Political Science Research Paper

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Political science in the Federal Republic of Germany – featured examples

Abstract: This paper presents the history of German political science and its current status. It contains a comparison of modern Political Science majors offered by the three top rated universities in German rankings – the University of Potsdam, Free University of Berlin and Humboldt University. It outlines the structure of political science studies, the type of courses offered and the literature used during teaching.

Key words: political science, science, university, Germany

The history of German political science is full of gaps and complexities. This is already reflected in the name of this discipline, which went through numerous evolutions: from "Politics"[1] to "Teaching Politics,"[2] and later in the Federal Republic of Germany, to "Science of Politics,"[3] "Scientific Politics,"[4] "Political Science,"[5] "Politics"[6] and finally "Political Science"[7] (*Politikwissenschaft*; Bleek, 2001, pp. 18–19).

The shape of today's German political science was strongly influenced by the events of 1945. It does not mean, however, that there are no older foundations, which date back to the Middle Ages and which are inseparably connected with the creation of universities (Bleek, p. 9). Being aware of this fact, C. J. Friedrich, a political scientist who contributed to the re-rooting of this discipline in the FRG, stated that the "Science of Politics," through its long ideological tradition is "both the oldest and the youngest science of human society" (Friedrich, 1954, p. 325).

In the early modern period, politics became an independent science with its own chair at Protestant universities. Until the mid-nineteenth century, the core of politics survived in the writings of G. W. F. Hegel, F. Schleiermacher and F. C. Dahlmann in the form of the philosophical and historically-oriented, liberal-bourgeois science of constitutions.

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[1] Ger. "*Politik.*"

[2] "*Lehre von der Politik.*"

[3] "*Wissenschaft von der Politik.*"

[4] Contrary to its name – "*Wissenschaftliche Politik*" – this scientific movement had nothing in common with making practical politics more scientific.

[5] The notion "*Politische Wissenschaft*" is a direct translation of the English term "*Political Science.*"

[6] The term "*Politologie*" used to describe the major and the title of graduates from Berlin was proposed by 2 political scientists – E. Fischer-Baling and G. von Eynern.

[7] The term "*Politikwissenschaft,*" as the most relevant to the content, and as being the most accurate in linguistic terms, was first used at the end of the twentieth century. At the same time it should be noted that what was formerly known as teaching of political science has little in common with today's political science, it can, however, help to understand its shape.

Political science research paper writing is a fundamental aspect of academic inquiry in the field of political science. It serves as a critical tool for students, scholars, and practitioners to analyze political phenomena, evaluate theories, and contribute to the ongoing discourse around governance, policy-making, and political behavior. In this comprehensive guide, we will explore the essential components of a political science research paper, the process of conducting research, and tips for successful writing.

Understanding Political Science Research Papers

Political science research papers differ from other types of academic writing primarily in their focus on political theories, concepts, and empirical data. These papers are designed to investigate specific questions or

hypotheses about political systems, behaviors, or institutions. They can address a wide range of topics, from international relations and comparative politics to public policy and political theory.

Key Elements of a Political Science Research Paper

A well-structured political science research paper typically includes several key elements:

1. **Title Page:** The first impression of your paper, including the title, your name, and institutional affiliation.

2. **Abstract:** A brief summary of the research question, methodology, findings, and conclusions.

3. **Introduction:** This section introduces the topic, states the research question, and outlines the significance of the study.

4. **Literature Review:** A comprehensive review of existing research and theories related to your topic, identifying gaps your paper aims to fill.

5. **Methodology:** A detailed description of the research methods used to gather data, including qualitative or quantitative approaches.

6. **Analysis and Findings:** Presentation and interpretation of the data collected, supported by evidence and critical reasoning.

7. **Conclusion:** A summary of the main findings, their implications, and suggestions for future research.

8. **References:** A complete list of all sources cited in the paper, formatted according to a specific citation style.

Choosing a Research Topic

Selecting a compelling topic is crucial for the success of your political science research paper. Here are some tips for choosing a research topic:

Tips for Topic Selection

- **Relevance:** Choose a topic that is relevant to current political debates or issues.

- **Interest:** Select a subject that genuinely interests you, as this will motivate your research and writing.

