Die Hausarbeit

Allgemein: Hausarbeiten müssen neben inhaltlichen auch wichtige formale Kriterien erfüllen, sonst droht die Gefahr der Abwertung. Es gilt, das mensch sich das Thema selbst sucht, aber dann mit seiner Dozentin/seinem Dozenten sein Vorhaben bespricht. Für kurze wie für lange Arbeiten ist ein Zeitplan notwendig, denn jede Arbeit ist das Resultat mehrerer überarbeiteter Entwürfe, die sich aus neuen Fragen, Erkenntnissen, Materialien, Literaturzugängen u. a. m. ergeben.

Formale Kriterien:

Layout des Textes

Schreiben Sie mit einem Abstand von 1 ½ Zeile, lassen Sie rechts und links 3 cm und wählen sie Schriftgrad 12. Die Anmerkungen (Fußnoten) sind entsprechend kleiner zu formatieren; der Schriftgrad 9 sollte nicht unterschritten werden. Sie können das Textverarbeitungsprogramm Ihres PCs entsprechend ändern, in dem Sie bei "Format" die Formatvorlagen (Standard, Fußnotentext) korrigieren. Im Text sind die Fußnoten-/Anmerkungszeichen hochgestellt, im Anmerkungstext am Fuß der Seite sollten sie das nicht sein. Sie erreichen das, in dem Sie den gesamten Anmerkungstext markieren und dann durch die Tastenkombination Strg+Leertaste alle Formatierungen entfernen. In diesem Fall rutschen die Zahlen nach unten.

Das Exemplar ist mit Seitenzahlen zu versehen; gezählt wird von der Gliederungsseite an.
Dem Titelblatt folgt ein weiteres Blatt mit der Gliederung. Die Angaben von Seitenzahlen zu den einzelnen Kapiteln ist bei größeren Hausarbeiten dringend erwünscht.

Bitte achten Sie beim Schreiben auf :
1. Korrektes Schreiben (Zeichensetzung, Grammatik, Rechtschreibung); hier folgen Sie ggf. dem Rechtschreibprogramm ihres Textverarbeitungssystems.
2. Korrektes Zitieren (amerikanisch oder deutsch, Vorlagen liegen im PS-Sternchenkurs-Ordner)
3. Korrekte Titelaufnahme (Vorlagen liegen im PS-Sternchenkurs-Ordner)

Aufbau

Der Aufbau der Arbeit folgt folgendem Schema:

1. Einleitung.
- Sie enthält:
- die Erläuterung des Themas – warum haben Sie es gewählt und worin liegt nach Ihrer Meinung seine Bedeutung (dazu finden Sie ein Papier im PS-Sternchenkurs-Ordner),
- die Fragestellung (dazu finden Sie ebenfalls ein Papier im PS-Sternchenkurs-Ordner),
- die von Ihnen gewählte Methode,
- eine kurze Beschreibung Ihres Darstellungsprinzips (keine Wiederholung der Gliederung, sondern Sie beschreiben, wie Sie vorgehen werden) sowie der Materialbasis Ihrer Arbeit.

2. Hauptteil

Der Hauptteil enthält
- Begriffsklärungen und Definitionen,
- die Entwicklung oder Modifizierung einer politikwissenschaftlichen Theorie, falls Sie eine verwenden,
- die Auseinandersetzung mit dem Schrifttum anderen AutorInnen,

- die Präsentation des Materials, wobei dessen Anschaulichkeit und Prägnanz, aber nicht die Fülle entscheidend sind und
- die ausführlichen Ergebnisse der Untersuchung.

3. Schlussteil

- Darin werden die plausibel begründeten Ergebnisse der Untersuchung in Thesenform zusammengefasst,
- eine Antwort auf die einleitende Fragestellung gegeben,
- der Forschungsstand reflektiert und Hinweise auf Forschungsprobleme (kontroverse Positionen, offene Fragen etc.) gemacht.
- Sie sollen durchaus eine persönliche Meinung zu politischen Problemen (im Kontext der Arbeit) abgeben.

4. Anhang

Er enthält die Literaturliste, Statistiken, größere Tabellen, Zeittafeln, Abkürzungsverzeichnis (kann auch nach der Gliederung kommen) etc. pp..

