

**HWG704****Research Communication for Graduate Studies**

- Study year** : Recommended for CCDS, CoE, CoS and IGP postgraduates who have completed the first semester of their candidature
- Academic units** : 3 (Pass/Fail)
- Pre-requisite** : HWG703 Graduate English

**CONTENT**

This course sets out to improve the productive (speaking and writing) skills of students with particular reference to writing their PhD theses and making research presentations in English. Two broad subsidiary aims are to increase students' confidence in the use of academic English, and to provide them with the tools and resources for continued self-study and enhancement of their abilities. The course comprises thirteen 3-hour sessions and is thematically based in its treatment of research writing and spoken presentations. Most of the coursework will take place in the classroom, but students will also be required to carry out some preparatory and writing tasks outside the class. Tutor feedback on student drafts will be provided periodically during the semester. By the end of the course, students will complete writing their own specimen research proposal or thesis introduction, relevant to their own field of academic communication. Where appropriate, this may take the form of a 'confirmation report', for PhD students preparing for their qualifying exams. For maximum benefit, this course is recommended for students who have completed at least the first semester of their PhD candidature.

**LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

The major objective of this course is to enable students to master important elements of research communication with reference to their PhD theses including:

1. the conventions of research argumentation;
2. the structure of PhD theses; and
3. presentation skills in seminars and conferences.

**LEARNING OUTCOMES**

Upon successful completion of this course, the students will be able to:

1. understand formal documentation standards relevant to their discipline;
2. recognize and apply patterns of argumentation appropriate to their field;
3. give spoken presentations in English to academic audiences on their research topics; and
4. participate actively and meaningfully in seminar and workshop settings.

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**COURSE SCHEDULE**

	<b>Tutorial topics</b>	<b>Tutorial hours</b>
1	<b>Talking about research</b> Including principles of academic communication, the structure of a postgraduate dissertation or thesis, and 'signposting' in writing.	3
2	<b>Introductions and signposting</b> Investigating the introductions to theses and proposals, thinking about titles, and more on signposting.	6
3	<b>From introduction to literature review</b> Learning key strategies in writing literature reviews, using references appropriately, and scaffolding arguments and ideas through the use of key verbs.	6
4	<b>Research proposals and methodology</b> Learning the structure of a research proposal comprising an introduction, methodology and conclusion, and working on their own research proposal.	6
5	<b>Presenting and describing results</b> Creating appropriate figures and tables, describing results and discussing them in relation to related findings.	6
6	<b>Finishing touches</b> Writing conclusions, summarizing findings, discussing limitations and significance, and indicating areas for future research.	6
7	<b>Presenting your research</b> Making formal presentations on their own research in seminars and conferences, preparing slides and practising delivery.	6

**STUDENT ASSESSMENT**

There is no end-of-semester examination for this course, and continuous assessment will be used for student evaluation instead. This mode of assessment is particularly suited for communication courses as it takes into consideration the development of students' skills in written and oral communication through the semester. Students will be assessed based on individual written assignments (60%), presentations (20%), and class participation (20%).

**Assessment**
**Weighting**
**Written assignments**
**60%**

Students will be required to complete a thesis introduction by the end of the course, in the correct academic format, including a short literature review, rationale for research, description of research issues, significance of research and appropriate references.

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Assessment	Weighting
<b>Oral presentations</b> Students will give 5-minute presentations on their own areas of scientific research.	<b>20%</b>
<b>Class participation</b> The classes will be conducted as small-class workshops (15 students) focusing on written and oral communication skills. To encourage students to participate actively in seminars, they will be evaluated on the quality and quantity of their class participation.	<b>20%</b>

### TEXTBOOKS/REFERENCES

The course materials will be provided by the Language and Communication Centre, but, throughout the course, reference will be made to key theorists in the field of scientific academic communication, including:

Penrose, A. M., & Katz, S. B. (2010). *Writing in the sciences: Exploring conventions of scientific discourse* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). New York: Longman.

Swales, J. M., & Feak, C. B. (2014) *Academic writing for graduate students* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

### Tutorial hours:

Semester	Tutorial hours
School Semester (Semesters 1 and 2)	13 weeks x 3 tutorial hours per week

**Class size:** Cap at a maximum of 15 students per class.