- **Feasibility:** Ensure that the topic is manageable within the scope of your assignment and the available resources.

- **Originality:** Aim for a unique angle or a less-explored aspect of a popular topic to contribute new insights.

Conducting Research

Effective research is the backbone of a strong political science paper. Here are some strategies to enhance your research process:

Research Methods

1. Primary Research: This involves collecting original data through surveys, interviews, or observations. It allows you to gather firsthand information and insights directly from your subjects.

2. Secondary Research: Utilize existing literature, such as academic journals, books, and articles, to gather data and understand the prevailing theories in your area of study.

3. Comparative Analysis: Compare different political systems, policies, or theories to identify patterns, similarities, and differences that can enhance your argument.

4. Case Studies: Conduct in-depth analyses of specific instances or events to illustrate broader political concepts or trends.

Utilizing Resources

Make use of various resources to strengthen your research:

- Academic Databases: Access databases like JSTOR, Google Scholar, and ProQuest for scholarly articles and papers.
- Library Archives: University libraries often have extensive collections of books, journals, and government documents.
- Government Websites: Official government websites provide valuable data, reports, and statistics relevant to political research.
- Think Tanks and NGOs: Research from think tanks and non-governmental organizations can provide insights into policy analysis and political trends.

Writing the Paper

Once you have gathered your research, the next step is to organize and write your political science research paper effectively.

Writing Tips

1. Outline Your Paper: Create a detailed outline to organize your thoughts, ensuring a logical flow of ideas throughout the paper.

2. Be Clear and Concise: Use clear language and avoid jargon unless necessary. Ensure that your arguments are straightforward and easy to follow.

3. Support Your Arguments: Use evidence from your research to support your claims. This might include quotes, data, or case studies that reinforce your points.

4. Cite Sources Properly: Adhere to the required citation style (APA, MLA, Chicago, etc.) to give credit to

original authors and avoid plagiarism.

5. Revise and Edit: After completing your draft, take the time to revise and edit for clarity, coherence, and grammar. Consider seeking feedback from peers or professors.

Conclusion

Writing a political science research paper can be a challenging yet rewarding endeavor. By understanding the key elements of a research paper, choosing a relevant topic, conducting thorough research, and following effective writing practices, you can create a compelling and insightful analysis of political issues. Whether you are a student, researcher, or practitioner, honing your skills in political science research is essential for contributing to the ever-evolving landscape of political discourse.

With these guidelines in mind, you are now better equipped to embark on your journey of political science research and writing. Embrace the process, stay curious, and contribute to the understanding of political phenomena in your unique way.

Frequently Asked Questions

What are the key components of a political science research paper?

A political science research paper typically includes an introduction, literature review, methodology, analysis, discussion, and conclusion.

How do I choose a topic for my political science research paper?

Choose a topic that interests you, has sufficient scholarly resources available, and addresses current political issues or debates.

What research methods are commonly used in political science?

Common research methods in political science include qualitative methods (interviews, case studies), quantitative methods (surveys, statistical analysis), and comparative analysis.

How important is the literature review in a political science research paper?

The literature review is crucial as it situates your research within existing scholarship, identifies gaps, and justifies your study's relevance.

What criteria should I use to evaluate sources for my research?

Evaluate sources based on their credibility, relevance, authority, accuracy, and purpose to ensure your research is well-supported.

How can I effectively present my findings in a political science research paper?

Use clear and concise language, support your arguments with data and examples, and consider visual aids like charts or graphs to enhance understanding.

What common mistakes should I avoid when writing my paper?

Avoid vague thesis statements, insufficient evidence, lack of organization, and failing to properly cite sources,

which can undermine your paper's credibility.

How can I ensure my research paper contributes to the field of political science?

Ensure your paper addresses a relevant question, provides new insights, and engages with existing literature to contribute to ongoing debates in political science.

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Remove the chicken from the broth and shred it on a cutting board. Add the chicken back to the soup along with the kale, sun-dried tomatoes and Parmesan.

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Remove chicken from soup and let cool. Remove meat from bones and shred, discard skin. Return meat to pot and stir in parsley and noodles. Cook for another 20 minutes.

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