



ZOOLOGICAL INSTITUTE
CONSERVATION BIOLOGY

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Semesterarbeit

General rules

This short thematic job has the aim to render the students more familiar with the scientific procedure for estimating the state of knowledge in a given field of research. It will also makes the student more familiar with scientific logical thinking and the editing process.

Once the subject is selected (see list at the end), the student has 4 weeks for handing in a first version of his report if the work is done during the lecture-free period (8 weeks if the job is done during the term); a possible extension of another two weeks is possible after discussion with the Semesterarbeit supervisor. The report is then corrected by the supervisor and marked within 4 weeks.

The main basic articles and books for starting a literature review will be provided by the supervisors; note that CB division has a huge database that can be consulted (contact: Olivier Roth under olivier.roth@nat.unibe.ch).

Further research will be made on the web :
(<http://wok.consortium.ch/portal.cgi?Init=Yes&SID=A1efA@LoDNahnc9JL3e>)
at the FBB (Fachbereich Bibliothek Bühlplatz), or at any other relevant institution or from any expert person dealing with your subject.

Report structure

The report is in German, English or French ; it has a maximum of 10 pages. It must have the following logical structure:

- Title
- Your name and the name of your supervisor
- Summary of your work (300 words maximum)
- Introduction: frame your research question. State the reason for the work, the context and the hypotheses being tested.



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- Material & methods:
 - Procedure followed by you
 - Sources of information used: databases, contact institutions and persons

- Results
 - This section must have the form of a general synthesis, i.e. an overview of the main trends indicated by the result of the research : you must here so to say present the state of the knowledge with respect to the question asked
 - Don't comment every piece of information separately, but sum up the information in a logical way
 - You must well balance the information you obtained from the different sources : a paper published in Nature as not the same scientific impact as the information you may have collected from an NGO activist

- Discussion
 - Point out the importance of the results and place them in the context of previous studies and in relation to the application of the work. Where appropriate, set out recommendations for management or policy.
 - Here you must actually take a critical position regarding the available information: what do you think about the quality of that information (is it scientifically well grounded, for instance) ? Is it convincing ? Does it indicate ways to follow ? Where is information greatly lacking, etc.

- Acknowledgements

- References
 - List here all references used (articles, website links, etc.) : for an appropriate citation procedure see Instructions

- Tables. These should be referred to in the text as Table 1, etc.

- Figures. Figures and their legends should be grouped together at the end of the paper. Figures should be referred to in the text as Fig. 1, Figs 1 & 2, etc. Photographic illustrations should also be referred to as Figures.

- Supplementary Material and Appendices.



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Information of Prof. Schümperli about Semesterarbeit

Die Zielgrösse des Berichts ist bis ca. 10 Seiten (maximal 30'000 Zeichen mit Lehrscläggen).

Die Studis sollten sich von allem Anfang daran gewöhnen, keine Textpassagen mit Cut/Paste-Technik zu übernehmen, sondern Ihre Aussagen selber neu zu formulieren. Zudem sollten Sie die Quellen zitierter Informationen mit korrekten Referenzen angeben. Analog zum Artikel 28 Absatz 2 des RSL, der sich auf Bachelor-, Master- und Doktorarbeiten bezieht, sollten Sie am Ende der Arbeit die folgende Erklärung abgeben und unterschreiben:

"Ich erkläre hiermit, dass ich diese Arbeit selbstständig verfasst und keine anderen als die angegebenen Quellen benutzt habe. Alle Stellen, die wörtlich oder sinngemäss aus Quellen entnommen wurden, habe ich als solche gekennzeichnet. Mir ist bekannt, dass andernfalls die Semesterarbeit als ungenügend taxiert werden kann."

Students can also propose their own subject. For that purpose, they have to send a one A4-page sketch (including: title, question asked, goal, methods envisaged, expected results, etc.) to raphael.arlettaz@nat.unibe.ch; the relevance of the subject will be checked and a decision about suitability communicated over email usually within 10 working days of receipt.

R. Arlettaz and assistants

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