



Guidelines for the Preparation of Concepts and Papers in the Media Change & Innovation Division (Prof. Latzer)

Zurich, November, 2024

Requirements for the concept for the seminar paper

The concept of your seminar paper serves as a work schedule, for time, resource and work allocation, and must contain all essential aspects of your seminar paper. Your concept must comply with the formal requirements given in the "Merkblatt zur Erstellung wissenschaftlicher Arbeiten am IKMZ"¹. Your concept must contain a coherent structure, a common thread that sets out the nature of the topic, the research questions, both the theoretical and methodological approach, and it must link them together in a meaningful way. Consistent citation and bibliographic style is important! Please note the length requirement of approximately 5 pages. Please proofread your concept before submission and format the text in a visually appealing way without wasting space. Your concept should contain the following points:

- 1) Introduction and relevance of the topic
Adequate working title, research interest, problem statement; justify the importance (relevance) and discuss the social context.
- 2) Objective, own research question(s) & hypotheses
Derive your specific research questions & hypotheses (for quantitative approaches) and research questions & research objectives (for qualitative approaches) from the state of research. Which research gaps will you address by answering your research questions? Describe the objective of your paper and the central research question (guiding research question).
- 3) Theory & state of research
Overview of the current state of research (please pay special attention to research outside the German-speaking area!) and existing research results, refer to literature used and make a connection to relevant theories.
- 4) Methods
Describe the methods you intend to use to address your topic (data collection, processing, analysis) and justify your choice of methods. Delineate your choice from other possibilities.
- 5) Literature
List relevant literature already read or yet to be processed.
- 6) Outline of your paper (optional)
Outline the planned structure. Provide an approximate scope of each chapter & subchapter.
- 7) Time & work plan (optional)
Determine which work steps you can accomplish and when; plan realistically: schedule only 60% of your time resources, set milestones, define an end point (deadline).

¹ https://www.ikmz.uzh.ch/dam/jcr:1d8e7f7a-9c06-47f8-b750-752aa5097134/merkblatt_wa_2019.pdf



Checklist - Requirements for the seminar paper

The following aspects of content and form will be considered when evaluating the paper:

Problem statement & research question:

- Clear presentation of the relevance of the topic
- Clear presentation of the problem (arouse interest)
- Stringent formulation of the research question (clear, explicit)

Elaboration of the state of research:

- Compact, differentiated elaboration of the state of research (extensive, critical and problem-oriented discussion and reflection)
- Consideration of relevant literature from the German-speaking and international research space

Theories & methods:

- Choice of appropriate theory(s)
- Justification of the choice of theories & conclusive connection to the topic of the thesis
- Choice of appropriate method(s)
- Justification of the choice of methods
- Presentation of the method
- Adequate application of the method

Summary of the paper & presentation of results:

- Plausible, differentiated and clear presentation of the results
- Reference to the research question
- Reference to the theory(s) used as a basis
- Reference to the method(s) used
- Reflection on limitations & weaknesses of the work
- Reflection on the relevance of the results for communication science
- Outlook for further research

Formal criteria:

- Fulfillment of the formal minimum standards according to the institute's guidelines on scientific work (e.g. cover sheet with title, contact details, textual layout...).
- Appropriate formatting of the text (good readability with appropriate font size, hyphenation; if possible and reasonable: use of graphs or tables)
- Appropriate title (must not promise too much and should at the same time cover the research question)
- Consistent citation and bibliographic style
- Scientific writing style, impeccable spelling & grammar
- Logical structure of the paper, comprehensible outline, clear argumentation
- Adherence to length requirements