Chair of Comparative Development and Cultural

Studies with a focus on Southeast Asia

**Advice on Academic Work**

1. **Structure**

* Any submission should be structured as follows:

Cover sheet

List of contents

Key to abbreviations / List of figures/ list of tables (if necessary)

1 Introduction

2 Body (divided into subsections with subtitles)

2.1 …

3 …

4 Conclusion

Bibliography

Image Sources

Declaration of Originality

1. **Formal requirements**

* Length:

Proseminar: 10 pages

Hauptseminar: 15 pages

(Dependant on the specifications of the lecturer)

* Formatting:

Font: Times New Roman, English (US)

Size: 12

Line spacing: 1,5 lines

* Cover sheet:

The assignment starts with a cover sheet which should contain at least the following information: university, chair, seminar type and title, name of the lecturer, title of the assignment, current semester, submission date, author’s name, matriculation number, e-mail, semester you are in, module, examination number.

**PDF** with sample cover sheet: <https://www.phil.uni-passau.de/fileadmin/dokumente/fakultaeten/phil/lehrstuehle/padmanabhan/Sample_Cover_Sheet.pdf>

* Declaration of Originality:

Each assignment must contain a declaration of originality.

**PDF** to fill out and include: <https://www.phil.uni-passau.de/fileadmin/dokumente/fakultaeten/phil/lehrstuehle/padmanabhan/Eigenst%C3%A4ndigkeitserkl%C3%A4rung-Decl.of_Originality.pdf>

1. **Content of the assignment**

* Basically, an assignment consists of three parts: Introduction, Body, Conclusion

1. Introduction:

Formulate a rather short and concise introduction on the topic and research question which captivates the reader. Also include an overview of the argument you will develop in the body of the assignment.

* + formulate “creative” introduction to captivate reader
  + Present the goal of the assignment in a nutshell
  + introduce and define key terms
  + keep short and concise
  + 3 functions:
    - specification of topic/research question
    - why does the topic interest you (motivation)?
    - Brief overview of the argument and structure of the paper

1. Body:

This section contains the logical, consistent examination of the research question, e.g., historical or thematic.

* work on and answer the research question/ the topic, analysis
* logic structure: begin with theory or background, illustrate or discuss using example(s)/case studies, then make/develop argumentation/interpretation
* argumentation:
* central aspect of academic work: reasoning and justifying
* give plausible reasons for theses and claims
* justify/illustrate through: e.g. sources, excerpts or examples
* include examples, passages, quotations that support your argument (referenced properly!)
* reasonable structuring in sections and subsections in relation to the development of your argument
* sections represent logical units according to the particular point you are trying to make; generally 10-15 lines
* short summary at the end of every section, relate back to question if relevant
* create connection between units (within a section) and sections in order to show linkages and maintain flow of argument and reading
* avoid digressions unrelated or not relevant to your core argument

1. Conclusion/Summary/Perspectives

This section summarises the main findings and should refer back to the research question set out in the introduction. It can also refer to issues that have not been resolved and point out where further study is required.

* 2 functions:
* summarising of body and a direct connection to the introduction: did you answer the research question? What is the overall thesis? - “round off” the assignment
* conclusion and perspectives (goal attainment, consequences, possible weak areas and problems, further inquiry, etc.)

1. **Literature Research**

* Starting points for literature research include the course literature, online databases at the University Library using the Passau Search Portal (e.g., JADE, JASTOR, SAGE), as well as academic search engines such as Google Scholar, that use key words to find academic publications.
  1. Internet research:
     + Google Scholar: here you can find academic literature, but it is rather randomised what is available and what is not.
     + Google: the results are often unsatisfying, because they are unfiltered.
     + Wikipedia: here you can find relevant and good literature references to follow up, but being an open access resource, **the information on Wikipedia is not reliable and is not suitable as a source!**
     + Rather use specific Websites (e.g., Inside Indonesia, New Mandala, etc.)
  2. Accessible databases for the University of Passau sorted by research fields:

<https://dbis.uni-regensburg.de//fachliste.php?bib_id=ub_pa&lett=l&colors=&ocolors=>

1. **Citation Style and Bibliography**

* The list of references should have a reasonable scope. As a reference point, it should contain at least:
  1. **One book or monograph (to be read selectively) and approx. three to five journal articles and/or book chapters**

*or*

* 1. **approx. eight journal articles and/or book chapters**

A list of this length will provide a solid grounding for a seminar paper and a subsequent assignment. The literature recommended in the course outline should be the starting point for your reading, but further independent research is also essential. Your reference list should list all materials consulted, including internet sites and videos.

**(Note: more literature is necessary for bachelor and master theses)**

* The exact source of your information (and therefore arguments) must be clear and traceable, therefore references for direct citation as well as indirect citation must be given.
* The required citation style is the APA-style with the following guidelines:

<https://library.westernsydney.edu.au/main/sites/default/files/pdf/cite_APA.pdf>

* Further advice:
* Do not forget to specify page numbers when using direct quotes in the text, e.g. (Smith, 2020:56)
* Always include page numbers of chapters and journal articles in your bibliography
* All figures, tables and pictures used must include a caption that briefly explains the content and a source must be provided.
* When referencing websites, do not forget to include the date you accessed the page
* Correct citation is essential to avoid unintended plagiarism. Please read these guidelines on plagiarism: <http://www.uefap.net/writing/writing-plagiarism/writing-plagiarism-advice>

1. **Submission:**

* Follow the given instructions of your lecturer. Generally, you are asked to upload your assignment to a Stud IP folder as a PDF including the declaration of originality and send a printed version to the Chair if necessary.
* **Tip**: Before submission, give your assignment to a fellow student for proof reading, with enough time to edit again if necessary. This will often help you identify structural problems or errors that can be corrected before you submit the assignment.
* **Tip**: Plagiarism of any kind is easily detected, don’t do it! If you are struggling for any reason, contact the lecturer as soon as possible.

1. **Assessment and Grading**

* Dependent on the lecturer
* The following general criteria are decisive for grading assignments:
  1. **Formal criteria:** spelling, punctuation, grammar, writing style, richness of linguistic expression, etc.
  2. **Adherence to academic standards:** correct use of terminology, correct citations, precise use of language, good engagement with relevant academic literature, transparent engagement with the literature, correctly formatted bibliography
  3. **Content:** Clear presentation of the topic and research question, conclusive argumentation, good comprehension and development of argument, independent preparation, clear analysis and assessment
  4. **Structure:** clear structure, clear line of argument leading to the conclusion, clearly stated conclusion or explicit “red flag” if no definite conclusion can be drawn, meaningful title and sub-titles