Scientific Communication in English: writing skills, 7.5 credits

Vetenskaplig kommunikation på engelska: skrivfärdigheter, 7,5 hp

Course Code/Codes | 35PS071 (corresponds course syllabus 35PS050, 35PS051 och 35PS052)
Subject Area | Psychology, cross-disciplinary
School/equivalent | School of Law, Psychology and Social Work
Valid from | 2017-01-16
Approved | 2016-12-02
Revised | 2019-05-22
Approved by | Head of School
Translation to English, date and signature | 2016-10-01
Svln. (written in English, no translation)

1 Course content

Because science is based on the transparent reporting of results to the broad academic community, communicating the results of scientific studies effectively is an essential aspect. This course tackles the fundamentals of writing so that PhD candidates can better communicate their research effectively in English and thereby reach the global academic community. In particular, this course addresses PhD candidates’ needs to work effectively in writing a scientific research article in psychology for publication in an international journal. To this end, the course will cover basic elements of good scientific writing such as the structure of sentences and paragraphs. This will subsequently be applied to organize the paper into the major sections of a research article. Informed by this, we will also investigate the tension between our own creative expression and the conventions of scientific writing. Most articles today have multiple authors. Hence we will examine the importance of providing and receiving feedback in order to develop a paper. The course focuses on both knowledge about writing as well as the skills involved in clear scientific communication. Meeting the course objectives will be enhanced by a supportive learning environment, homework, feedback, and considerable practice of the acquired skills.

2 Outcomes

2.1 The course in relation to the doctoral programme

The course shall primarily refer to the following intended learning outcomes for third-cycle courses and study programmes as described in the Higher Education Ordinance, i.e. the doctoral student shall demonstrate:

Knowledge and understanding
- advanced and up-to-date specialised knowledge in a limited area of this field (part of outcome 1)
- familiarity with research methodology in general (part of outcome 2)
familiarity with the methods of the specific field of research in particular (part of outcome 2)

**Competence and skills**
- the capacity for scholarly analysis and synthesis (part of outcome 3)
- the capacity to review and assess new and complex phenomena, issues and situations autonomously and critically (part of outcome 3)
- the ability to identify and formulate issues with scholarly precision critically, autonomously and creatively (part of outcome 4)
- the ability to review and evaluate research and other qualified tasks (part of outcome 4)
- the ability in both national and international contexts to present and discuss research and research findings authoritatively in speech and writing and in dialogue with the academic community and society in general (outcome 6)

**Judgement and approach**

The intended learning outcomes are listed in the same order as in the general syllabus for the programme.

### 2.2 Intended course learning outcomes

To obtain a passing grade, the doctoral student shall demonstrate:

**Knowledge and understanding**
- broad knowledge and understanding of the format for publishing scientific articles in psychology
- Familiarity with the structure of written sentences and paragraphs in English
- Broad knowledge and understanding of the elements in writing that make an article clear and interesting.

**Competence and skills**
- Ability to write sentences and paragraphs according to scientific standards
- Ability to apply writing skills to produce a scientific article
- Ability to plan the writing of an article including the production of an outline of an article
- Ability to provide helpful and constructive feedback about an article to another
- the capacity to support the learning of others

**Judgement and approach**
- Intellectual autonomy and disciplinary rectitude
- Ability to read and analyze written texts from a writer’s perspective
- Ability to evaluate and make ethical judgments about writing and reporting results, e.g., concerning authorship and plagiarism

After successfully completing the course, the participant will be able to:
- Critically evaluate the written presentation of a scientific article in psychology
  (Examination: written critical evaluation of a scientific article)
- Describe and employ revision strategies to make writing more clear, coherent, and concise
  (Examination: provide written feedback on a draft article that employ the strategies)
- Write clear, coherent, and concise sentences and paragraphs
  (Examination: written texts)
- Develop a working outline to guide the writing of an article
  (Examination: a written outline)
- Write an introduction and method section of an article according to scientific convention
  (Examination: written article containing an introduction and method section)
- Present, explain, and apply a writing technique to participants
  (Examination: find material, organize, and make a written and verbal presentation in class)

### 3 Reading list and other teaching material

The following course readings and teaching material will be used on the course:
This course utilizes reference books, articles, and materials available on the internet in order to provide current and applicable information. Students will be involved in finding and selecting sources to support the objectives of the course. For instance, they will be active in finding materials about how to revise an article. In addition, since students will be working on writing articles with various subject matters, some of the teaching material will be defined by this and cannot be provided here.

