

THE PROCESS OF WRITING SEMINARS – (HARVARD)

Assignments and/or seminars form an important part of each students' studies. Writing seminars and utilizing the appropriate referencing methods are of critical importance. The lecturers who are responsible for the various courses are ultimately responsible for specifying the referencing methods to be used.

Another critical element in preparing a response to an assignment is to obtain the relevant literature. Without access to the relevant literature, the student will be unable to prepare a proper response.

- **THEME**

Once the theme has been announced, it has to be analyzed and problems have to be identified.

- **OBJECTIVES**

Various objectives must be defined to determine the ends to be achieved by the research.

- **SUBDIVISION**

Demarcate the problem into sub-sections

- **QUESTIONS**

Formulate the following questions that pertain to the theme:

1. What is the aim of the assignment?
2. What is the core of the theme?
3. What are the boundaries of the topic?

Draw up a provisional **table of contents**. Once you have completed the assignment, you may draw up the final **table of contents**.

- **COLLECTING THE RELEVANT LITERATURE**

Using the provisional **table of contents** as a guide, you have to search the library for relevant sources that pertain to the topic in question.

The **KOVSIEMAT** (computerized catalogue) is the place to commence a search for relevant sources.

Note the indexes at the end of each source – these contain a wealth of information.

Encyclopedias are most important as a source of background knowledge and definitions of key terms.

Journal articles are used to secure the latest information on the topic in question.

Computerized searches are carried out on data bases that consist of overseas and South African documents (Kovsidex, Medline, SA Studies, Internet and Science Direct).

PRACTICAL STYLE OF WRITING

The student has to form a clear understanding of the problem. For this reason, it is necessary that the student is able to explain the problem in his/her own words so that he/she will be clear as to what is understood in terms of the topics in question. In the introduction, the student has to present an own interpretation of the problem, and should be able to define the problem statement.

Additional aspects of the table of contents have to be specified.

Sources that are consulted must be included in the list of references/bibliography. The authors have to be acknowledged in the text. Referencing methods will be discussed later in greater detail.

MODIFIED HARVARD REFERENCING METHOD

REFERENCES IN THE TEXT

In the **TEXT**, students have to refer to sources as follows: e.g. **Henderson (1994:73)** states that ... OR

It is claimed that wheat (**Henderson 1994:73**) ...

Translations from English have to make sense.

Correct **spelling** is also important.

Abbreviations have to be written out in full, e.g.
I/O = instead of

BUT

Acronyms may be used provided that they are written out in full when they are used for the first time, e.g. South African Broadcasting Corporation (S.A.B.C.) – the abbreviation may then be used in the rest of the assignment.

LIST OF REFERENCES

- In the list of references, you have to include the surnames of the authors of these sources and magazines in alphabetical order.
- If an author is not indicated, the title of the source has to be used.
- Titles are typed in *italics*.
- Commas and full-stops are most important for any entry and must be indicate correctly.
- If the date of publication is missing, this is indicated by the abbreviation [s.a.], e.g. Smith, J.A. [s.a.] **Title of the book**. Place: publisher.
- If a place of publication is not quoted, use the abbreviation [s.l.].
- If the publisher's particulars do not appear, this is indicated by [s.n.].

- The publisher's surname is used, e.g. HAUM. In the case of the publisher, the words "... & Co." and "... and Sons" may be left out.
- In the list of references, you may only include sources that have been quoted in the text.
- Persons' titles such as Dr, Prof., etc. are not included in the list of references.
- Junior and Senior is indicated only in the bibliography, e.g. De Vries, M. sr. and Du Plooy, L. Jr. 1982. Title of the book. Place: Publisher.
- The source is indicated in the language of publication, e.g. English titles in English. The title as a whole as to be in English.
- Sources are not numbered.

EXAMPLES

LETTER

PUBLISHED LETTER

McFaunn, W. 1990. Letter to the editor. Physiotherapy Forum, 20(1): 3

INSTITUTES

Institute for National and Contemporary History. (INCH). 1989. Election ... Bloemfontein: University of the Orange Free State.

NEWSPAPER REPORTS

Van, O.T. 1994. Title of report (or only the title of the report if the author is unknown). Volksblad. 21 October: early/late/special issue.

AUTHORS

A SINGLE AUTHOR

Van, O.T. 1994. Title of book: the explanatory title (if any). Edition (2nd or 3rd); if it is the first edition, one does not refer to an edition. Place of publication: publisher. Series no. (if any).

TWO AUTHORS

Burchel, E.M. and Milton, J.R. 1994. Title of book. Place of publication: Publisher.

THREE AUTHORS

Burchel, E M, Milton, J.R. AND Nel, E.S. 1983. Title of book. Place of publication: Publisher.

MORE THAN THREE AUTHORS

Burchel, E.M. et al. 1981. Title of the book. Place of publication: Publisher.

PAMPHLET OF MANUAL

Wiggins, R.R. 1990. Therapy Techniques. Johannesburg: Perskor.

PERSONEL COMMUNICATIONS

Van, O.T. 1 Augustus 1994. Upper arm techniques. Personnel communications/interviews/telephonic conversation/correspondence. Head of Physiotherapy (or whatever applies).

THESES

Smit, J.A. 1990. The dilemma of wrong treatment. D. Phil. Thesis (or M dissertation). University of the Free State, Bloemfontein.

GOVERNMENT REPORTS

South Africa (Republic). 1990. Report of the ... Pretoria: government Printer (Van Wyk Commission). RP 80/ 1990.

SYMPOSIUMS

Henderson, R. 1988. The purple membrane. In Relations between structure: Twenty eighth symposium of the society for Microbiology at University of Cape Town, April 1988. Ed. By R. Stainer and H. Rogers. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press...

GOVERNMENT GAZETTE

Notification nor. 177 of 1989. Title of notification. Official Gazette (Transvaal), 11 July, p. 349.

TWO TITLES

Smit, S.J. Tweetalige bundel=Bilingual title. Place of publication: Publisher.

JOURNAL ARTICLE

Van, O.T. 1994. Title of the article. The title of the journal, 3(4):3-10. Titles of articles are in small letters and are not underlined. Only the titles of journals are typed in *italics*.

REPORTS

Smit, S.J. 1989. Primary Policy. Pretoria: Medical Research Council. (HSRC report no. S-49)/

TRANSLATIONS

Zink, J. 1981. The voice of the sun, trans. By F. Deist. Pretoria: Published.

GENERAL HINTS

- An assignment must always be **neat**, with correct subdivisions and meaningful expositions.
- Prepare a **title page** that displays the title of the assignment of seminar. The name of the student, the student number, as well as the course code, must appear on this page.
- Avoid **spelling errors** at all cost – these create a very poor impression.
- Ensure that all the **references** in the text appear in the bibliography, and vice versa.

- Adopt a **scientific and subject-directed** mode of writing. Consider sentence constructions and language usage.
- Make sure that each reference is recorded immediately so that confusion may be avoided at a later stage.

EXAMPLE OF TABLE OF CONTENTS

TOPIC OF ASSIGNMENT

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. Introduction
2. Definitions (if required)
3. The focus of the assignment

Finer subdivisions
Further subdivisions
Further subdivisions
More subdivisions

4. Second specific aspect

Finer subdivisions
Subdivisions
Subdivisions
More subdivisions

Subdivisions (various aspects may be demarcated until the entire topic has been covered)

5. Summary
6. Conclusions
7. Bibliography/List of references