

PMCb1002 Academic Writing - Syllabus, Autumn 2023

Lecturer

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Guarantor

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Course objectives

This 5 ECTS course aims to introduce undergraduate students to the basic principles of academic writing. The course will provide students with an explanation of academic writing styles, literature review, the structure and language of research papers, abstracts, working with professional literature, sources, and referencing. Overall, the course will provide information about all the necessary structural elements of an academic paper and how to organize and present arguments. After completing the course, students will know the basic elements of academic papers, the academic style of writing, and will be able to critically read texts, actively use sources, write and edit an academic paper, apply the norms for proper citation of sources, and work with feedback. The knowledge acquired during the course will be used by students for their own original research in the study program.

Course requirements

Before every class, students should have done the respective assigned readings to better understand the material presented during class and to ask any questions they may have. If time remains at the end of a class, students can use that time to work on the exercise or their final paper with the teacher's help.

After every class, students will be required to complete a short exercise related to the topic covered, and the exercise must be submitted to the Information System before the next class. After every class, students will also be required to complete a part of their final paper. The teacher will review their work and provide feedback for every part that students can then incorporate into their final paper. As such, by the end of the semester, students should have received comments for every part of their final paper and should be able to simply put the parts together with regard to the teacher's comments. The final paper should be approximately 8 pages and is due before December 22, 2023. As this course takes place during the first half of the semester, we will also have one more class in November where students can ask the teacher to review their work or answer any questions they may have.

Useful links for the course and your academic career

Grammarly: <https://library.fss.muni.cz/study-research-support/grammar/grammarly>

Zotero: <https://www.zotero.org/>

Masaryk University's writing lab: <https://writinglab.cjv.muni.cz/>

Citation guide: <https://www.mendeley.com/guides/citation-guides/>

Grading Scheme

A total of 85 points is available:

- 2 points per class for presence and participation for the six classes (12 points total)
- 3 points for each of the six exercises (18 points total)
- 55 points for the final research paper
 - 5 points for each of the six research paper sections done throughout the semester (30 points total)
 - 25 points for the final paper

A: 85-77

B: 76-69

C: 68-63

D: 62-57

E: 56-51 – A minimum of 51 points is required to pass the course

F: 50 or less

In the case of an N grade, students will have the opportunity to revise the term paper based on individual instructions from the instructor.

Schedule

Classes and date	Time and location
September 19, Introduction and Class 1	16:00-17:40, Online
September 26, Class 2	16:00-17:40, FSS P24a
October 3, Class 3	16:00-17:40, FSS P24a
October 10, Class 4	16:00-17:40, FSS P24a
October 17, Class 5	16:00-17:40, FSS P24a
October 24, Class 6	16:00-17:40, FSS P24a
November TBD, final paper seminar	16:00, 17:40, location TBD

September 19: Introduction and Class 1

16:00-17:40, Online

Topics

- Introduction to the course
- Academic writing style – basic elements
- How to use [Grammarly](#)

Required readings

- “Features of Academic Writing,” (pp. 88-96), Gillett, A., Hammond, A., & Martala, M. (2013). Inside track to successful academic writing.
- Appendix A (pp. 183-186), Hartley, J. (2008). Academic Writing and Publishing. A Practical Handbook. Abingdon: Routledge.

Assignment

- Complete exercise 1 on academic writing styles
- Submit (by email or in the Homework Vault) three potential topics for your final paper

September 26: Class 2

16:00-17:40, FSS P24a

Topics

- Different types of writing – essays, research proposals, book reviews, case studies, abstracts, etc
- Working with sources
 - Primary and secondary scholarly sources
 - How to search for information
 - How to read sources and annotate
 - How to do a literature review
- How to develop a research question
- A discussion on final paper topics

Required readings

- “Genre and Discipline-Specific Writing” (pp. 214-238), Gillett, A., Hammond, A., & Martala, M. (2013). Inside track to successful academic writing.
- Chapter 3.7 “Book reviews” (pp.115-122), Hartley, J. (2008). Academic Writing and Publishing. A Practical Handbook. Abingdon: Routledge.
- Chapter 4.1 “Finding, keeping and disseminating information” (pp. 131-136), Hartley, J. (2008). Academic Writing and Publishing. A Practical Handbook. Abingdon: Routledge.
- Chapter 4 “Carrying out the Research” (pp.39-58), Gillett, A., Hammond, A., & Martala, M. (2013). Inside track to successful academic writing.

