

Seminar Guidelines

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Topic

- Define your topic precisely

- How shall I approach my topic?
 - Present the field?
 - Explore the topic and its challenges?
 - Analyse the topic issues in depth?
 - Explore the field and its ,players‘?

- Which scientific documents or sources shall I use?

- There is *no single right answer!*
- You can decide for yourself with certain boundaries
- Ask you supervisor if you feel unsure

Overview

- ❑ Try to get a *first overview* of the topic

- ❑ Sources
 - References given by supervisor
 - Encyclopedia
 - Library (McLuhan Documentation Center)
 - Online-catalogues (e.g. <http://www.acm.org/dl>, etc.)
 - Internet (e.g. <http://www.google.com>, etc.)

- ❑ Overview means
 - Go through the material, but *don't read it completely* (especially books)!
 - Exception: overview articles, which are always helpful

- ❑ Hint
 - Try to find articles, named like „An overview of topic x“ or „Topic x – State of the Art“, „A comparison of ...“ etc.



Plan

- Try to *plan your work*

- When is the deadline?
- How much time do I need for the search of references?
- How long do I need to read?
- Do I need translations from some document?
- How do I get to some resources (e.g. from remote libraries)
- How long do I need to write?
- Which word processing tool do I use?
- How long do I need to prepare the presentation?
- Which presentation technologies will I use?

- Hint
 - Especially, if you have several parallel seminars running, a time plan is essential to avoid late-night-session!

Understand Documents

- ❑ What is the *purpose* of the source document?
 - To present overviews?
 - To develop logical relations (to other fields)?
 - To present empirical knowledge?
 - To convince through arguments?
 - To describe research projects?

- ❑ Categorize your resources and sort them accordingly

- ❑ Hint
 - Check, whether you may need other documents to fill white spots of the categories mentioned above
 - Try to use as many different types of sources as you can (Books, journals, reports, newspaper stories, web sites, multimedia)

Terms

- ❑ Define the *terms* of your topic

- ❑ Dictionaries
 - Specific dictionaries
 - Etymological dictionaries
 - Foreign language dictionaries

- ❑ Scientific Publications
 - Index
 - Glossary

- ❑ Hint
 - Develop your own little glossary, which you may want to include in the document
 - Introduce each term at the first place of occurrence and never again
 - Always use the same definitions and wording (consistency)

Excerpts & Paraphrases

- ❑ Excerpt
 - Extract the main content

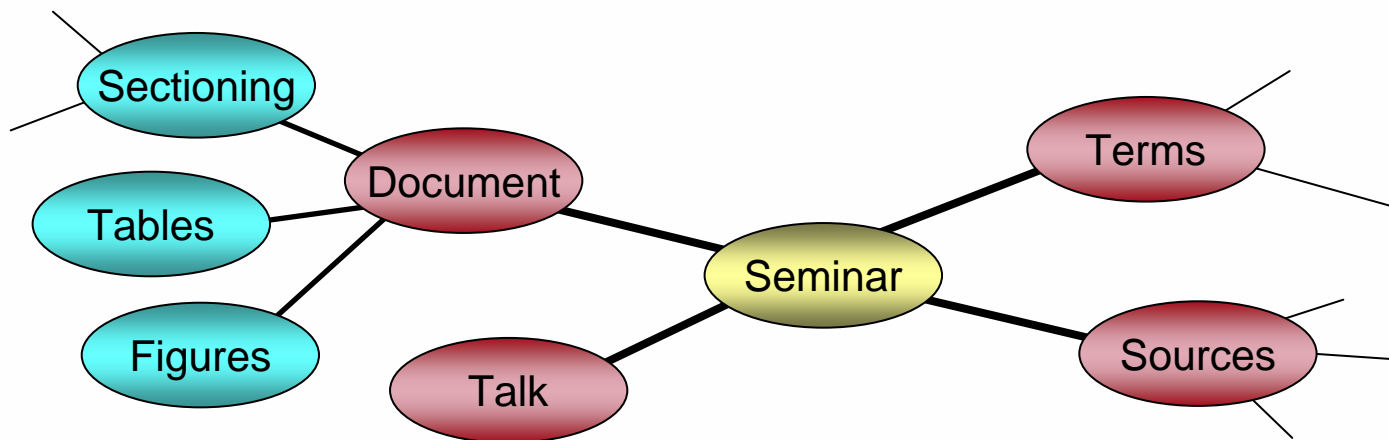
- ❑ Paraphrase
 - Re-formulate content in your own words

- ❑ Ask yourself
 - What is the general topic?
 - What is the specific aspect?

- ❑ Hint
 - You don't have to provide own content and results
 - Your seminar should just report about existing material
(but you can have your own mind, opinion and judgement!)

