

Maria Curie-Sklodowska University

Academic Writing

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Political Science Faculty Room 224

Winter Semester 2019
Contact Hours: Tuesdays 12-14
and Thursdays 14.30-15.30

About the Course

This workshop seeks to help students improve their written English-language academic writing. We will do so by considering what makes a 'good' piece of academic writing, identifying and discussing some of the common flaws of non-native speakers when writing in English, critiquing a lot of written work, and having some of our own written work critiqued by our colleagues.

Reading Materials

The instructor will distribute a number of materials for your critique.

Course Requirements

Students are expected to attend class and actively critique the written work of others. These critiques are important not only for the person hearing your comments but for you, because critiquing the work of others, helps you improve your critical thinking skills.

Preparation of a brief, approximately five-page, introduction to your dissertation in which you identify your topic, provide some background to it, and describe how you intend to approach the topic. This is not a research assignment; the intent is more to get you to think about your dissertation – its argument, its organization, possible sources, etc.--rather than actually beginning to do your dissertation. If your department requires that you prepare a dissertation proposal for this semester, it is fine to use that. This is due by 13 December; the instructor will send a copy of your proposal to other members of the class for their commentary and critique.

Oral presentation to the class about your dissertation proposal. Because students will have read your written proposal prior to your oral presentation, the oral presentation should include different information, to be selected by you. The purpose of the oral presentation is not merely to improve your public speaking skills, but also to use your speaking and listening senses as a means to stimulate your thinking in different ways. The oral presentations will be given on 17 and 24 January 2020.

Grades will be based on the amount of effort you devote to these assignments.

Course Outline and Assignments (tentative)

18 October 12.00-14.00	Introductions to the Course, to Each Other and to Academic Writing
29 November 12.00-15.00	What Makes a Piece of Academic Writing 'Good'? Discussion and examination of others' written work
13 December 12.00-15.00	Issues of Style and Language-Use When Writing in English Lecture and discussion Your writing assignment is due today.
17 January 10.00-13.00	Oral Presentations, Group 1
24 January 10.00-13.00	Oral Presentations, Group 2
31 January 10.00-11.00	A Summing Up of Our Course