

## Writing Academic Papers (C004411)

**Course size** *(nominal values; actual values may depend on programme)*

**Credits 4.0**

**Study time 120 h**

**Course offerings and teaching methods in academic year 2024-2025**

A (semester 1)

English

Gent

lecture

independent work

**Lecturers in academic year 2024-2025**

Haelewaters, Danny

WE11

lecturer-in-charge

**Offered in the following programmes in 2024-2025**

[Master of Science in Teaching in Science and Technology\(main subject Biology\)](#)

**crdts**

**offering**

4

A

[Master of Science in Biology](#)

4

A

[Exchange Programme in Biology \(master's level\)](#)

4

A

**Teaching languages**

English

**Keywords**

Academic writing, peer review, scientific writing, storytelling

**Position of the course**

How do you write a paper that gets read and cited by other researchers? In this course, students who are ready to write their first paper learn to think about scientific writing as storytelling. Every week, teacher and students will engage in group analysis, dissection, and editing of written work, both of previously published papers and own manuscript sections. By the end of the semester, every student should have a manuscript that is ready for submission, or almost so.

**Contents**

- Scientific papers as stories
- Creating an outline
- Story structure and story elements
- Paragraph structure
- Sentence structure
- Energizing writing
- Approaches to revising
- Dealing with AI in writing

**Initial competences**

Bachelor degree. Basic writing skills. Competent in English

**Final competences**

- 1 Knowledge on theory about writing sentences, paragraphs, papers.
- 2 Ability to provide constructive criticism to colleagues (peer review).
- 3 Ability to engage the reader through effective writing.
- 4 Ability to apply SUCCES and OCAR concepts in writing manuscripts.
- 5 Write a complete manuscript, section by section, throughout the semester.

**Conditions for credit contract**

Access to this course unit via a credit contract is determined after successful competences assessment

**Conditions for exam contract**

This course unit cannot be taken via an exam contract

## Teaching methods

Group work, Lecture, Independent work

## Extra information on the teaching methods

### Lectures, group work, in-class discussions:

A typical "class" consists of three parts:

- 1 First, after an introduction or lecture by the instructor, students will analyze written work as a group
- 2 Students will provide oral feedback on parts of a paper they were assigned to prepare
- 3 Students will break into peer groups for exercises, discussion, and feedback

### Independent work:

Weekly assignments, which include writing and editing exercises, as well as manuscript milestones (i.e., deadlines for completing certain sections of the student's manuscript)

### Peer assessment:

Students will provide written and oral feedback on the work of their peers

## Study material

Type: Handbook

Name: Writing Science: How to write papers that get cited and proposals that get funded

Indicative price: € 55

Optional: yes

Language : English

Author : Joshua Schimel

ISBN : 978-0-19976-024-4

Number of Pages : 221

Oldest Usable Edition : 2011

Online Available : No

Available in the Library : No

Available through Student Association : No

Usability and Lifetime within the Course Unit : intensive

Usability and Lifetime within the Study Programme : regularly

Usability and Lifetime after the Study Programme : occasionally

Additional information: The lecturer has several copies that can be borrowed.

Type: Handbook

Name: The Scientist's Guide to Writing, 2nd Edition

Indicative price: € 21

Optional: yes

Language : English

Author : Stephen B. Heard

ISBN : 978-0-69121-920-2

Number of Pages : 368

Oldest Usable Edition : 2016

Online Available : No

Available in the Library : No

Available through Student Association : No

Usability and Lifetime within the Course Unit : regularly

Usability and Lifetime within the Study Programme : one-time

Usability and Lifetime after the Study Programme : occasionally

Additional information: The lecturer has several copies that can be borrowed.

Type: Slides

Name: Lecture slides

Indicative price: Free or paid by faculty

Optional: no

Language : English

Available on Ufora : Yes

## References

- <https://www.ugent.be/doctorschool/en/doctoraltraining/courses/transferableskills/writing-academic-papers>

- Gopen GD, Swan JA. 1990. The science of scientific writing. *The American Scientist* 78(6): 550-558.
- Heard SB. 2022. *The Scientist's Guide to Writing*, 2nd Edition. Princeton University Press, Oxford. 368 pp.
- Knight J. 2003. Clear as mud. *Nature* 422(6938): 378. <https://doi.org/10.1038/423376a>
- Kozak M, Hartley J. 2019. Academic science writing: an inconsiderate genre? *European Science Editing* 45(3): 69-71. <https://doi.org/10.20316/ESE.2019.45.19002>
- Mensh B, Kording K. 2017. Ten simple rules for structuring papers. *PLoS Computational Biology* 13(9): e1005619. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pcbi.1005619>
- Schimel J. 2012. *Writing Science: How to write papers that get cited and proposals that get funded*. Oxford University Press, New York. 221 pp.

#### **Course content-related study coaching**

Ample time for questions and interaction during lectures and in-class discussions.  
The lecturer is also available for further questions by email.

#### **Assessment moments**

end-of-term and continuous assessment

#### **Examination methods in case of periodic assessment during the first examination period**

Assignment

#### **Examination methods in case of periodic assessment during the second examination period**

Assignment

#### **Examination methods in case of permanent assessment**

Participation, Peer and/or self assessment

#### **Possibilities of retake in case of permanent assessment**

examination during the second examination period is not possible

#### **Extra information on the examination methods**

Evaluation will be made based on weekly assignments (25%); the final manuscript draft (50%); and class attendance, participation, and quality of peer assessment (25%).

#### **Calculation of the examination mark**

- Assignments: 75%
- Class attendance, participation, and quality of peer assessment: 25%