Ein zusätzlicher Hinweis zum Schreiben:

In einer amerikanischen Information (Handout) für Studierende über *Effective Academic Writing* (gilt prinzipiell auch für Referate) heißt es zu inhaltlichen Aspekten von Hausarbeiten (siehe dazu auch im PS-Sternchenkurs-Ordner die Papiere "Themen" und "Fragestellung"):

The Argument

Arguments are everywhere...
You may be surprised to hear that the word "argument" does not have to be written anywhere in your assignment for it to be an important part of your task. In fact, making an argument--expressing a point of view on a subject and supporting it with evidence--is often the aim of academic writing. Your instructors may assume that you know this fact, and therefore they may not explain its importance to you in class. Nevertheless, if your writing assignment asks you to respond to reading and discussion in class, you are likely to be expected to produce an argument in your paper.

The majority of the material you learn in college is or has been debated by someone, somewhere, at some time. Even when the material you read or hear is presented as simple "information" or "fact," it may actually be one person's interpretation of a set of information or facts. In your writing, you may be called on to question that interpretation and either defend it, refute it, or offer some new view of your own. In writing assignments, you will almost always need to do more than just present information that you have gathered or regurgitate information that was discussed in class. You will need to select a point of view and forward evidence (in other words, use "argument") to shape the material and offer your interpretation of the material. If you think that "fact," not argument, rules intelligent thinking, consider these examples from history. At one point, the "great minds" of Western Europe firmly believed the Earth was flat. They had discussions about how obviously true this"fact" was. You are able to disagree now because people who saw that argument as faulty set out to make a better argument and proved it.

The more recent O.J. Simpson trial provides another example. DNA testing was used by both the prosecution and the defense to determine guilt but in totally different ways. Some DNA experts were brought in to prove that DNA testing was good evidence, while other experts were brought in to prove it was poor evidence. differences of opinion are how human knowledge develops, and scholars, like your instructors, spend their lives engaged in debate over what may be counted as "true," "real," or "right" in their fields. In their courses, they want you to engage in the similar kinds of critical thinking and debate in your writing.

Argumentation is not just what your instructors do. We all use argumentation on a daily basis, and you probably already have some skill crafting an argument. The more you improve your skills in this area, the better you will be at thinking critically, reasoning, making choices, and weighing evidence. You can use these practical skills in everything from jury duty to choosing a laundry detergent or a president.

Making a Claim

What is an argument? In academic writing, an argument is usually a main idea, often called a "claim" or "thesis statement," backed up with evidence that supports the idea. Ninety-nine percent of the time you will be expected to make some sort of claim and use evidence to support it, and your ability to do this well will separate your papers from those of students who see assignments as mere accumulations of fact and detail. In other words, gone are the happy days of being given a "topic" about which you can write anything. It is time to stake out a position and prove why it is a good position for a thinking person to hold. Basically, claims can be as simple as "protons are positively charged and electrons are negatively charged," with evidence such as "in this experiment, protons and electrons acted

in such and such a way." Claims can also be as complex as "the end of the South African system of apartheid was inevitable," using reasoning and evidence such as, "every successful revolution in the modern era has come about after the government in power has given and then removed small concessions to the uprising group." In either case, the rest of your paper will detail reasons and facts that have led you to believe that your position is best. When beginning to write a paper, ask yourself, "what is my point"? For example, the point of this pamphlet is to help you become a better writer, and we are arguing that an important step in the process of writing argumentation is understanding the concept of argumentation. If your papers do not have a main point, they cannot be arguing for anything. Asking yourself what your point is can help you avoid a mere "information dump." Consider this: your instructors probably know a lot more than you do about your subject matter. Why, then, would you want to provide them with material they already know? Instructors are usually looking for two things:

1. Proof that you understand the material, AND
2. A demonstration of your ability to use or apply the material beyond what you have read or heard.

This second part can be done in many ways: you can critique the material, or apply it to something else, or even just explain it in a different way. In order to achieve this second step, though, you must have a particular point to argue. Arguments in academic writing are usually complex and take time to develop. Your argument will need to be more than a simple or obvious statement such as, "Frank Lloyd Wright was a great architect." Such a statement might capture your initial impressions of Wright as you have studied him in class; however, you need to look deeper and express specifically what caused that "greatness." Your instructor will probably expect something more complicated, such as, "Frank Lloyd Wright's architecture combines elements of European modernism, Asian aesthetic form, and locally found materials to create a unique new style," or "There are many strong similarities between Wright's building designs and those of his mother's, which suggests that he may have borrowed some of her ideas." Then you would define your terms and prove your argument with evidence from Wright's drawings and buildings and those of the other architects you mentioned.

