

**Subject title:** Thesis Writing for Research Students

**Subject code:** ELC6002

**Credit value:** Nil

**Pre-requisites:** ELC6001

**Contact hours:** 39

## **Objective**

This subject aims to improve research students' academic writing proficiency, enhance their understanding of the academic audience, develop their awareness of academic conventions, and develop their skills in using clear, appropriate, persuasive, and analytical language in thesis writing.

## **Learning outcomes**

Upon completion of the subject, students will be able to present their research effectively in a thesis through:

- i. presenting the study clearly, appropriately and concisely in the Abstract;
- ii. introducing the background, rationale and aim of the study in the Introduction analytically;
- iii. reviewing the literature critically;
- iv. analysing the appropriateness of the methodology used in the study;
- v. reporting and discussing the findings of the study logically and systematically; and
- vi. discussing the significance of the study in the Conclusion in a clear and succinct manner.

To achieve the above outcomes, students are expected to use language, text structures, and cohesive devices appropriate to the academic audience, select and present information analytically, concisely and appropriately, examine and cite sources critically, and analyse the impact and significance of the research persuasively.

## **Content**

This syllabus is indicative. The balance of the components, and the corresponding weighting, will be based on the specific needs of the students.

With regard to the organisational structures and linguistic features appropriate to different sections of the research thesis, the course will focus on the following:

- i. Critical analysis of prior research
  - Understanding research thesis writing process and the structure of a thesis; identifying language features of thesis writing.

- ii. Awareness of academic conventions
  - Developing awareness of citation practices, referencing format and language use adopted in the related disciplines.
- iii. Inter and intra paragraphing connections
  - Using effective cohesive devices to plan, organize and connect different parts of a research thesis.
- iv. Clear, appropriate, persuasive and analytical language use
  - Summarising, evaluating and citing sources; describing and discussing research data; objectively evaluating research contribution; writing, revising, and proofreading written texts.

### **Teaching and learning approach**

The study method is primarily seminar-based. Activities include teacher input as well as individual and group work involving writing practice, evaluation of texts, mini-presentations and discussions. Practical work will involve analysing texts such as journal articles and research theses that are relevant to students' research areas. Students will be provided with opportunities to apply the language skills acquired to the preparation of their own thesis. Students will be referred to information on the Internet and the ELC's Centre for Independent Language Learning.

Learning materials developed by the English Language Centre are used throughout this course. Additional reference materials will be recommended as required.

### **Assessment**

Continuous assessment: 100%

Students will be assessed on their cohesion and coherence, linguistic accuracy and language appropriateness in fulfilling the task requirements of assignments and activities related to the learning outcomes.

### **Indicative references**

Blair, L. (2016). *Writing a graduate thesis or dissertation*. Sense Publishers.

Calabrese, R. L. (2006). *The elements of an effective dissertation and thesis : a step-by-step guide to getting it right the first time*. UK: Rowman & Littlefield.

Cooley, L., & Lewkowicz, J. (2003). *Dissertation writing in practice: Turning ideas into text*. Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press.

Cooksey, R. W., & McDonald, G. (2019). *Surviving and thriving in postgraduate research* (Second edition). Singapore: Springer Singapore.

- Dunleavy, Patrick. (2011). *Authoring a PhD: How to plan, draft, write and finish a doctoral thesis or dissertation*. Palgrave Macmillan.
- Golden-Biddle, K. & Locke, K. (2007). *Composing qualitative research (Second Edition)*. Sage Publications.
- Feak, C. B., & Swales, J. M. (2009). *Telling a research story: Writing a literature review*. University of Michigan Press.
- Felix, M. S., & Smith, I. (2019). *A practical guide to dissertation and thesis writing*. UK: Cambridge Scholars Publishing.
- Foss, S. K. (2015). *Destination dissertation : a traveller's guide to a done dissertation / (Second Edition)*. UK: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.
- Kornuta, H. M., & Germaine, R. W. (2019). *A concise guide to writing a thesis or dissertation: Educational research and beyond (Second edition)*. Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge.
- Lantsoght, Eva O. L. (2018). *The a-Z of the PhD Trajectory*. Springer International Publishing AG.
- Luey, Beth. (2007). *Revising your dissertation (2nd ed.)*. University of California Press.
- Lunenburg, F. C., & Irby, B. J. (2008). *Writing a successful thesis or dissertation : tips and strategies for students in the social and behavioural sciences*. Corwin.
- Oliver, P. (2013). *Writing your thesis (Third Edition)*. London: Sage.
- Paltridge, B., & Starfield, S. (2020). *Thesis and dissertation writing in a second language : a handbook for students and their supervisors (Second edition)*. Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge.
- Swales, J. M., & Feak, C. B. (2012). *Academic writing for graduate students: Essential tasks and skills (Third Edition)*. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press.