



**FACHHOCHSCHULE
WIENER NEUSTADT**

Austrian Network for Higher Education

University of Applied Sciences

ACADEMIC SKILLS

Class 7

B_BCi 2020, Group 1

Wintersemester 2021

AGENDA



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- Recap
- Abstract
- Quick insight into writing a Research Proposal
- Q&A
- Homework

STATUS QUO



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Class 1 (Sep. 10)	Research, types of literature
Class 2 (Sep. 16)	Research question, citing, search protocol
Class 3 (Sep. 17)	Literature research (plenary session held by the Library)
Class 4 (Oct. 7)	Reading, paraphrasing, literature analysis table
Class 5 (Oct. 14)	Literature Review, process, structure
Class 6 (Oct. 21)	Reasoning, writing style
Class 7 (Nov. 5)	Abstract, research proposal
Class 8 (Dec. 7)	Feedback

STATUS QUO



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INDIVIDUAL ASSIGNMENTS

1. Literature Search Protocol & First Research Question (mandatory)	Sep. 27 Submission on Edunet
2. Literature Review for Peer Feedback (mandatory)	Nov. 4 Submission as MS-Word Document on Edunet + E-Mail to Peer-Group (with lecturer in cc)
3. Peer Feedback on Literature Review (mandatory)	Nov. 11 Submission in PDF-Format on Edunet
4. Version 2 of the Literature Review (voluntary)	Nov. 18 Submission as MS-Word Document on Edunet
5. Final Literature Review + Literature Analysis Table (mandatory = final course grade)	Dec. 18 Submission as PDF-Document on Edunet

5. Best tips for writing

Then, pair up with your neighbour and compare your results. Did you forget to mention something relevant? Write down the most important findings in a bullet point list.

Time: 15 min writing & 15 min discussion



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Abstract

EXAMPLE I



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Abstract


Graduate students are future scientists, and as such, being able to communicate science is imperative for their integration into the scientific community. This is primarily achieved through scientific papers, mostly published in English; however, interactions outside of academia are also beneficial for future scientists. Therefore, academic writing courses are prevalent and popular science communication courses are on the rise. Nevertheless, no rubrics exist for assessing students' writing in academic and science communication courses. This article describes the development and testing of a rubric for assessing advanced L2 STEM graduate students' writing in academic (abstract) and popular science writing (press release). The rubric was developed as part of a longstanding academic writing course, but was modified to include a module on science communication with the lay public. Analysis of student needs and the literature inspired a pre-pilot that assessed 16 descriptors on 60 student works. A subsequent, adjusted pilot version on 30 students resulted in adaptations to fit each genre and course goals. In the third round, a modified, final rubric tested on 177 graduate students was created that can be used for both assessment and comparison of the genres. This rubric can assess scientific genres at the graduate level and can be adapted for other genres and levels.

Source: <https://www-sciencedirect-com.wn.idm.oclc.org/science/article/pii/S1075293516300873>

EXAMPLE II



ABSTRACT

Go to: 

Background: The scientific article in the health sciences evolved from the letter form and purely descriptive style in the seventeenth century to a very standardized structure in the twentieth century known as introduction, methods, results, and discussion (IMRAD). The pace in which this structure began to be used and when it became the most used standard of today's scientific discourse in the health sciences is not well established.

Purpose: The purpose of this study is to point out the period in time during which the IMRAD structure was definitively and widely adopted in medical scientific writing.

Methods: In a cross-sectional study, the frequency of articles written under the IMRAD structure was measured from 1935 to 1985 in a randomly selected sample of articles published in four leading journals in internal medicine: the *British Medical Journal*, *JAMA*, *The Lancet*, and the *New England Journal of Medicine*.

Results: The IMRAD structure, in those journals, began to be used in the 1940s. In the 1970s, it reached 80% and, in the 1980s, was the only pattern adopted in original papers.

Conclusions: Although recommended since the beginning of the twentieth century, the IMRAD structure was adopted as a majority only in the 1970s. The influence of other disciplines and the recommendations of editors are among the facts that contributed to authors adhering to it.

Source: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC442179/>

WHAT IS AN ABSTRACT?



