

Karl Bruckmeier
Visiting Professor at UNL – FCSH, Lisboa

Syllabus for a short course
“Scientific Writing”
Elective course for Doctoral Students

Time: 02-03 and 28-29 May 2019

Language: English

Author of the course syllabus and teacher: Karl Bruckmeier

email: karlbr@fcs.unl.pt

The course is an introduction in the forms and problems of scientific writing in social and interdisciplinary sciences, with two parts:

Part 1 - course sessions: May 02, 03, 28 – three sessions of 2 academic hours (introductory lectures with powerpoint slides, discussions in the class, short groups works/exercises)

Part 2 - individual meetings: May 29 - each participant should mail to the teacher a scientific text/paper he/she has written (in Portuguese or English language) as part of – or related to – his/her thesis. This text will be reviewed by the teacher and discussed in an individual meeting with the student after the course sessions.

The discussion in the individual meeting is the examination. For successful participation it is required to participate in all sessions, to deliver a text written by the student, and to discuss this text in the individual meeting with the teacher.

Themes of the course: Traditions and norms of scientific writing in the social sciences; the process of writing a doctoral thesis; scientific monographs – structure and publication (publisher and internet); scientific articles – structure and publication (journal and internet); quality of scientific texts – methods, language and style of writing; ethics of scientific writing; practical problems in scientific writing.

Course material: Electronic copies of course literature and power point slides from lectures will be mailed to the participants.

Time Plan

Session	Time	Theme
	Friday 26/04/19	<i>Information and course material mailed to participants</i>
	26/04 – 02/05/19	<p><i>Individual preparation</i></p> <p>Before the course:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - reading texts 1 and 2 (from text 2 only the introduction) of the course literature (Irvin and Hartley) - answering a short questionnaire (mailed together with the course material) where each participant describes the main difficulties in writing his/her thesis <p>During the course (until May 29):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - each participant prepares a scientific text (can be a draft of a thesis chapters, or a course paper, or an article you want to submit for publication) to be discussed individually with the teacher
		Part 1: Course sessions - principles and practices of scientific writing
1	Thu 02/05/2019 18.00h Room ...	<p><i>To read before this session: texts 3 and 4 (Mills and Becker) of the course literature</i></p> <p><u>Lecture and discussion 1:</u> Scientific writing - general criteria, traditions and norms in the social sciences, difficulties in scientific writing</p> <p><u>Group work 1:</u> Discussion of scientific writing - difference to other forms of writing</p> <p><u>Individual task after the session:</u> Reflecting about the work with the supervisor of your thesis – what do you expect from the supervisor, work practices of supervision</p>
2	Fri 03/05/2019 18.00h Room ...	<p><i>To read before this session: text 5 (Randolph) of the course literature</i></p> <p><u>Lecture and discussion 2:</u> Process of writing a doctoral thesis – thesis forms (monographs and compilation thesis), international</p>

		<p>standards of thesis planning and writing, criteria for writing monographs and scientific articles (peer review)</p> <p><i>Group work 2:</i> Discussion of forms of thesis and international standards of thesis writing – how important are they for the practice at the faculty?</p> <p><i>Individual task after the session:</i> Reflecting about international standards of thesis writing – their significance for the own thesis</p>
3	<p>Tue 28/05/2019 18.00 Room ...</p>	<p><i>To read before this session: text 6 (Roig) of the course literature</i></p> <p><i>Lecture and discussion 3:</i> Practical problems of scientific writing, ethic of scientific writing and publishing</p> <p><i>Group work 3:</i> Discuss the quality criteria of research reports/scientific texts and the practical difficulties to achieve the criteria</p> <p><i>Individual task after the session:</i> Reflecting about your thesis plan – difficulties of planning your thesis, unsolved problems/questions in the thesis work</p>
		Part 2: Individual meetings – examination
	<p>Wed 29/05/2019</p> <p>Fri 31/05 – Fri 07/05/19</p>	<p><i>Participants mail their individual texts to the teacher</i></p> <p><i>The examination: an individual meeting of the teacher with each participant (45 minutes) to discuss the text of the participant and the individual questions the participant has regarding his/her thesis (including such questions as: work with the supervisor, thesis planning and revision of plans)</i></p>
	<p>Follow-up Activity</p>	<p>In the months after the course a follow-up seminar with the course participants can be organised to discuss further practical questions of thesis writing (time planned together with the participants at the end of session 3)</p>

Course plan

1. Objectives

The course is about scientific writing for doctoral students in the social and interdisciplinary sciences. It is assumed that the participants have basic experience in scientific writing (course papers, master thesis, or publications).

