Writing a term paper - Guidelines

Types of term papers
There are two types of term papers you can write: a theoretical literature review or an empirical paper. For both types you need to define a clear research question that you would like to address.

1. Theoretical paper/literature review
You can discuss one particular theory or model of a phenomenon or contrast different theories. Start by outlining the phenomenon and research question and why it is important. Then sketch the account (s) of the phenomenon and its potential problems. Finally you discuss the empirical evidence and conclude how the theory manages or fails to capture the phenomenon. Let's take an example: our research question is *How are scalar implicatures computed?.* You could contrast the Neo-Gricean and grammatical theory and outlines how each account derives scalar implicatures. Then discuss cases for which one theory fares better than the other. What are remaining challenges for each account?

2. Empirical paper
This type of paper would centered around the empirical evidence. You can either discuss existing experiments, make a proposal for an experiment design or present an experiment that you conducted. For this type of paper it is also important to lay out the theoretical background assumptions, the theory just takes up less space in your paper. For our example question, you could discuss the existing eyetracking studies on the online processing of scalar implicatures. What do the experiments show? What are the methodological challenges? The conclusion of your paper could summarize what we know and what we don't know about the processing of implicatures to date.

Planning
Please discuss the topic of your paper with your advisor. You will get the most support if you choose a topic that your advisor is interested in. Typically you have 6 to 8 weeks to write the paper during the semester break. Start thinking about the topic and reading the relevant literature at the start of the semester break and make yourself a schedule for different milestones of writing the paper (e.g., reading, writing theory part, writing discussion).

Structure and table of contents
Please include the title of your paper and a table of contents at the start of your paper. In the following, you see two typical examples of the table of contents.

Theoretical paper/literature review
1. Introduction (relevance of the topic, research question)
2. Theory x
3. Theory y
4. Empirical evidence
5. Conclusions

Empirical paper
1. Introduction (relevance of the topic, research question)
2. Theoretical Background

3. Experiments
   - 3.1. Methods
   - 3.2. Results
   - 3.2. Discussion
4. General discussion and conclusions

Formatting of references
Use APA citation style and guidelines for formatting:
https://apastyle.apa.org/style-grammar-guidelines/references

Citation and ChatGPT3
Mind the distinction between literal quotes and indirect citation. You are not allowed to copy chunks of text from a paper. If you quote ideas or paragraphs indirectly, this also needs to be acknowledged. Any form of plagiarism causes damage to the academic system and will lead to failing. If you play around with ChatGPT3 (which can be fun and enlightening), make sure you use it in a smart way and don't just copy a mediocre essay or non-sense text.

FAQ
How many references should I include? Between 5-10

How do I find a topic/research question? Think about the topics that interested you in class, get inspired by reading a paper that was discussed during class, talk to your advisor.