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- **a concise summary of the entire paper**
- it describes but does not evaluate nor defend the work
- it follows a certain structure
- it should contain the most important key words with reference to a) the methodology and 2) content and 3) results to facilitate computer and human searches

Abstract: Why is it so important?



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„The content of an abstract is extremely important because it can influence decisions made by researchers and other potential readers“
(University of Chicago Press 2017, 46).

*„An abstract is a **brief, comprehensive summary** of the contents of the paper. A well-prepared abstract can be the **most important paragraph** in an article...Readers **frequently decide on the basis of the abstract whether to read the entire article**“* (American Psychological Association 2020, 73).

Abstract: The tough thing...



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Being precise and short but still including all the
relevant information.....

ABSTRACT: CONTENT



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Introduction

Method

Results

and

Discussion

Introduction -> Relevance, Research question, Hypothesis

Method -> Data collection method, Data analysis method

Results -> Key outcome

and

Discussion -> Impact

ABSTRACT: CONTENT

~ 250 words

Introduction & research question (aim and relevance)

25%

Method (how you researched)

25%

Results (what you found)

35 %

Discussion (so what?)

15 %

NO-GOs

- defending, evaluating or glorifying your work
- general statements instead of specific findings
- violating the rules of academic writing

AVOID ...

- **providing general statements instead of specific findings**

Example I:

Don't: This study examines the causes of procrastination.

Do: The main causes of procrastination found were the fear of failure, low energy levels as well as a lack of focus among individuals.

NO-GO 1

- **Providing general statements instead of specific findings**

No go

~~This study draws conclusions on the central variables in choosing a gym.~~

Go

The study concludes that the most important variables in choosing a gym are distance to home and price.

10 min Break



ABSTRACT: EXAMPLE

Abstract

IMQ Television advertisements are one of the most persuading and frequently used marketing tools, especially when directed at children. Hence, a systematic literature review is compiled based on Briner and Denyer (2012), focusing on the question to what extent television food advertisements have an impact on children's diet in Europe.

The conclusion drawn from this paper is that children are highly influenced by food advertisements shown on television. Not only increases their overall consumption while watching television, but food advertisements also stimulate their desire to eat high in fat, sugar and salt products. Furthermore, these advertisements have an impact on children's preferences, as they most commonly choose the brands that they already know from television promotions. The outcome of this essay proposes to foster the public's awareness from a governmental point of view and additionally reconsider current television advertisement regulations.

ABSTRACT: EXAMPLE



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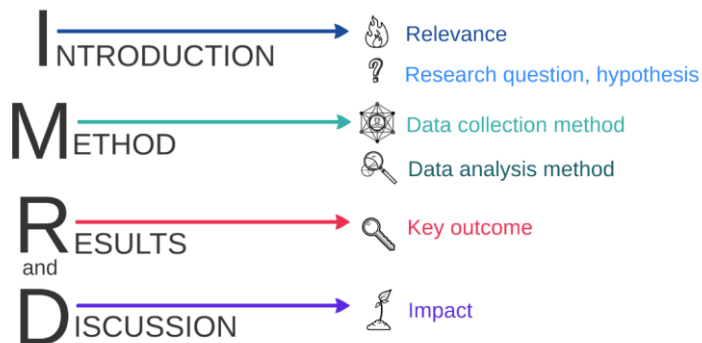
ABSTRACT: EXAMPLE



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ABSTRACT

Even though mind wandering, that is stimulus-independent thought, is a remarkable evolutionary achievement of human beings, philosophical and religious traditions suggest that it comes at an emotional cost. The question pursued in this study is, if mind wandering is linked to happiness. To test the hypotheses that mind wandering affects happiness more than actual activities, real-time data was collected from 5000 people from 83 different countries through the development of an iPhone-application. A multi-level regression model revealed that people were less happy when their minds were wandering than when they were not and what people were thinking was a better predictor of their happiness than was what they were doing. In conclusion, a human mind is a wandering mind and a wandering mind is an unhappy mind. This outcome may have implications for psycho-therapy, stress treatment and burnout prevention alike.

Killingsworth, Matthew A. und Daniel T. Gilbert. "A Wandering Mind Is an Unhappy Mind." *Science* 12 Nov 2010: Vol. 330, Issue 6006, pp. 932. DOI: 10.1126/science.1192439

Bouhania (2018)

Class exercise: Writing your abstract



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Take 20 Minutes to write your own preliminary abstract.

