

Graduate School of Public Policy, The University of Tokyo

Guidelines for Writing Academic Papers

January, 2021

The following guidelines describe what need to be taken care of when writing doctoral theses, professional master's theses, research papers, and class papers (hereinafter, "academic papers") at the Graduate School of Public Policy.

1. Sources and Quotations

When describing and outlining social phenomena and referring to previous studies* in academic papers, you must observe the following rules:

*Previous studies are research results published prior to your research in the field that your academic paper deals with. Written materials the existence of which is recognized by its authors and others (e.g., materials jointly written with others, etc.) also fall within the definition of previous studies, even if they have not been published in the form of academic papers.

(1) Identifying sources

- a. Always identify sources when referring to existing systems and institutions or citing previous studies.
- b. When identifying several sources, list them in order, in principle, according to the conventions of the respective academic fields.
- c. Limit information to leading sources when referring to a commonly accepted view, but show more sources when there are disputes.
- d. When citing foreign-language information and studies, identify the Japanese-language version if the material has already been translated into Japanese or described in Japanese-language books or papers.
- e. When identifying sources in English, unless otherwise instructed by your supervisor, follow the latest edition of the *Chicago Manual of Style*.

(2) Quoting

- a. Quote an expression from a previous study by enclosing it in quotation marks, and identify its source. If a key term is a concept originally proposed by a previous study, the key term is recommended to be enclosed in quotation marks. Not doing so may cause a misunderstanding that you claim to have coined the term. If, however, it has already become widely used in the academic circle, the term is not necessary to be enclosed in quotation marks every time.
- b. Ensure to show omissions and changes clearly by inserting ellipsis points (...) to indicate a partial omission within a quote or brackets ([]) to indicate a partial change.

- c. When making partial omissions or changes to quotes, or quoting only a portion of a passage, make sure not to alter the intended meaning of the original.
- d. If you wish to explain a previous work without quotation marks, you must identify the source clearly and paraphrase its expressions significantly in your words to make them to appear completely different from the original.
- e. State explicitly if foreign-language information and studies have already been translated in Japanese-language books or papers.
- f. Similar to printed materials, online resources may also serve as information sources for academic papers. As with other materials, you must clearly identify sources (URLs), and also need to carefully examine the credibility of the website and the posted information. When quoting from a website, you need to write the date on which you accessed to refer the information, not only to specify the URL. Since websites are frequently updated and sometimes disappear, it is recommended that you print out the contents and keep a paper copy, even if you refer to or quote only a portion.
- g. If quoting in English, unless otherwise instructed by your supervisor, follow the latest edition of the *Chicago Manual of Style*.

2. Plagiarism

Using the words of others without quotation marks and without a reference to the original source constitutes plagiarism. In universities, the publishing industry, and the society at large, plagiarism infringes on the intellectual property rights of others, and must be avoided by all means. Research outcomes are achieved by the steady efforts of individuals and research teams. Copyrights of individuals (and teams) are protected by law. Pretending that you have written something that was written by someone else, claiming that you have achieved something that was achieved by someone else without permission, is plagiarism. Such conduct may not only be subject to punishment but may also debase the whole research activities. It would not be forgiven.

Not only you should avoid intentional plagiarism by all means, but you must also prepare your academic paper carefully in order not to invite suspicion of plagiarism unintentionally. Papers written in your non-native language in particular require closer attention than papers written in your native language.

The following conduct may be considered plagiarism:

- (1) Writing any part of a previous work without indicating it as a quotation, that is, presenting it as your own idea and research outcome without identifying the source. Needless to say, this would be considered intentional plagiarism.
- (2) Writing a part of a previous work in the body of the text with a similar expression without quotation marks, although you cite a previous work. A sentence without quotation marks is regarded as the author's original writing. Hence, typing a text of another person with only a minor change of words or expressions, without quotation

marks, may be considered plagiarism, even if you have clearly indicated that you are explaining a previous work and identified the reference.

- (3) Using figures, tables, data, statistical analysis, theorems, propositions, and so forth from previous works without identifying their sources.

What is important is to clearly demonstrate your appreciation of previous studies by highlighting your marginal contributions to the literature. Failure to do so may make people think your quotations of previous studies as inappropriate. In order to avoid such an unintentional problem, you should show your references in a well-organized manner.