Mindmap

- ❑ Develop your own Mindmap
 - Put your main topic in the center
 - Branches follow subtopics
 - On inner nodes more fine-granular aspects follow



- ❑ Why?
 - It helps you to get an overview
 - You can place sources in that diagram
 - It is useful to plan the sectioning of the document

Draft Version

- ❑ Dilemma
 - What I can say is not really scientific
 - What is available from documents is already said

- ❑ Goal
 - Make your own contribution using existing public results

- ❑ Hint
 - Make notes immediately (in the library – during reading)
 - Don't forget to write down the exact source data for each statement!
 - Polish it afterwards, when you have a better overview and general understanding
 - Otherwise you have to do everything at least twice

Structure

❑ Outer part

- Your name & topic, Institution, course, supervisor, place, time
- Design a nice outer page or use the template from the course

❑ Inner part

- Sectioning
- Introduction
 - What is the topic and how does it relate to the seminar?
- Main part
 - Structure the main part in order to improve readability
 - Statements must be proven
- Summary
 - Summarize the main part and explain, why it fulfills the ‚promises‘ from the Introduction
 - Room for own opinions without proof
- References

Citation

- ❑ How to deal with citations?

- ❑ Strategy 1
 - Collecting citations and connect them with own text
 - Relatively simple to do
 - Not very interesting to read

- ❑ Strategy 2
 - Describe your own point of view and prove it with citations
 - It's more difficult
 - Gives a more authentic impression

- ❑ Hint
 - In practice, you will probably use a mix of both strategies
 - Never forget to give the reference (see plagiarism!)

Plagiarism (I)

- ❑ Plagiarism (latin): kidnapping
- ❑ Statements from (ANY!) source only with full reference
- ❑ Direct statement:
 - In quotes with reference
 - Example:
„It is clear that taking sentences from text is always plagiarism!“ [1]
...
[1] E. Mueller and F. Meyer, *Plagiarism or why prisons should be full*, Invented Publisher, Heidelberg, 2004.
- ❑ Indirect statement
 - Example:
In the same way, Mueller and Meyer [1] also argue that taking sentences from text is always plagiarism.
- ❑ Otherwise you perform plagiarism (mental theft).

Plagiarism (II)

- ❑ Plagiarism is a serious problem
 - It shows that the ,author' is not a scientist
 - It prevents people from benefitting from hard work (loss of income)
 - Universities are usually acting very strictly (immediate ex-matriculation!)
 - US: even derivated texts are plagiarism!

ISNM: **5.0 guaranteed** (eventually never allowed for examination again!)

- ❑ Hint
 - Teachers are not stupid and will find it out
 - Some links (please read!):
 - <http://www.cs.berkeley.edu/~moss/general/moss.html>
 - <http://bcs.bedfordstmartins.com/plagiarism/> (Especially handouts for students)
 - <http://www.templetons.com/brad/copymyths.html>

Contribution

- ❑ How can you express your *own* contribution?
 - Self-made structure with embedded material
 - Own language, which differs from referenced material
 - Own judgement, evaluation, interpretation and summary of presented issues, theories, facts, and positions

- ❑ Hint
 - Ask yourself:
 - What was new for me?
 - What was interesting?
 - Which opinion did I disagree with?
 - Avoid:
 - Subjective personal opinions

Final Version

- Is the topic sufficiently precise?
- Did you explain how you understand the topic?
- Are the central terms defined and explained?
- Is the sectioning useful?
- Do statements and text parts follow a reasonable sequence?
- Are the sources always clear?
- Did you expressed your own point of view clearly enough?
- Are there some interesting conclusions?
- Is the text understandable for others (non-experts)?
- In the end:
 - Update your references!
 - Proof-check your english language (use tools and friends)
- Hint
 - Give the text to others for proof-reading and take their comments serious

Presentation (I)

□ Preparation

- Create your presentation media (slides, flash, movies, sounds, etc.)
 - Consider your audience (Experts?)
 - What is your main message?
 - What is your information flow?
 - Use a good design (minimum 14pt, no blue font, bright background, etc.)
 - Don't steal pictures from the web without reference (plagiarism!)
 - Plan 25% less time than you have (you will be slower!)
- Test your talk with friends or colleagues
- Prepare a handout and distribute it in the class before the talk
- Should be an excerpt of your written document (~1-3pages)
- Show your documents to your supervisor before the event
- Check the equipment in the room before the event
 - It looks completely different from a beamer than on your PC monitor
 - The operating system might be different
 - Many more issues ... you never know!

Presentation (II)

□ Introduction

- Say „Hello“ and greet the audience - simple, but effective ;-)
- Introduce yourself (if unknown)
- Explain what and why you present
- Explain how you plan to present (duration, sections, which media)
- Are audience questions allowed? When?

□ The Talk

- Don't read from your document
- Don't apologize for missing parts, errors, etc.
- Look to the audience (everyone), Speak clearly and loud
- Speak slowly (the audience needs more time than you to understand it)
- Concentrate on the main points (leave out the details)
- Use examples and figures to explain facts
- Never use ‚oehm ... aeh ...‘ etc. (if you are unsure – just be quite)
- Bring some humor, but don't overstress it with too many jokes

