

Faculty of Management and Economics

Chair of Public and Regional Economics
Prof. Dr. Thushyanthan Baskaran

Information regarding Plagiarism

In recent years an increased number of academic works have been handed in at universities and colleges which, in part or even completely, were copied from other theses or seminar papers. This development is mainly the result of the rapid spread of the Internet and the thereby facilitated availability of seminar papers and bachelor and master theses.

As a result, the Chair of Public and Regional Economics has decided on the following guidelines on dealing with submitted academic work: **Any seminar paper and thesis has to be handed in as hard and as a digital copy.**¹ The digital version has to match the printed version invariably in content and wording. Moreover, the **“Declaration of Honour Regarding the autonomous Preparation of Master/Bachelor Thesis or Seminar Paper”**² has to be signed and included in all seminar papers and theses.

The digital version of every thesis or seminar paper is checked with an **anti-plagiarism software** routinely. This type of software has a very high hit ratio, since it works with Internet search and forensic stylometric.

¹ Cf. the “Guidelines for Writing Theses and Seminar Papers” on our homepage.

² The official form can be found on the chair’s homepage and has to be signed personally.

In case a submitted thesis or seminar paper is detected to be or to contain plagiarism (definition below) serious consequences ensue. These consequences range, depending on the severity of the attempt to deceive, from downgrading (Notenabzug), over grading an exposition “insufficient,” to further sanctions at the discretion of the examination committee.

Plagiarism (according to the “Resolution des Deutschen Hochschulverbandes zur Sicherung guter wissenschaftlicher Praxis”) denotes the case in which the writings of a third party were completely or partially adopted, verbatim or nearly verbatim, for the purpose of a seminar paper or thesis and submitted as **own** scientific effort. In this sense, plagiarism does also exist if a scientific work is translated from another language. Analogous citation and literal citation put in quotation marks, which are marked as a quote and whose sources are cited,³ naturally **do not** fall under this definition.

Submitting a plagiarism instead of a seminar paper or thesis prepared autonomously is **not a minor offense**, but does constitute a grave violation of elementary scientific rules (cf. Resolution des Deutschen Hochschulverbandes, Grundsätze zur Sicherung guter wissenschaftlicher Praxis der Deutschen Forschungsgemeinschaft) as well as a violation of the copyright act (§ 23, 24 UrhG)) and meets the criteria of a statutory offense of deception (Article 263 paragraph 1 StGB). Equally the criterion of a statutory offense of deception is met if a paper is submitted which, in part or in the whole, has already been submitted in other courses at the Faculty of Administration and Economics, at any other faculty or any other university.

³ Cf. the “Guidelines for Writing Theses and Seminar Papers” on our homepage.