GHENT UNIVERSITY

Course Specifications

Valid as from the academic year 2024-2025

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 2025-2026

A (semester 1)	English	Gent	lecture
			independent work

Lecturers in academic year 2025-2026

Haelewaters, Danny	WE11	lecturer-in-charge

Offered in the following programmes in 2025-2026	**crdts**	**offering**
Master of Science in Teaching in Science and Technology(main subject Biology)	4	A
Master of Science in Biology	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, studentswill analyze written work as a group
2 Students will provide oral feedback on parts of apaper theywere 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 slies
Indicative price: Free or paid by faculty
Optional: no
Language : English
Available on Ufora : Yes

References

- https://www.ugent.be/doctoralschool/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%