A Guide to Writing Term Papers (American Studies)

Please read this guide carefully before you start working on your term paper. If you still have any questions, please tell your instructor, for we are constantly trying to improve this guide. Thank you!

General Remarks

Please use the Times New Roman font, 12pt size, 1.5-spaced.

Please use the following margins: left margin: 3cm, right margin: 2.5cm, top margin: 2cm, bottom margin: 2cm).

Please add page numbers (starting with the first page of the introduction).

A term paper generally consists of six parts:

1. a title page
2. a table of contents
3. an introduction
4. the main part of your paper (which may be divided into subchapters)
5. a conclusion
6. a works cited list
7. a separate statement (add place, date, and your signature). Please use the version applicable for your term paper: https://fb06.uni-mainz.de/wp-content/uploads/sites/25/2024/02/Eidesstattliche-Erklaerung-fuer-Haus-und-Abschlussarbeiten.pdf.

Depending on your topic, you may also want to add an appendix containing paintings, photographs, screen shots, etc. after the works cited list.

Title Page & Table of Contents

On the following two pages, you will find examples of what your title page and your table of contents should look like.

Johannes Gutenberg-Universität Mainz
FB 06: Translations-, Sprach- und Kulturwissenschaft
Arbeitsbereich: Amerikanistik (American Studies)
Winter Term 2025/26
Seminar: American Short Stories
Instructor: Dr. P. Maier

Racial Identity in Kate Chopin's "Désirée's Baby"

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BA Translation
3rd Semester
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Table of Contents

The Text Part of Your Paper

Formatting and Length

Please use the Times New Roman font, 12pt size, 1.5-spaced.

The text part of your paper (the introduction, the main part, and the conclusion) should be
12-15 pages (BA-Seminar) or 15-20 pages (MA-Seminar) long.

Quoting

Put quotes in inverted commas. If you alter a quote (either by adding something to it or
leaving something out), use square brackets: "She [Désirée] looked at him and left
[…]."

Indent quotes that are longer than four lines. Do not put them in inverted commas. Here is
an example:

In the final passage of *The Octopus*, Presley recapitulates the conflict between the farmers
and the railroad and concludes:

> But the WHEAT remained. […] Through the welter of blood at the irrigating ditch
> […], the great harvest of Los Muertos rolled like a flood from the Sierras to the
> Himalayas to feed thousands of starving scarecrows on the barren plains of India.
> Falseness dies; injustice and oppression in the end of everything fade and vanish
> away. Greed, cruelty, selfishness, and inhumanity are short-lived; the individual
> suffers, but the race goes on. Annixter dies, but in a far-distant corner of the world a
> thousand lives are saved. (448)

References

The most convenient way to indicate the sources you quote from (directly or indirectly) is to
use abbreviated versions of the bibliographical data in parentheses right in the text. These
consist of the name of the author and the page number(s):

> One critic has noted that this story "is one of Kate Chopin's most controversial short
> stories" (Toth 34).

If you use two or more texts by the same author, the abbreviated version consists of the name
of the author, a short version of the title, and the page number(s):

> As one critic has argued, this "is one of Kate Chopin's most controversial short
> stories" (Toth, *Chopin* 34). Elsewhere, this critic has even noted that it is "most
> certainly Chopin's best story" (Toth, "Regionalism" 29).

Note that you MUST give the complete bibliographical data of the sources you quote from
in your works cited list/bibliography.

If you work with a lot of quotations from ONE AND THE SAME text, it is possible to give,
from the second quotation onwards, just the page number in parentheses directly after the
quote:

> At the beginning of "Désirée's Baby," Armand is described as "dark and handsome"
> (*Chopin* 324). At the end of the story, his face is "whiter than snow" (337).

If you work with media like film or audio, please include the time span (hours, minutes, and seconds) if displayed:

> Buffy's promise that "there's not going to be any incidents like at my old school" is obviously not one that she can keep (*Buffy* 00:03:16-17).

Footnotes

Please do not give bibliographical data for quotes in footnotes. Use footnotes to provide additional information on a topic, sketch a wider context, or to underline your argument with the help of secondary literature.

Works Cited List

A works cited list contains ALL of the titles you quoted from (directly and indirectly) in your paper.

Titles are listed by the authors'/editors' surnames. If you use several titles by one and the same author/editor, they are sorted in alphabetical order (ignoring any initial direct and indirect articles).

Titles of monographs are given in italics. If the title cites another book title, the latter does not appear in italics. Titles of articles, poems, and short stories are given not in italics, but in inverted commas.

Each entry ends with a period.

Here are some general and specific examples:

Monograph:
> Surname, first name [initial]. *Title.* Publisher, year.
> Davis, Angela Y. *Blues Legacies and Black Feminism: Getrude "Ma" Rainey, Bessie Smith, and Billie Holiday.* Pantheon, 1998.
> Dorris, Miachel, and Louise Erdrich. *The Crown of Columbus.* HarperCollins Publishers, 1999.

Edited collection:
> Surname, first name [initial], editor(s). *Title.* Publisher, year.
> Sánchez Prado, Ignacio M., editor. *Mexican Literature in Theory.* Bloomsbury Academic, 2018.