Assignment

- Complete exercise 2 on working with sources
- Develop a research question that will guide your final paper

October 3: Class 3

16:00-17:40, FSS P24a

Topics

- Referencing – what is it? Why do we need it? Paraphrasing?
- Citation style
 - In-text and bibliography, parentheses and footnotes
- A discussion on plagiarism and ChatGPT
- How to use Zotero
- Overview – the structure of an academic paper

Required readings

- Chapter 3.3 “Literature Reviews” (pp. 87-93), Hartley, J. (2008). Academic Writing and Publishing. A Practical Handbook. Abingdon: Routledge.
- Article about ChatGPT: <https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2023/02/writing-education-language-empathy-ai-chatgpt-age/672999/>
- Chapter 9, “Referencing and Plagiarism” (pp. 145- 155), Jesson, J., Matheson, L., & Lacey, F. M. (2011). Doing your literature review: Traditional and systematic techniques. Sage.
- Watch this Zotero tutorial:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JG7Uq_JFDzE&ab_channel=StevenBradburn

Assignment

- Complete exercise 3 on ChatGPT
- Identify at least 5 relevant sources to your final paper’s topic and provide a short summary for each of them

October 10: Class 4
16:00-17:40, FSS P24a

Topics

- Structure of an academic paper – part 1
 - Introduction
 - Motive, thesis
 - Theoretical background
 - Contextual background/current state of knowledge
 - Methodology
 - Body
 - Arguments

Required readings

- Chapter 2.5 “Introductions” (pp. 41-43), Hartley, J. (2008). Academic Writing and Publishing. A Practical Handbook. Abingdon: Routledge.
- Chapter 2.6 “Methods” (pp. 45-46), Hartley, J. (2008). Academic Writing and Publishing. A Practical Handbook. Abingdon: Routledge.
- “On the Importance of Structure” (pp.257-273), Belcher, W. L. (2019). Writing your journal article in twelve weeks: A guide to academic publishing success. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Assignment

- Complete exercise 4 on introductions
- Write the introduction and methodology for your final essay
- Begin writing the body for your final paper – current state of knowledge and contextual background (not graded right away, but I can provide comments if you submit some of your work)

October 17: Class 5

16:00-17:40, FSS P24a

Topics

- Structure of an academic paper – part 2
 - Discussion and conclusion
- Abstract and keywords
- Table of contents
- Acknowledgements
- Titles

Required readings

- Chapter 2.8 “Discussions” (pp. 49-51), Hartley, J. (2008). *Academic Writing and Publishing. A Practical Handbook*. Abingdon: Routledge.
- “Writing an Abstract” (pp. 232-233), Gillett, A., Hammond, A., & Martala, M. (2013). *Inside track to successful academic writing*.
- Chapter 2.3 “Abstracts” (pp. 31-36), Hartley, J. (2008). *Academic Writing and Publishing. A Practical Handbook*. Abingdon: Routledge.
- Chapter 2.1 “Titles” (pp. 23-28), Hartley, J. (2008). *Academic Writing and Publishing. A Practical Handbook*. Abingdon: Routledge.

Assignment

- Complete exercise 5 on abstracts
- Finish writing the body for your final paper – theoretical background and analysis
- Write the discussion and conclusion for your final paper

October 24: Class 6

16:00-17:40, FSS P24a

Topics

- Questions on the analysis/body of an article?
- How to edit your work
- How to give and receive feedback
- Any topic you would like to review or topics we did not cover

Required readings

- “Editing Your Sentences” (pp. 308-323), Belcher, W. L. (2019). *Writing your journal article in twelve weeks: A guide to academic publishing success*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Chapter 14 “Working with Feedback” (pp. 255-270), Gillett, A., Hammond, A., & Martala, M. (2013). *Inside track to successful academic writing*.
- Chapter 15 “Editing your Work” (pp. 271-282), Gillett, A., Hammond, A., & Martala, M. (2013). *Inside track to successful academic writing*.
- Appendix 2 “Guidelines for revising text” (pp. 187-188), Hartley, J. (2008). *Academic Writing and Publishing. A Practical Handbook*. Abingdon: Routledge.

Assignment

- Complete exercise 6 on editing
- Write an abstract for your final paper and identify 5 key works for your paper

Academic Honesty

Students are expected to know the Masaryk University study rules and maintain academic honesty by refraining from plagiarism and cheating. Plagiarism means that one presents other people's ideas as one's own and does not credit the author. Plagiarism is one of the most severe breaches of ethical standards in the academic environment, for it denies the mission of the university and the meaning of studying. From a legal perspective, plagiarism is the stealing of intellectual property. The official Faculty of Social Studies disciplinary policy states that academic dishonesty is not tolerated under any circumstances. For students caught plagiarizing or cheating in a course, the minimum penalty is immediate expulsion from the course, a grade of F for the semester, and a referral to the Faculty Dean, who may choose to send the case to the FSS Disciplinary Committee. To avoid plagiarism, students are responsible for learning and following the rules about the proper citation of sources.