

Style Guidelines for Term Papers and Theses

The following guidelines can be used by students and lecturers as orientation for the study programmes in Political Science at the School of Social Sciences. The lecturer can:

1. make the guidelines mandatory for their courses;
2. they may suggest alternatives or;
3. leave it to the students to use an alternative citation and formatting style.

1 General

In most of our courses, students write term papers loosely based on the structure of research articles. Some of the more traditional requirements for term papers, e.g. a cover page, are unnecessary.

The examination regulations and module catalogues of each study programme stipulate the maximum character count for the specific course you are teaching or studying in.

A cover page is not required, instead students can use a header on the first page of the paper that should include the following information, examples in brackets:

- Student ID number is sufficient for attribution of authorship: (1234567)
- Name of lecturer: (Florian Dorner)
- Name of course: (Guidelines for Term Papers and Theses)
- Semester of course: (FSS 2026)

Start of paper: title

Table of contents: not necessary

Abstract: can be required, counts towards overall character count

Character size: 11 or 12

Font: not specified

Line spacing: 1.5 lines

Margins: 2.5cm on each side of the text

Page numbers: bottom right, start on the first page of your actual text

2 Citations

These guidelines largely follow the official citation style of the [American Political Science Review](#) and the [Chicago Manual of Style](#) (so-called author-date style)

2.1 In-text citations

These only require the last name, year and page number in brackets behind the (in-)direct quote or paraphrase:

- Single author: (author year, pages) e.g. (Dorner 2026, 1)
- Two authors: (author_A and author_B year, pages)
- Three or more authors: (author_A et al. year, pages)

- Multiple sources: (author year, pages; author year, pages)
- Multiple sources by the same author from the same year: (author year_a, pages; year_b pages) e.g. (Dorner 2026a, 1; 2026b, 3)

2.2 Bibliography

The bibliography contains all direct and paraphrased citations within the text – and only those. The reference list is sorted alphabetically and then chronologically. If there are more than six authors, list the first three and finish with “et al.” Below, you can find examples of the most common sources by type. For more details follow the link to the Chicago Manual of Style.

Books

Cohen, Cathy J. 1999. *The Boundaries of Blackness*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Hardy-Fanta, Carol, Pei-te Lien, Dianne Pinderhughes, and Christine Marie Sierra. 2016. *Contested Transformation*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Journal articles

Gay, Claudine. 2001. “The Effect of Black Congressional Representation on Political Participation.” *American Political Science Review* 95 (3): 589-602.

Junn, Jane. 2007. “From Coolie to Model Minority: US Immigration Policy and the Construction of Racial Identity.” *Du Bois Review* 4: (2): 355-73.

Chapter in an edited volume

Ravi K. Perry and X. Loudon Manley. 2017. “Case Studies of Black Lesbian and Gay Candidates: Winning Identity Politics in the Obama Era.” In *LGBTQ Politics: A Critical Reader*, eds. Marla Brettschneider, Susan Burgess, and Christine Keating, 295-308. New York: NYU Press.

Edited Collections

Brettschneider, Marla, Susan Burgess, and Christine Keating, eds. 2017. *LGBTQ Politics: A Critical Reader*. New York: NYU Press.

News article

Blum, Dani. 2023. “Are Flax Seeds All That?” *New York Times*, December 13.
<https://www.nytimes.com/2023/12/13/well/eat/flax-seeds-benefits.html>.

Websites

American Political Science Association. n.d. “Manuscript Preparation and Formatting.” Accessed January 15, 2026. <https://apsanet.org/publications/journals/american-political-science-review/apsr-manuscript-preparation-guidelines/>

Datasets

Ansolabehere, Stephen, Pamela Ban, and Michael Morse. Precinct-Level Election Data, 2014. Distributed by Harvard Election Data Archive. <https://doi.org/10.7910/DVN/B51MPX>.
UNF:6:PR/uz4ma+HsOTALYyMzr0w==.