Then take 15 minutes to give your peer-partner feedback on it!



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10 min Break





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Research Proposal

WHAT IS A RESEARCH PROPOSAL?

- **proposal for a research project**
- it describes the 5 Ws & How
(What, Why, How, Who, Where & When)
- **Goal:** present and justify a research idea

WHY IS A RESEARCH PROPOSAL NEEDED?



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- to justify your future research (why is it worthwhile?)
- to obtain approval for your thesis proposal
- to receive funding for your project

RESEARCH PROPOSAL - CONTENT



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- 1) Research Context and Rationale
- 2) Research Objective
- 3) Current State of Research (only needed for empirical study)
- 4) Research Method
- 5) Structure of the Paper
- 6) Bibliography

1) RESEARCH CONTEXT AND RATIONALE



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- Introduction to the topic
- Context statement, problem statement
- Further introduce your topic by providing e.g. main concepts, definitions, most relevant empirical findings, etc.
- Significance and contribution of your research

Refer to relevant academic literature.

Remember that all quotations need to be properly cited.

1) RESEARCH CONTEXT AND RATIONALE



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Some questions that might help you guide your research context and rationale:

- Who has an interest in the topic?
- How much is already known about the research question?
- What is currently missing in the literature?
- Which new insights will your work deliver?
- Why is your study worth conducting?

2) RESEARCH OBJECTIVE



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- What is the key research objective? What does your thesis aim to achieve?
- Present the **central research question or hypothesis** (hypothesis only for empirical study) which will be investigated in your work.

3) CURRENT STATE OF RESEARCH



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- Describe the status of academic research on the research question/hypothesis.

Refer to relevant academic literature.

(Only needed for empirical studies)

4) RESEARCH METHOD

For a literature review

- Describe the methodological design:
(e.g. literature review)
 - Which criteria are applied for selecting sources?
 - Which databases, catalogues etc. are used?
 - Search strings/key words
 - Process of selecting adequate sources
 - Describe the body of literature that is available and the quality of available sources
 - Describe the principles and rules for interpretation and synthesis of evidence

4) RESEARCH METHOD

For an empirical study

- Describe the methodological design (e.g. qualitative study, quantitative study, experiment, case study research).
- Describe the empirical setting, if applicable.
- Describe the data collection method:
 - data basis or data collection method (e.g. interviews, focus groups, observation, survey)
 - data acquisition tool (guidelines, questionnaire, databases/data sources)
 - selection criteria (sampling, time frame, etc.)
 - procedure for data acquisition

4) RESEARCH METHOD

For an empirical study

- Describe the method you will use for data analysis:
 - Qualitative: method of data analysis (e.g. content analysis) and planned procedure
 - Quantitative and experimental: specify the statistical testing procedure for each hypothesis
 - Case Study Research: systematic procedure of data analysis; describe analysis method for each data source

5) STRUCTURE OF THE PAPER



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- Preliminary table of contents

This requires a fully developed understanding of the topic.

No more than 4 outline levels are required (maximum)

6) BIBLIOGRAPHY



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- Correct references of literature used in the proposal
- Correct references of literature planned for use in the Bachelor paper
- Refer to the BCI Citation Guide
- It is recommended to mainly use specialist literature from recognized academic international journals

STEPS FOR A RESEARCH PROPOSAL



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- 1) Determine a general topic.
- 2) Perform a literature search/review on the topic.
- 3) Identify a gap in the literature.
- 4) Identify a problem.
- 5) Write an introduction.
- 6) Determine research hypotheses and/or research question.
- 7) Determine the method, target group, sample size, data collection and data analysis procedures.

SELF-EVALUATION GUIDELINE

Structural requirements

- Does the research proposal have a descriptive title (i.e. is it clear from the title what the proposal/thesis is about)?
- Does the research proposal contain a research context?
- Does the research proposal contain a research question or overarching aim?
- Does the research proposal contain a working hypothesis (in case a quantitative project is proposed)?
- Does the research proposal suggest a comprehensive research design that includes (i) methods of data collection, (ii) sampling and (iii) methods of data analysis?
- Does the research proposal present a suggested thesis outline?
- Does the research proposal include a bibliography/list of references?