3. Specific Instructions According to Methodology Used for Academic Papers

(1) Statistical or econometric analysis

- a. You must clearly identify the source of data used in your academic paper. If your data are publicly or commercially available, you need to identify the public source or the data vendor. If you have collected the data yourself, you need to describe clearly how the data were collected.
- b. Protection of privacy: If you use data containing personal information that can identify an individual, you need to present your work while protecting individual identities, for example, by using pseudonyms. Any data containing personal information must be kept under strict control.
- c. You must take all necessary steps to ensure that your statistical or econometric analysis can be replicated and confirmed by a third party. Some academic journals may require authors to furnish the data and the program codes used in a paper for publication. Even if you are not required to furnish such data and program codes, you should make them ready for disclosure to a third party upon request. (It should be noted that any data containing personal information must be disclosed in a form that prevents identification of each individual. Also, you should be prepared to be able to explain the existence, if any, of restrictions on data disclosure to a third party.)
- d. When you collect data which require ethical considerations, you must apply for an ethics review by the Office for Life Science Research Ethics and Safety of the University of Tokyo.

(2) Experiments

When you conduct an experiment or collect data using human subjects, you may be required to apply for an ethics review by the Research Ethics Committee of the Office for Life Science Research Ethics and Safety of the University of Tokyo. Although you are not necessarily required to request for an ethics review in all cases, you are expected to make an appropriate decision at your own risk. You need to request a review without fail in case you find it necessary.

Submission of such a request will not be required under normal circumstances in economic experiments, which are usually unlikely to cause psychological, physical, or economic harm to human subjects. If, however, you have any of the following cases, you must submit a request for an ethics review. When you have any doubt in your judgment, you should consult the Office for Life Science Research Ethics and Safety of the university headquarters.

- An ethics review and approval by the Research Ethics Committee are required by law or guidelines (e.g., under the Ethical Guidelines for Clinical Studies, Ethical Guidelines for Human Genome/Gene Analysis Research, etc.)
- A questionnaire or interview survey that may require ethical considerations
- A study which requires safety considerations for study subjects
- A study which analyzes and stores information or data which may be detrimental to certain socially disadvantaged populations
- A study which requires the informed consent of its participants; or
- A study for which an ethics review by the Research Ethics Committee is required by academic journals

(3) Interview records

When you carry out interviews of the parties relevant to your research, you must take note of the following. You should keep in mind that a breach of any of the following conditions will cause problems for not only yourself but other researchers who wish to conduct subsequent research (e.g., refusal to grant an interview).

- a. Obtain unequivocal consent of the interviewee in advance.
- b. Explain the purpose of the interview clearly to the interviewee.
- c. If the interview needs to be recorded, obtain unequivocal consent of the interviewee.
- d. Obtain unequivocal consent in respect of the format in which the interview will be published: whether the entire content of the interview may be published, and whether parts of it may be quoted and so forth.
- e. Keep accurate records of the interviewee's name, his or her position, and date, time, and place of the interview. Obtain an agreement as to the extent of the inclusion of the interview results in your academic paper (e.g., whether the name or initials should be used, or the interviewee's employer can be identified, etc.). Even when the entire content of the interview cannot be included in your research paper or thesis, you must keep it ready for presentation as evidence to the extent which does not breach the agreement with the interviewee, if required by a third party.
- f. Mutually agree in advance as to whether the interviewee can review your academic paper prior to publishing.

It should be noted that there is no assurance that the information given in an interview is necessarily the objective truth. Accordingly, the use of the information requires due attention.

The use of records of a field study of a factory or other places requires the same consideration. If you obtain special data, or were allowed a special observation, upon a promise of confidentiality, you must comply. Taking photographs requires careful attention (that is, you must refrain from taking photographs where it is prohibited, or obtain prior permission whenever you have a concern).

(4) Historical materials

- a. When you use historical materials which are publicly available in archives or elsewhere, you must keep records of the names of the archives and the material, as well as their reference numbers so that researchers conducting subsequent research can refer to them. If the use of the material, which is deposited in an archive, is permitted on the condition that you would submit your draft academic paper to the depositor for review in advance and that you need to receive his or her approval, you must comply with the condition.
- b. When you conduct statistical or econometric analysis with the data you obtained from archives, refer to the instructions in Section 3 (1) "Statistical or econometric analysis" above.
- c. If you have given special permission from an individual or corporation to allow you to examine materials, you must obtain a prior agreement as to the extent of disclosure of the materials (including the name of the owner of the material) or disclosure of personal information in your academic paper, and comply with the terms of the agreement. It is highly debatable if facts revealed by materials for which ownership cannot be revealed can be widely accepted.

Note: These guidelines have been prepared using the relevant portions of the two sets of guidelines listed below, since they need to take into account conventions followed in the related disciplines of law, politics, and economics due to the unique nature of public policy studies.

- "Preparing Research Papers and Theses: Guidelines for Writing Doctoral Theses in the Fields of Law and Politics," Graduate Schools for Law and Politics, The University of Tokyo, 2011
- "Guidelines for Research Papers and Theses," Graduate School of Economics, The University of Tokyo, 2011