

## IICB PhD Course Work: Advanced Chemistry & Advanced Biology Examination-2009

### Writing a term paper & Term Paper Format

The structure

Table of Content

Introduction (I)

Main Part (II)

Conclusion (III)

Citations (footnotes/endnotes)

References

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#### Structure of the paper:

Cover: Name and title  
Page 2: List of contents  
Page 3-12: Text (double space)

#### **I. Introduction**

#### **II. (Main part)**

1....

2....

3...

a....

b. and so on

4....

#### **III. Conclusion**

Page 13: Footnotes

Page 14: Key references

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### The Introduction (I)

*The introduction should consist of three aspects:*

1. A description of the topic, the importance of the topic and which aspects of the topic you are going to write about.

2. A description of the structure of the term paper: you should explain how you have structured your term paper, which aspects you are going to deal first, second and so on.

3. You should give a short overview of the main sources which are important for the topic and which sources you have finally used. Give only the titles with a footnote from which the whole title can be identified. With a term paper of ten pages, the introduction should be no more than one page.

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## The main part of the term paper (II)

- The main part of the term paper has to be constructed systematically. Look at several books to see how the authors have structured the content of their books.
- There are different systems for arranging the content of a paper:

1. Numbers
2. Letters
3. Numbers and letters.

Look at several books with different systems and decide on the system you would like to apply. You must only apply one system.

Usually, the main part starts with the definitions of the central concepts and a short review of the topic.

Refer to the table of content to see an example of a list of contents showing the systematic structure of a term paper

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## Conclusion (III.)

- In the conclusion you should try to sum up the main results of the term paper. You should try to put down the results in three or four short statements or thesis. At the end, you should give your own point of view. Try to explain why some authors are wrong or right, and what do you think about the topic, but you have to base your own opinion on reasonable arguments.
  - The conclusion should be no longer than 1 page.
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Citations (footnotes/endnotes):

Citations are very important. A term paper without citations will not be accepted. They are necessary in order to show which sources you have used and allow the reader to look up the references for further reading.

There are three systems for writing citations:

1. at the bottom of each page (called *footnotes*)
2. at the end of the term paper (called *endnotes*)
3. in between the text

To start with we would recommend to use the system 1 or 2.

Do not mix two systems. Apply only one.

## Wrapping It Up.

For the best possible grade, review your paper to be sure that you:

- Address the subject of the seminar. Since this is a *science* seminar, your paper should relate in an important way to science (not technology).
- Stick to the chosen topic. Don't stray into side issues.
- Make the structure and organization of the paper appropriate to the subject and clear to the reader.
- Discuss issues and themes. Don't merely recount facts and events.
- Thoroughly document all sources and assertions, with internal references in a consistent form.
- Present the material in a readable and professional style. Double-space the text. Use only one side of each sheet, with at least a one inch margin at the left and 3/4 inch margins on the other three sides. Avoid distracting font styles. Secure the pages in some way so that they can't get out of order.
- The commonest deficiency of term papers are their lack of analysis of issues, failure to expose connections and relations or to dig into historical background. Another deficiency was too-heavy reliance on language and style of sources. A good essay is not a cut-and-paste operation. It must show clearly *your* contribution to the organization, selection, and analysis of the materials.

## Term Paper Guidelines

### Your Obligation to the Reader.

The author of a book or paper has an obligation to give the reader something beyond what the reader could obtain directly from the source materials. These services to the reader may include:

- *Research and investigate.* Seek out obscure and hard-to-find material, and unify it into a clear presentation.
- *Synthesize.* Draw together diverse things to show patterns and relations.
- *Organize.* Give logical continuity and structure to diverse materials.

- *Analyze*. Provide critical analysis in which arguments are examined for evidence, validity, logic, and flaws.
- *Clarify*. Make evidence and arguments clearer to the reader. Elucidate difficult material.
- *Examine in a broader context*. Show how a specific subject fits into a broader context, relates to another field, or relates to historic precedents.
- *Select and distill*. Weed out fluff and irrelevancies to get at the main issues of a complex subject.
- *Adopt a point of view*. Show how the preponderance of evidence and reason favors one side in a controversial issue.



### The Question of plagiarism:

You cannot lift paragraphs from other books or articles and place them into your term paper. This is called Plagiarism - taking paragraphs from an author and presenting them as your own.

You have to write your own term paper.

If you quote, you have to give a footnote.

A good topic for a term paper needs to do the following things:

- It needs to be appropriate for the assignment.
- It needs to be fairly easy to research and write about.
- It needs to be something you know enough about to write about comfortably.
- It needs to not be too broad (i.e. too large of a topic to cover in detail within the page length limits).
- It needs to not be too narrow (i.e. too small of a topic to fill up enough pages for the assignment).
- It needs to be interesting and important to you (or else you're going to get very bored).
- It needs to be creative. Professors hate **tired topics** that everybody writes and speaks about.