

Fundamentals of Academic Writing:
Developing Research Prospectus
IUP-Department of Psychology, Gadjah Mada University
March 19th - June 4th, 2021

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Class hours: Friday 8.00-10.00 am.
Office hours: by appointment – Zoom only.

Course Overview

This course is designed to assist upper-level undergraduate students in writing the prospectus of their honor thesis. Elements of a thesis are explained, and students are given weekly writing tasks that contribute to their prospectus writing. To complete the course, students are required to eventually write (i) a literature review of their proposed research, and (ii) a proposed data gathering and method of analysis. Certificates will be distributed upon successful completion of the course.

Course Policies and Requirements

This is an online, Zoom based, lecture and seminar. Students are required to attend the Zoom meetings and participate in seminar discussions. Should the students encounter a situation in which they are unable to attend the meeting, they are required to notify the instructor in advance through email.

Required Text

Weekly reading materials are distributed by the instructor through Google Classroom. Students do not need to make any purchase in regard of their readings. Students are expected, however, to read all the required readings of a particular week before they join the class. Reading load is typically more or less 50 pages per week.

Course Expectations

The class is structured as a half lecture and half seminar. The instructor would lecture for the first 50 minutes and then would open a seminar discussion for the next 50 minutes. Every student is expected to participate actively in the discussion commenting on or asking about the reading materials of that particular week. Each student is expected to be polite and courteous toward each other. It is important for the students to learn how to converse in a scholarly manner. A seminar experience goes a long way should they decide to pursue their PhD or graduate study later.

Students may schedule Zoom office hours with the instructor should they need to discuss their respective research project. Office hours are typically 2 hours per week, and each student is allocated a 15 minutes slot. Schedule your appointment early in the week to reserve your slot, in case there are several students making appointment at once.

Weekly Class Schedule

Part I – Writing Literature Review

Week 1 - March 19th, 2021.

What is a thesis?

Readings

- Umberto Eco, “The Definition and Purpose of the Thesis,” in *How to Write a Thesis* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 2015), 1-7.
- Stephen van Evera, “Hypotheses, Laws, and Theories: A User’s Guide,” in *Guide to Methods for Students of Political Science* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1997), 7-27.

Outcomes

- Students are able to identify elements of an undergraduate honor thesis: (i) research questions, (ii) literature review, (ii) argument/theory, (iii) data collection, (iv) methods of analysis, (v) results of analysis, (vi) conclusion.
- Students are able to identify elements of a research abstract – IMRaD (introduction, method, results, and discussion).

Homework

- Write an abstract of 300-500 words of your proposed research.
Deadline: March 26th, 2021.

Week 2 - March 26th, 2021.

Finding relevant sources and assessing their quality.

Readings

- Kate L. Turabian, “Finding Relevant Sources,” in *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations 8th Edition* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2013), 24-36.
- Wayne C. Booth et al., “From Problem to Sources,” in *The Craft of Research 4th Edition* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2016), 65-84.

Outcomes

- Students are able to understand the types of resources.
- Students are able to search relevant articles and books through research database.
- Students are able to assess the quality and relevance of an article.
- Students are able to document those sources using reference management and citation software Zotero.

Homework:

- Find 10 or more journal articles or books that are pertinent to your research project and carefully document them using Zotero.

Deadline: April 16th, 2021.

Week 3 – April 16th, 2021

Critical and systematic reading using matrix and index cards.

Readings

- Kate L. Turabian, “Engaging Sources,” in *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations 8th Edition* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2013), 37-48.
- Wayne C. Booth et al., “Engaging Sources,” in *The Craft of Research 4th Edition* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2016), 85-104.
- Umberto Eco, “The Work Plan and the Index Cards,” in *How to Write a Thesis* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 2015), 115-142.

Outcomes

- Students are able to use matrix to critically read a journal article.
- Students are able to write index cards and documenting important information from readings.
- Students are able to write an annotated bibliography.

Homework

- Write annotated bibliography & matrix of 3 journal articles or books. You should pick those 3 from 10 journal articles and books that you have identified the previous week and are pertinent to your research project.