Content

- Is it clear to the reader which specific aspect of the topic the author is interested in?
- Does the research context properly introduce the reader to the subject matter?
- Does the research context explain the rationale of the topic choice (importance and topicality)?
- Does the research context properly link to the topic and/or research interest specified by the author?
- Is/Are the presented research question(s) clear and focused?

SELF-EVALUATION GUIDELINE

Content

- Does the proposed research design fit with the research question(s) or hypotheses?
- Is it clear which data collection techniques and data analysis procedures are suggested for the thesis?
- Are the references relevant and current?
- Are the references of sufficient quality (i.e. also academic journal articles from high ranked journals, not primarily textbooks, etc.)?

SELF-EVALUATION GUIDELINE

Formality and presentation

- Is the formal structure consistent and sound?
- Is the layout clearly arranged and appealing?
- Have the citation guidelines been accurately applied in in-text citations?
- Have the citation guidelines been accurately applied in the bibliography?

SELF-EVALUATION GUIDELINE



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Writing

- Is the writing understandable?
- Does the style and language adhere with the standards of academic writing?
- Is the text free from grammar and spelling mistakes?

3-2-1



Write down

- 3 things you learned
- 2 things you want to know more about
- 1 question

3-2-1
ACADEMIC SKILLS I - BBCI



Take 10 minutes to reflect on the course.

3 things you learned

1

2

3

2 things you want to know more about

1

2

1 question you still have

1



Last tips and Q&A



Share your writing tips!

These are the ones from last years students....



- Do not be afraid to rethink the whole process. Specifying and narrowing down your topic can help a lot
- to be clear
- It is best for me to write out the general ideas of a paragraph and then elaborate on them section by section
- the structure
- Every sentence you write helps, even if you end up deleting it.
- Discussing your topic with your friend or someone can really help you get a new perspective and maybe they will give you some interesting ideas aswell
- Research on several different databases and also run quick google searches about the topic
- Look into cited articles from the ones you use. Look for studies who define your topic/concept first
- You are probably always biting more than you can chew and you will realize mid research
- That I need to start working on my research proposal
- Staying clear and direct in the proposal
- Finding with detailed information
- start with writing then the flow comes automatically
- Do not get lost
- That everybody struggles at the beginning

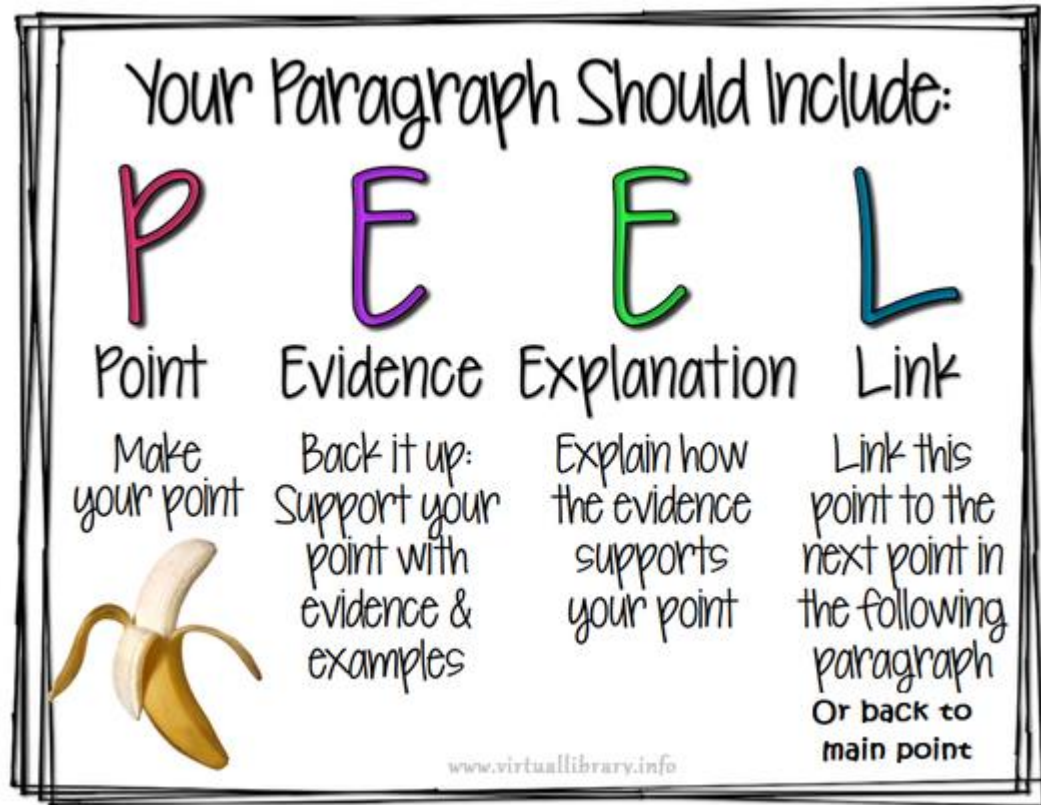
Mine are....