Evidence

Do not stop with having a point: you have to back up your point with evidence. The strength of your evidence, and your use of it, can make or break your argument. You already have the natural inclination for this type of thinking, if not in an academic setting. Think about how you talked your parents into letting you borrow the car. Did you present them with lots of instances of trustworthiness on your part from the past? Did you make them feel guilty, because your friends' parents all let them drive? Did you whine until they just wanted you to shut up? Did you look up statistics on teen driving and use them to show how you didn't fit the dangerous-driver profile? These are all types of argumentation, and they exist in academia in similar forms.

Every field has slightly different requirements for acceptable evidence, so familiarize yourself with some arguments from within that field, instead of just applying whatever evidence you like best. Pay attention to your textbooks and your instructor's lectures. What types of argument and evidence are they using? An English instructor and a Sociology instructor are not necessarily going to be swayed by the same type of evidence. Find out what counts as proof that something is true in that field; is it statistics, a logical development of points, something from the object being discussed (art work, text, culture, or atom), the way something works, or some combination of more than one of these things?

Be consistent with your evidence. Unlike negotiating for the use of your parents' car, a college paper is not the place for an all-out blitz of every type of argument. You can often use more than one type of evidence within a paper, but make sure that within each section

that you are providing the reader with evidence appropriate to each claim. So, if you start a paragraph or section with a statement like "putting the student section closer to the court in the Dean Dome will raise player performance," do not follow with your evidence on how much more tuition is raised by letting more students go to games for free. Information about fan support influencing player morale, which then results in better play, would be a better follow-up. Then the next section could clearly offer reasons why undergraduates have as much or more right to an undergraduate event as wealthy alumni--but not in the same section as the fan support stuff. You cannot convince a confused person, so keep things tidy and ordered.

Counterargument

One way to strengthen your argument and show that you have a deep understanding of the issue you are discussing is to anticipate and address counterarguments or objections. By considering what someone who disagrees with your position might have to say about your argument, you show that your have thought things through, and you dispose of some of the reasons your audience might have for not accepting your argument. Recall our discussion of student seating in the Dean Dome. To make the most effective argument possible, you should consider not only what students would say about seating, but also what alumni who have paid a lot to get good seats might say about the issue.

You can generate counterarguments by asking yourself what someone who disagrees with you might say about each of the points you've made or about your position as a whole. If you can't immediately imagine another position, here are some strategies to try:

Do some research. It may seem to you that no one could possibly disagree with the position you are arguing, but someone probably has. For example, some people argue that the Holocaust never happened. If you are making an argument concerning, for example, the accuracy of our knowledge of the Holocaust, you might wish to see what some of these people have to say.

Talk with a friend or with your teacher. Another person may be able to imagine counterarguments that haven't occurred to you.

Consider the conclusion and the premises of your argument, and imagine someone who denies each of them. Then you can see which of these arguments are most worth considering. For example, if you argued "Cats make the best pets. This is because they are clean and independent," you might imagine someone saying "Cats do not make the best pets. They are dirty and needy."

Once you have thought up some counterarguments, consider how you will respond to them--will you concede that your opponent has a point but explain why your audience should nonetheless accept your argument? Will you reject the counterargument and explain why it is mistaken? Either way, you will want to leave your reader with a sense that your argument is stronger than opposing arguments.

When you are summarizing opposing arguments, be charitable: present each argument fairly and objectively, rather than trying to make it look foolish. You want to show that you have seriously considered the many sides of the issue, and that you are not simply attacking or caricaturing your opponents. It is usually better to consider one or two serious counterarguments in some depth, rather than to give a long, but superficial, list of many different counterarguments and replies.
Be sure that your reply is consistent with your original argument. If considering a counterargument changes your position, you will need to go back and revise your original argument accordingly.

Audience

Audience is a very important consideration in argument. A lifetime of dealing with your parents has helped you figure out which arguments work in different situations. Maybe whining works with your dad, but your mom will only accept cold, hard statistics. Your kid brother may listen only to the sound of money in his palm. It's usually wise to think of your audience in an academic setting as someone who is perfectly smart, but who doesn't already or necessarily agree with you. You are not just expressing your opinion in an argument ("it's true because I said so")--and in most cases your audience is pretty knowledgeable on the subject at hand--so you will need sturdier proof. At the same time, do not think of your audience as a genius clairvoyant. You have to come out and state both your claim and your evidence clearly. Do not assume that because the instructor knows the material that they understand what part of it you are using, what you think about it, and why.

(Quelle: http://www.unc.edu/depts/wcweb/handouts/argument.html)