Deadline: April 23rd, 2021.

Week 4 – April 23rd, 2021

Outlining your literature review: identifying gap & justifying research.

Reading

- “Writing a Literature Review,” George Mason University Writing Center, assessed March 2, 2021, <https://writingcenter.gmu.edu/guides/writing-a-literature-review>.
- Thomas F. Pettigrew, “Intergroup Contact Theory,” *Annual Review of Psychology* 49, (1998): 65-85.
- Michael M. Munger, “10 Tips on How to Write Less Badly,” *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, September 6, 2010.

Outcomes

- Students are able to understand what a literature review essentially is.
- Students are able to identify competing theories explaining a phenomenon of interest.
- Students are able to identify the gap in a literature, and formulate a question addressing that gap.

Homework

- Write the literature review section of your respective research proposal. It should be around 6 to 8 pages double-spaced, or around 2000-2500 words.
Deadline: April 30th, 2021.

Part II – Proposing Your Research

Week 5 – April 30th, 2021.

Formulating research questions.

Reading

- Wayne C. Booth et al., “From Questions to a Problem,” in *The Craft of Research 4th Edition* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2016), 49-64.
- Jorgen Sandberg & Mats Alvesson, “Ways of Constructing Research Questions: Gap-spotting or Problematization?”, *Organization* 18, no.1 (2011): 23-44.

Outcomes

- Students are able to identify typical research questions in a positivist social science research.

Homework

- Write a section wherein you formulate your research questions and justify them in regard to the gap in the literature that you have identified in your literature review. It should be a couple of pages long, double spaced or around 750 to 1000 words.

Deadline: May 7th, 2021.

Week 6 – May 7th, 2021.

Methodology, or how to answer your research questions.

Reading

- Paul M. Kellstedt & Guy D. Whitten, “Research Design,” in *The Fundamentals of Political Science Research 3rd Edition* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 77-100.
- Paul M. Kellstedt & Guy D. Whitten, “Measuring Concepts of Interest” in *The Fundamentals of Political Science Research 3rd Edition* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 104-122.

Outcomes

- Students are able to understand methods of data gathering and data analysis.

Homework

- Write a section on your methodology. Particularly, do think hard about the kind of data that you would like to obtain in order for you to answer your research questions. In addition, you also should discuss how you will analyze your data in order for you to shed light on the phenomenon you are researching. Your methodology section doesn't need to be long. It should be just a few pages double spaced or around 500 words.

Deadline: May 28th, 2021.

Week 7 – May 28th, 2021.

Writing your prospectus: quoting, summarizing, paraphrasing, in short, citing properly.

Reading

- Kate L. Turabian, "Drafting Your Report" in *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations 8th Edition* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2013), 75-83.
- Kate L. Turabian, "General Introduction to Citation Practices" in *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations 8th Edition* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2013), 135-143.
- Kate L. Turabian, "Author-Date the Basic Form" in *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations 8th Edition* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2013), 216-228.

Outcomes

- Students are able to avoid plagiarism.
- Students are able to decide when to cite, summarize, and paraphrase.

Homework

- Draft your prospectus containing your abstract, literature review, research questions, and methodology. It should be around 8 to 10 pages double-spaced or 2500 to 3000 words.

Deadline: June 4th, 2021.

Week 8 – June 4th, 2021.

Peer reviewing: learn how to be critical and yet supportive of your fellow academics.

Reading

- Gregg R. Alexander, “A Guide to Reviewing Manuscripts,” *Maternal and Child Health Journal* 9, no.1 (2005): 113-17.

Expected Outcomes

- Students are able to summarize the research’s core findings and claims in an accurate way.
- Students are able to provide suggestions for better research output, not to underappreciate the work.
- Students are able to praise the work in order to morally support your fellow academics.

Homework

- It is the end of the workshop, so no more substantive homework. However, the students are required to fill in the instructor evaluation form and return it to the instructor. Students’ feedback helps the instructor to improve the workshop in the future.

Deadline: June 6th, 2021.