



The Art of Academic Writing

Dr. Shmuel Lederman
shmulikled@gmail.com

The focus of this course is academic writing. It is aimed at helping students improve their skills in writing papers across a variety of disciplines and methods, as required in our program. How do we identify the main arguments of a text? How do we analyze these arguments? What kind of responses can we offer to such arguments? How do we present our own thoughts, analysis, and arguments when writing a paper? The course addresses these questions in order to assist students in maximizing their academic skills and successfully fulfilling their course requirements.

Course Requirements:

Full attendance.

Weekly reading assignments: Students are required to read the assigned papers for each week and to upload to Moodle a short (up to 1 page) evaluation of their strengths and weaknesses.

Sharing papers: Each student is required to share one referat/seminar paper s/he has written or is writing for a course in the program (it can be a work in progress).

Grading: This is a pass/fail course.

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Recommended reading:

Luke Strongman, *Academic Writing* (Cambridge Scholars, 2013), chap. 1.

Trevor Day, *Successful Academic Writing* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013).

Stephen Bailey, *Academic Writing: A Handbook for International Students* (London: Routledge, 2006).

Neil Murray and Geraldine Hughes, *Writing Up Your University Assignments and Research Projects: A Practical Handbook* (Maidenhead: Open University Press, 2008).

Rowena Murray and Sarah Moore, *The Handbook of Academic Writing: A Fresh Approach* (Maidenhead and New York: Open University Press, 2006).

Guidelines for weekly evaluations:

Assess:

Research question: Does the paper have a clear research question? Is it focused enough? Does the paper answer the research question?

Introduction: Does the paper have a clear introduction? Does the introduction clarify what the paper is about and its contribution to the existing literature? Is the introduction appealing? What makes it such?

Arguments: What are the main arguments of the paper? Does the paper manage to substantiate them?

Context: To what extent does the paper manage to contextualize the information/arguments it presents historically/theoretically?

Secondary literature: Does the paper successfully integrate the secondary literature it uses? Is it clear what scholarly approaches exist on the main topic of the paper?

Quotations: Does the paper use quotations? Are they good quotations (for example, do they illustrate the main points the paper attempts to get across)? Are there too many or too few quotations?

Writing style: Is the paper written in an appealing way? Could some parts be written in a way that would have been more attractive to the readers?

References: Are the references written according to the citation rules?

Conclusion: Does the conclusion summarize the paper's main findings accurately?