The course has four objectives:

- (1) creating awareness of the traditions of scientific writing and their changes
- (2) discussing the practical difficulties of scientific writing with regard to thesis writing
- (3) informing about procedures and requirements of publishing books and scientific articles in journals or the internet
- (4) improving the writing skills of participants for scientific texts of different type

The course includes collective and individual work (analysis and assessment of scientific texts, analyses of the processes of writing and publishing scientific texts. On completion of the course, the participants should be able

- to understand social-scientific and general criteria of scientific writing and publishing,
- to describe and explain the forms, components and specific qualities of scientific texts and their production (writing, reviewing, publishing),
- to practice critical reading and reviewing of scientific texts,
- to understand the ethical rules and requirements of scientific writing and publication

2. Description of the course

The methods of the course include individual reading, introductory lectures, group work exercises (discussion of questions coming up in the lectures), and individual reflections about the own thesis project (discussed in individual meetings with the teacher).

The course has two parts:

- (1) Three sessions in the class: lecture, discussion, oral group work
- (2) Individual meetings with the participants

Part 1: Principles and traditions, forms and practices of scientific writing (3 sessions):

1. Scientific and social-scientific writing
2. Writing a doctoral thesis (forms, process of writing)
3. Ethic and practical problems of scientific writing

Part 2: Individual meetings - examination

One meeting of each participant with the teacher to discuss a text written by the participant - this discussion is the examination for the course.

The examination and the evaluation of the course are done in an individual meeting with each student (45 minutes) after the course sessions. To pass the course it is required to read the course literature, to participate in all 3 course sessions, to deliver a text written by the student (in Portuguese or English language) that will be reviewed by the teacher and discussed in an individual meeting. The text should be part of the thesis (a chapter draft, or part of a chapter, or an article) or a text connected with the thesis. If the student has not yet written a chapter or article for the thesis, he/she can use a text written earlier (course paper, examination paper, part of master thesis etc.).

3. Literature

All literature is available before the course (mailed to the students). Participants should read the texts no. 1-2 before the course, the texts no. 3-6 during the course.

Introductory literature:

1. *Irvin, L. Lennie, 2010. What is “Academic” Writing? (in. C. Lowe and P. Zemliansky, eds., Writing spaces: readings on writing. Vol.1) – to read before the course*

2. *Hartley, James, 2008. Academic Writing and Publishing: A Practical Handbook, Routledge: London and New York – reference for the course (not to read the whole book, only selected parts according to the interest of the participant)*

Literature for part 1 of the course: (to read during the course)

3. *Mills, Charles Wright, 1959. The Sociological Imagination. New York: Oxford University Press - appendix “On Intellectual Craftsmanship”.*

4. *Becker, Howard S., 1986. Writing for Social Scientists. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, xii+180 pp, last chapter.*

5. *Randolph, Justus G., 2009. A Guide to Writing the Dissertation Literature Review. Practical Assessment, Research, and Evaluation, Vol. 14, No. 1, 13 pp.*

6. Roig, Miguel, 2003. Avoid plagiarism, self-plagiarism, and other questionable writing practices: A guide to ethical writing. St. Johns University, 63 pp.
(<http://facpub.stjohns.edu/~roigm/plagiarism/Index.html>)

Additional literature (optional reading):

7. Pham, T.B., 2011. Penning the Sociological Imagination: Writing about My Struggles with Writing. *Human Architecture: The Journal of Sociology of Self-Knowledge*, 9, 2, pp. 1-10.

8. Soule, Daniel. P. J., et al, eds., 2007. Writing for Scholarly Journals. Publishing in the Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences. University of Glasgow

9. Elsevier, 2015. Ethics in Research and Publication (ethics.elsevier.com).

10. Torraco, R.J., 2005. Writing Integrative Literature Reviews: Guidelines and Examples. *Human Resource Development Review* 4,3, pp. 356-367.

Reference literature - formalities of scientific writing:

The following texts should not be read, but can be used individually, to check the formalities of scientific writing

The Writing Center. Writing in Sociology. www.umt.edu (undated)

Tischler, Marc E., (undated). Scientific Writing Booklet. University of Arizona.

Turabian, Kate, L., 2007 (1996). A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses and Dissertations. 7. Edition (Chicago Guides to Writing, Editing and Publishing). Chicago: Chicago University Press, 482 pp. (*classical manual about the formalities of academic writing*)

QUT, 2008. Cite, write - Your introductory guide to citing, referencing and academic writing at QUT (www.citewrite.qut.edu.au).

Harvard College, 2009. A guide to writing a Senior thesis in sociology. Harvard University.