

Syllabus

Writing for Academic Publication in Management and Organization Studies (online PhD course, 4 ECTS)

Course tutor:

Dr Nick Butler

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Course coordinator:

Helene Olofsson

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Course level

This is a doctoral level course that awards 4 ECTS upon completion.

Aim

The aim of the course is to stimulate critical reflection on the academic writing process, both practically and ethically, and to provide the skills to edit one's own work effectively.

Eligibility and requirements

The course is intended for PhD students in management and organization studies. Participants are expected to have started the thesis writing process. The course takes place entirely online via the video conferencing tool Zoom, which participants will need to download prior to the course. The course is funded by the Nordic Academy of Management (NFF), so PhD students from NFF members institutions will be prioritized. The language of instruction and examination is English.

Course content

This intensive week-long course is about the craft of academic writing. The course focuses on writing as a social and organizational practice rather than a universal set of skills. The emphasis is on the practical and ethical choices involved in what and how we write academically, instead of the 'one best way' of producing text for scholarly publication.

On one level, writing is the most visible of academic tasks: it is the means by which we convey our ideas in theses, books and articles. On another level, writing is the least visible of academic tasks: we do it behind closed doors, in silent dialogue with ourselves. Even if the outcome of our writing will be shared with others, the act of writing itself remains profoundly private. Writing is a source of worry and anxiety – particularly among doctoral students – precisely because we are expected to do it, and do it well, with little or no formal training. This course is designed to bring academic writing out from the shadows and into the light of day, not just by talking about writing but also by actually doing it together.

Learning outcomes

Upon completion of the course, students should be able to:

1. Appreciate different styles of academic writing
2. Apply principles of effective writing and editing to their work
3. Reflect on the practical and ethical dimensions of academic publishing

Teaching and learning activities

Each session is an interactive online seminar that is split into two parts. In the first part, we will discuss the craft of academic writing in relation to a specific topic. This will take the form of class discussion and small group work. In the second half, we will collectively edit a text produced by a course participant.

In preparation for the course, participants must send the course tutor an extract from their recent academic writing (e.g. thesis, conference paper, draft article, or another work-in-progress). The text must be a two-page, 12-point, double-spaced Word document. In addition, participants need to read the compulsory readings. All readings will be provided to participants in advance, with the exception of Sword, H. (2012) *Stylish Academic Writing* – please acquire this book prior to the course.

Examination

Participants will submit a written assignment at the end of the course. Participants will edit two pages of their own work and write a critical essay reflecting on how they edited it. They will draw on the course literature to discuss the process of editing, including word choice, sentence length, paragraph structure, voice, and style. Essays must include both the original two-page text (written before the course begins) and the edited text. Essays should be no more than 1,500 words, excluding the original and edited text. Students will receive a grade of ‘pass’ or ‘fail’.

Registration

To register for the course, please contact Helene Olofsson (helene.olofsson@sbs.su.se).

Schedule

Deadline for registration: 17 January 2022

Deadline for submitting your two-page text to the course tutor: 31 January 2022

Session 1: Monday 7 February (9.00-12.30 CET)

Session 2: Tuesday 8 February (9.00-12.30 CET)

Session 3: Wednesday 9 February (9.00-12.30 CET)

Session 4: Thursday 10 February (9.00-12.30 CET)

Session 5: Friday 11 February (9.00-12.30 CET)

Deadline for submitting your written assignment to the course tutor: 4 March 2022

Session overview and reading list

- **Session 1: Writing habits**

This session explores the ways we write as academics: what, how, where, when...and why. We will discuss writing habits and routines, reflect on our emotional relationship to writing, and share our favourite procrastination techniques. The second part introduces the principles of editing that we will use throughout the rest of the course.

Readings

Parker, M. (2014) 'Writing: What can be said, by who, and where?', in E. Jeanes and T. Huzzard (eds.) *Critical Management Research: Reflections from the Field*. London: Sage.

Clark, R.P. (2006) 'Cut big, then small', in *Writing Tools: 50 Essential Strategies for Every Writer*. New York: Little, Brown and Company.

- **Session 2: Writing style and stylish writing (part 1)**

This session examines the nature of academic writing on a sentence-by-sentence level. We will see what stylish writing involves and how we can avoid the most common pitfalls. In the second part, we will collectively edit a text by a course participant.

Readings

Sword, H. (2012) 'Ch. 4: Voice and echo', in *Stylish Academic Writing*. Cambridge and London: Harvard University Press.

Sword, H. (2012) 'Ch. 5: Smart sentencing', in *Stylish Academic Writing*. Cambridge and London: Harvard University Press.

- **Session 3: Writing style and stylish writing (part 2)**

This session continues to examine the nature of academic writing on a sentence-by-sentence level. We will try to understand why academic texts are often so painful to read, and what we can do to make our own writing more powerful and effective. In the second part, we will collectively edit a text by a course participant.

Readings

Billig, M. (2013) 'Learning to write badly', in *Learn to Write Badly: How to succeed in the social sciences*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Sword, H. (2012) 'Ch. 10: Jargonitis', in *Stylish Academic Writing*. Cambridge and London: Harvard University Press.

Sword, H. (2012) 'Ch. 7: Hooks and sinkers', in *Stylish Academic Writing*. Cambridge and London: Harvard University Press.

- **Session 4: Planning to write**

This session is about planning one's writing time and carrying out this plan. We will consider different ways of managing our writing time and learn how to set and achieve goals whilst remaining happy and productive. In the second part, we will collectively edit a text by a course participant.

Readings

Belcher, W. (2009) 'Designing your plan for writing', *Writing Your Journal Article in 12 Weeks: A Guide to Academic Publishing Success*. London: Sage.

- **Session 5: Publishing ethics**

This session explores the ethical dilemmas we face during publication process, from initial submission to eventual publication. We will discuss our experiences of submitting work to academic journals and reflect on how publishing can modify our relationship to research. In the second part, we will collectively edit a text by a course participant. Guest tutor: Dr Sverre Spoelstra, Associate Professor at Copenhagen Business School, Denmark.

Readings

Butler, N. and S. Spoelstra (2017) 'How to become less excellent', in T. Huzzard, M. Benner and D. Kärreman (eds.) *The Corporatization of the Business School: Minerva Meets the Market*. London and New York: Routledge.