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<https://www.virtuallibrary.info/peel-paragraph-writing.html>

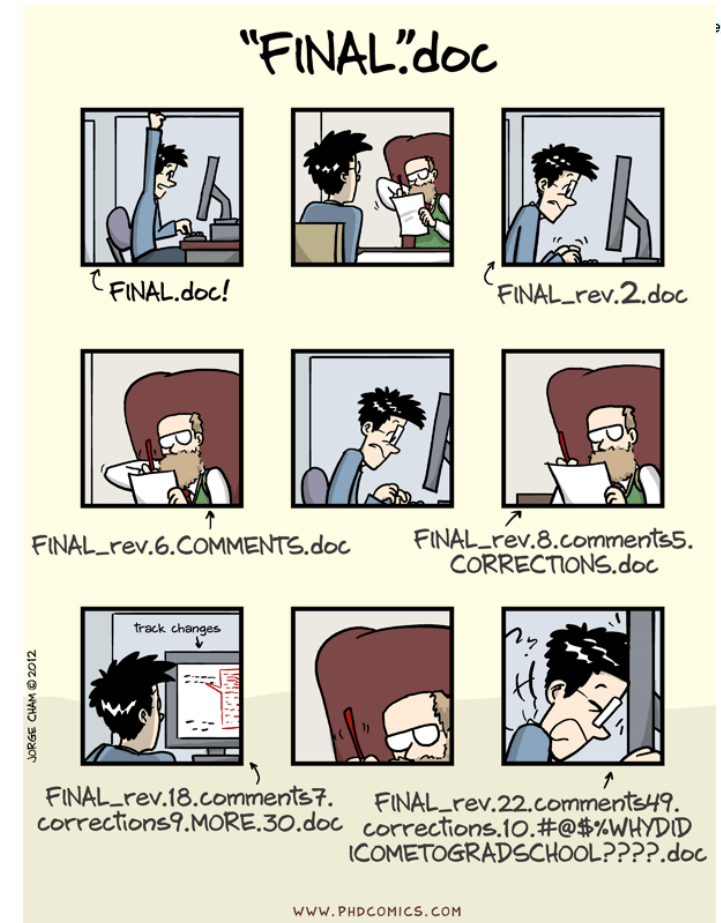
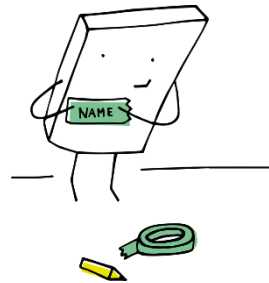
Mine are....



Revising the first draft is absolutely necessary and an essential part of writing a paper.

- Scientific language style: re-read Unit 6 & use a dictionary of synonyms in the spirit of varied language.
- Use a spellchecker
- Have your work proofread
- Make sure you cite CORRECTLY
- Don't forget to put your name on your Literature Review
- Also: Use the essay evaluation guidelines

**Last but not least: Make sure to
actually ANSWER YOUR RESEARCH
QUESTION!!!!**



QUESTIONS?



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HOME ASSIGNMENT #6



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- (1) Continue and finish the ongoing peer feedback process.**
Don't forget to forward the feedback to your assigned partner.
- (2) Incorporate the received feedback in your work and add an abstract to your literature review.**
- (3) Submit your second draft.**
(including incorporation of feedback and abstract)