

Writing a Synopsis

(SCHÄFER/PÖSCHEL, Semesterplaner 2017-2018, S. 134f.)¹

Synopsis = 1st draft of a thesis

When planning a consultation with your academic tutor about your Bachelor project, it is wise to prepare a synopsis of your project.

A synopsis is much more than a first table-of-contents

Instead, it needs to convey the following information:

- *what*,
- *for what purpose*,
- *how*,
- within which *time frame*,
- applying *which methods* &
- building on *which theory* you would like to deal with your topic.

A synopsis forces you to structure your thoughts clearly; it allows you to correctly assess the work done and the work still necessary. It also prevents you from choosing a topic prematurely.

A synopsis contains at least the following elements:

- *Personal details* (surname, first name, degree course, semester, student ID),
- *Timeframe* for writing your thesis.
- *Title* suggested.
- Brief overview of the aspects you wish to study and why you are dealing with the topic (*Theoretical & practical relevance of the topic*).
- Elaboration of the central *theoretical framework* and – with empirical studies – the *concept of gaining the data*.
When *writing for/with a firm*, also state how the new knowledge provided by your thesis is to be implemented.
- Overview of the *current state of research* (including a *list of the most relevant literature*) and outline of *your own expertise* so far.²
- Representation of your planned *original/novel contribution* (problems, hypotheses, models etc.)³
- Delineation of *results expected*.
- Draft *table-of-contents*
- *Task schedule*⁴: = Overview of timed work packages (Which point of the T-o-C is to be finished when?)

¹ **Synopsis** = DE: *Exposé*

² A typical shortcoming of synopses is insufficient research, as a result of which it is claimed that the topic at hand needs to be dealt with extensively.

³ The larger your **original contribution**, the larger the likelihood of positive assessment of your thesis. – Apart from the options mentioned, other (less challenging) forms could be: self-devised graphs (e.g. charts and tables), process models, stage models.

⁴ **Task schedule** = DE: *Arbeitsplan*