Literature:


Additional articles, webpages, etc will be assigned as students develop their writing projects.

4 Teaching formats

Teaching on the course takes the following format:

Teaching will take the form of short lectures, seminars, homework, and contact hours. Students will be involved and are expected to be active participants throughout the course. Short presentations of material will be followed by discussion and in-class work. Each session will also have assigned homework in the form of readings, skills practice, and preparation for presentations and discussion in the classroom.

5 Examination

The course is assessed through the following examinations which will be graded separately:

Module 0100 Scientific communication in English, clear writing, 2,5 credits. The objectives of writing clear sentences and paragraphs and developing an outline will be examined by a written text and a written outline and a written critical evaluation of a scientific article

Module 0200 Scientific communication in English, revising written text, 2,5 credits. The object of critical evaluation and strategies for revising written text will be examined by a written critical evaluation of a scientific article and written feedback on a draft article.

Module 0300 Written and oral presentation of introduction and method, 2,5 credits. The objective of writing and presenting an introduction and method section will be examined by a written and oral presentation of such an article.

For examinations consisting of several examination components, the following applies: If during the course it is concluded that a doctoral student is unable to complete a certain examination component, the examiner may set a substitute assignment provided that circumstances do not reasonably allow for the course component to be completed at a later date during the run of the course.
6 Grades

Examinations on third-cycle courses and study programmes are to be assessed according to a two-grade scale with either of the grades ‘fail’ or ‘pass’ (local regulations).

The grade shall be determined by a teacher specifically nominated by the higher education institution (the examiner) (Higher Education Ordinance).

To obtain a passing grade on examinations included in the course, the doctoral student is required to demonstrate that he/she attains the intended course learning outcomes as described in section 2.2. Alternatively, if the course consists of multiple examinations generating credit, the doctoral student is required to demonstrate that he/she attains the outcomes that the examination in question refers to in accordance with section 5.

A student who has failed an examination is entitled to a retake.

If an examination consists of several examination components, and a student fails an examination component, the examiner may, as an alternative to a retake, set a make-up assignment with regard to the examination component in question.

A doctoral student who has failed an examination twice for a specific course or course element is entitled, upon his/her request, to have another examiner appointed to determine the grade.

7 Admission to the course

7.1 Admission requirements

To gain access to the course and complete the examinations included in the course, the applicant must be admitted to a doctoral programme at Örebro University.

The student must be proficient in written and oral English.

7.2 Selection

Selection between applicants who have been admitted to doctoral programmes at Örebro University and who otherwise meet the admission requirements as listed above is made according to the following order of precedence:

Doctoral students in psychology will be given priority.

If no other selection criteria are specified in this section, priority shall be given to applicants with a lower number of course credits left before the award of their degree over applicants with a higher number of remaining course credits. Should two or more students have equal number of credits, selection will be done through the drawing of lots. This also applies within any selection groups listed unless otherwise stated.

7.3 Other applicants than doctoral students admitted at Örebro University

Other applicants than doctoral students admitted at Örebro University may be given access to the course on the grounds of provisions for and/or agreements regarding contracted courses, joint degrees, national graduate schools or cooperation in other respects with other universities.

Any decisions on what such other applicants may be given access to the course are made separately and on the basis of the provisions and/or agreements that occasion the student to apply for the course.
For participation in the course in other respects, the same provisions shall apply as for doctoral students admitted to Örebro University.

8 Transfer of credits for courses, study programmes and other experience

Provisions on the transfer of credits can be found in the Higher Education Ordinance and on the university’s webpage.

9 Other information

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Transitional provisions

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