Dissertation/MA thesis:
> Surname, first name [initial]. *Title.* Year. University, PhD/MA dissertation. [*Web host*, URL.]
> Njus, Jesse. *Performing the Passion: A Study on the Nature of Medieval Acting.* 2010. Northwestern U, PhD dissertation.
> Njus, Jesse. *Performing the Passion: A Study on the Nature of Medieval Acting.* 2010. Northwestern U, PhD dissertation. *ProQuest,* search.proquest.com/docview/ 305212264.

Journal article:
> Surname, first name [initial]. "Title." *Journal title*, volume, number, year, pp. page-page.

Boggs, Colleen Glenney. "Public Reading and the Civil War Draft Lottery." *American Periodicals*, vol. 26, no. 2, 2016, pp. 149-66.

Article from a collection:

Surname, first name [initial]. "Title." *Title of collection*, edited by first name [initial] surname, publisher, year, pp. page-page.

Denwar, James A., and Peng Hwa Ang. "The Cultural Consequences of Printing and the Internet." *Agent of Change: Print Culture Studies after Elizabeth L. Eisenstein*, edited by Sabrina Alcorn Baron et al., U of Massachusetts P / Library of Congress, Center for the Book, 2007, pp. 365-77.

Article on a website:

Surname, first name [initial]. "Title." *Title of website*, date of posting, URL.

Parker-Pope, Tara. "How to Age Well." *The New York Times*, 1 Nov. 2017, www.nytimes.com/guides/well/how-to-age-well.

Dictionary entry:

Physical copy

"Entry title, *grammatical category*. [Entry number]." *Title of dictionary*, edition, publisher, year, p. page.

"Emoticon, *N*." *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*, 11th ed., Merriam-Webster, 2003, p. 408.

Website

"Entry title, *grammatical category*. [Entry number]." *Title of dictionary*, year, URL.

"Content, *N*. (1)." *Merriam-Webster*, 2020, www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/content.

Social media:

Surname, first name [@username]. "Title." *Platform*, day month year, URL.

Lilly [@uvisaa]. "[I]f u like dark academia there's a good chance you've seen my tumblr #darkacademia." *TikTok*, 2020, www.tiktok.com/@uvisaa/video/681 5708894900391173.

Thomas, Angie. Photo of *The Hate U Give* cover. *Instagram*, 4 Dec. 2018, www.instagram.com/p/Bq_PaXKgpPw/.

Movie:

Title. Directed by first name [initial] surname, distribution company, year.

Opening Night. Directed by John Cassavetes, Faces Distribution, 1977.

Television episode:

Viewed on physical media

"Episode Title." Year of release. *Title*, created by first name [initial] surname, episode number, production company, year of release of medium, disc. number. Medium.

"Hush." 1999. *Buffy the Vampire Slayer: The Complete Fourth Season*, created by Joss Whedon, episode 10, Mutant Enemy / Twentieth Century Fox, 2003, disc 3. DVD.

Viewed on a website

"Episode Title." *Title*, season number, episode number, production company, year of release. *Website name*, URL.

"I, Borg." *Star Trek: The Next Generation*, season 5, episode 23, Paramount Pictures, 1992. *Netflix*, www.netflix.com.

Video game:

Title of Game. Version, publisher, day month year.

Angry Birds. Version 7.0.0, Rovio Entertainment, 10 Dec. 2016.
Minecraft. Java ed. for Mac, 2017.

Some Additional Hints

Wikipedia, SparkNotes, gradesaver, and enotes are not acceptable web sources for writing

academic papers.

Use a colon between the title and the subtitle of a book, an article, etc.

In English, all the words of the title are capitalized (exceptions are prepositions, articles, and

conjunctions, unless they appear at the beginning of the title or subtitle). In French

or German, by contrast, all the words of the title appear in regular upper and lower

case.

In the works cited list, omit the article before the title of a journal:

Kho, Younghee. "'I prefer not to dine to-day': Self-starvation under Biopolitical
Regulation in 'Bartleby, the Scrivener'." *Journal of English Language and
Literature*, vol. 70, no. 1, 2024, pp. 75-95. [not: *The Journal of English
Language and Literature*]

Give the number of the edition or the volume after the title, but not in italics:

The Awakening. 5th ed.,
Literary History of Canada. Vol. 2,

If there are more than three authors/editors, name the first (according to the alphabet)

and use "et al.":

Baron, Sabrina Alcorn, et al., editors. *Agent of Change: Print Culture Studies after
Elizabeth L. Eisenstein.* U of Massachusetts P / Library of Congress, Center
for the Book, 2007.

If someone other than the author has edited the book, give his or her name after the

title:

Chopin, Kate. *The Complete Works.* Edited by Per Seyersted, Louisiana State UP,
1969.
Chopin, Kate. *Poems.* Edited by Per Seyersted and Emily Toth, Miller, 1985.

If you use a translation, name the translator after the title:

Flaubert, Gustave. *Madame Bovary.* Translated by Geoffrey Wall, Penguin Books,
2003.

The most frequently used abbreviations are:

ed.	edition (but spell out *editor*, *edited by*)
et al.	and others
vol.	volume

Have fun working on your term paper!
[June 2025]