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## General Guidelines for Writing Reviews at the BA and MA Level

### 1 Aim

The goal of a review is the compact und structured written summary – of both content and methodology – of a text (from an article or book) that includes the reviewer's own evaluation (comment, critique, questions).

### 2 Title Page

The title page gives an overview of the context, topic and author. It contains the following information:

#### 2.1 Header

Name of the institution	Ruhr University Bochum
Name of the faculty	Faculty of Social Science
Department	Sociology
Name of the chair	Chair of Sociology/Social Inequality and Gender
Course instructor (title, name)	Prof Dr Heike Kahlert
Semester	WiTe 2017/18 or SoTe 2018 etc.
Title of the course	e.g. Gendered Excellence
Course number	e.g. 080 200

#### 2.1 Full Citation of the Reviewed Article/Book

See syllabus

#### 2.2 Author

Full name of the author of the seminar paper  
Full postal address (street, house number, postal code, town/city)  
Telephone number (to contact the author in case of questions)  
E-mail address  
Student ID number  
Semester  
Type of course (seminar, exercise course, lecture, advanced seminar)  
Course of study  
Information about the course of study (basic/main course of study)

#### 2.3 Date of Submission

### **3 Formal Structure**

A review generally contains the following:

- Introduction (reference to the seminar/current example as introduction to the topic of the discussed text)
- Structure/organisation of the reviewed text
- Summary of key questions or theses or arguments of the text
- Indication of methods used in the text and the utilisation of data (in case of empirical studies)
- Opinions on or criticism of statements from the text, including questions. What does the text accomplish with regards to central questions of the course?

Reviews are not structured into chapters or subchapters due to their shortness.

### **4 Citations, Use of Sources in the Text**

Reviews may and should – in moderation! – include direct citations of the literature worked with. These citations must be marked (in quotation marks) and followed by the name of the author, the year, and the page number in parentheses (e.g. Barker 2005, p. 2190 or Jenkins 2014a, p. 163f.). Further references are not necessary.

Reviews generally do not contain other sources and/or references to other texts.

### **5 Language, Style and Critical Distance to Applied Literature**

Develop an inner distance to the reviewed literature and express this through your choice of words. Even sociological texts do not proclaim the – one and only – truth but a possible perspective on a certain issue. Other theoretical and political premises and/or methodical approaches might lead to a different account of the assumed objective circumstances!

Detach yourself from the idea that ‘everything’ you read can and needs to be mentioned and neutrally described! Reviews necessitate subjectiveness and selectiveness.

Make use of active forms of sentences! You may use the pronoun ‘I’ even in academic texts when it is appropriate and done in moderation.

Formulate short and precise sentences! Excessively long sentences with complicated clauses are highly impressive; however, they do not necessarily contribute to an understanding of the issue described and the messages of the text.

## **6 Layout and Extent of the Review**

Pay attention to the manuscript's legibility (spacing, title layout...).

Font size: at least 12 pt.

Line spacing: 1.5

Margins (left and right): at least 4 cm

Number of characters (including spaces): 6,000 characters or 2–3 pages

The page count starts on the title page which does not, however, contain a page number. The pagination starts on the first page of the text and continues until the last page.

## **7 Dates and Certificate of Successful Participation**

### **7.1 Submission Date**

In general, deadlines set by instructors are binding. Changes require a prior agreement with the instructor and are only possible in exceptional and justified cases.

Reviews should be completed for the session which will deal with the reviewed text and handed in two days in advance at the latest. More information on that will be found on the syllabus.

Reviews, along with a signed declaration of authenticity, must be sent as a PDF or a Word document (one document) to the instructor and/or tutor via e-mail. In exceptional cases, they may be handed in to the secretary's office (Universitätsstraße 134, Room 3/3.02) or sent to: Prof Dr Heike Kahlert, Ruhr University Bochum, Faculty of Social Science, Chair of Sociology/Social Inequality and Gender, Room 3/3.14, Universitätsstraße 134, 44801 Bochum.

### **7.2 Correction of the Review**

The correction by the instructor and/or tutor is usually finished by the next seminar session.

### **7.3 Certificate of Successful Participation**

The successful participation is certified electronically (currently via VSPL/CampusOffice).