specific source, you may declare that source in the beginning or the end of the section. The longer the section is, the more it is recommended, that the source is referenced at the beginning.
- It is not permitted just to reference the name of the author in your text. Example:
 - wrong: "Mankiw states, that rational agents think in marginal units."
 - correct: "Mankiw (2008) states, that rational agents think in marginal units."
(Do not forget to reference your source in your bibliography!)
 - correct: "Mankiw¹ states, that rational agents think in marginal units." —
footnote with name and year.
- Basic knowledge, which is taught in educational books, does not have to be explicitly referenced.

- Regarding additional sources, you should use reliable sources and only rely on those. You may use **wikipedia** to get an overview about a topic, but it is not a citable scientific source!
- Your citations and your bibliography should show the consistent use of established formats such as the *Harvard Style* (in the text) or the *Chicago Style* (footnotes). An example would be

 ”‘... Utilities of events may be weighted based on their probability (Kahneman & Tversky (1979), S. 275). ...’”
- Within the text and the footnotes neither the surname of the author, the title of their work nor the publisher. Those information on the other hand are strictly necessary the bibliography. If a work has been published by more than two authors, they have to be abbreviated in the text according to the following logic: (Mayer et al. (2008))
- Do not directly translate foreign sources — Attention: This often happens unconsciously. Check your thesis before submission explicitly for direct translations.
- Figures and tables should be sourced directly below the description.
 - Graphics and tables you created yourself you can source as: ”compiled by the author”
 - If a figure has been reconstructed based on a source, it is credited the following way: ”compiled by the author based on Müller ((2009), p. 15)”

It should be avoided to photograph or copy figures from the sources. Wherever possible, the figure should be reconstructed. If that is not possible, you should ensure that the graphic is displayed in sufficient quality. You may include a figure the following way:

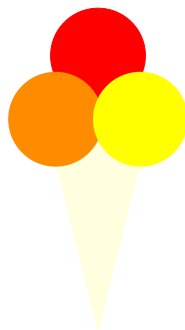


Figure 2.1: Ice-cream cone,
Source: compiled by the author

2.3 Calculations

- Calculations should always be displayed in a new line and be centered. They should only be numbered, if you reference them later in your thesis.
- For a better readability it is recommended to write variables in italic.
- Keep in mind, that font and font size of variables in the text and the formulas should be consistent. The use of variables in the text should not change the line spacings.
- Differentiate between a minus, a hyphen and a dash.

correct: -1 wrong: -1 wrong: $\text{—}1$

3 Tips & Tricks

- Use the active voice! Avoid long constructed sentences!
- Get to know your data! What are the data points? Which unit do they have? What does it mean, if they have been logarithmized?
- Avoid mixing American and British English — choose one and stick with it.
- Start with the main part of your thesis. Write the introduction and the conclusion at the very end.
- Make at least one appointment with your supervising tutor! Do not make too many appointments. You have to show, that you are able to work autonomously.
- If you are interested in writing your thesis in \LaTeX you can find a [short \(German\) introduction](#). Using \LaTeX a lot of the necessary formalities are very easy to meet. Alternatively you can use [LyX](#), which provides most advantages of \LaTeX , but is a lot easier to learn.
- Most of the necessary literature can be downloaded via the network of **ulm univers-**
ity. Just keep in mind, that you have to access the databases via **ulm university's**
network (for example via [WebVPN](#)).

4 Additional Remarks Regarding Seminar Theses

4.1 Extent and Scope

The thesis should have around 3.000 words ($\pm 10\%$) if not otherwise specified in the seminar. Bibliography and appendix do not count against the word count or a possible page count. This is a strong limitation! You can not possibly review the complete basic literature. You can and you should focus on specific points or ideas. One of the goals of a seminar thesis is to differentiate important from unimportant information. Consequently, you should select what on which literature you focus on. This selection should be adequately difficult. Do not avoid central parts of your chosen literature just because it seems to hard.

In those cases, where several students have the same topic, each student may chose his/her own focus. You may discuss your ideas with the other students, you have to write your own thesis. Make sure, you do not accidentally plagiarize from other students.

4.2 Registration

Please register yourself prior to the submission of your thesis at the *Hochschuldienstportal*. Make sure you register in accordance to the deadlines of the university.

4.3 Submission

Your thesis has to be submitted — at the latest — till the day of the official deadline, 12 o'clock, in printed form to the secretariat (room 1.09, Helmholtzstr. 18). Regarding seminar theses a single printed version is sufficient, a duplicate is not necessary. At the same day as the submission of the printed version, a identical digital version has to be send to the referee per e-mail. The digital version has to be a pdf file. It is not necessary to provide the digital version via a portable data storage medium. The printed version does not need to be bonded, as a plastic folder is sufficient. Make sure the print quality is high enough, to ensure, that all tables and figures have a good readability.

4.4 Presentation of the Thesis

If not otherwise communicated, your referee will contact you after your submission. He/she will then coordinate a date for the oral presentation of your work. A typical presentation is about 30 minutes per student (including discussion). Where several students worked on the same topic, the presentations should be attuned to each other. It is completely viable to hold a longer, merged presentation, where each student presents his/her part of the topic.

5 Additional Remarks Regarding Bachelor and Master Theses

A bachelor thesis should have around 7.500 words ($\pm 10\%$); a master thesis should have approximately 12.500 words ($\pm 10\%$). Bibliography and appendix do not count against the word count.

Organize a timely appointment with your adviser to check the structure of your thesis. To ensure that this appointment is as efficient as possible, you should have read the literature regarding your topic prior to the appointment. Additionally, you should already have designed a precise proposal for the structure of your thesis.

Hand in your thesis at the admissions office (M23, room 2203) according to the rules of your *Prüfungsordnung*. These copies have to be [bonded](#)¹. In addition to that, send an identical digital version (in pdf format) per e-mail to your advisor and referee. It is not necessary to provide the digital version via a portable data storage medium. There exists no rule regarding the specific time of the hand in².

¹Please make sure to have enough time to print another set if the first one fails. Note, that the KIZ takes some time to print your thesis. Make yourself familiar with that duration.

²As there might be problems with the mailbox of the admissions office we strongly advise that you hand in your thesis during the opening hours.