

Writing Scientific English for the ESL* Learner

VT2018, Graduate student course

*English second language

30 January to 20 March, 2018 (7 Tuesday afternoons; no class during week 8). **Deadline for application: 12 January 2018 at 5 p.m.** Successful applicants will be notified by email shortly thereafter.

Course description: The scientific paper is an essential part of the research process. This course will teach how to structure and write an article for publication in a scientific journal. The course will cover mechanics of good English usage (grammar, punctuation, and writing style), especially from the viewpoint of non-native English speakers. A lecturer from the Dept. of English will present the most common errors encountered in scientific English and provide individual feedback on the students' writing. The submission and referee processes are covered by an editor from a scientific journal.

Who is eligible to take the course:

Ph.D. students registered at departments within the TekNat Faculty. M.Sc. students are not eligible. If there are available places, Ph.D. students from other Faculties can be accepted. The course is intended for non-native speakers of English. Students are encouraged to bring their own writing as material for the course.

When and where: Tuesdays 15.15-17.00 at the Biomedical Center (BMC)

How to apply: Applications must be made by email to the contact person. Give your social security number (personnummer), your supervisor's name, full department address (in English), and native language(s). Include a mobile number where you can be reached. State in 100 words or fewer (in English) why you need this course at this point in your PhD career. Applicants will be notified immediately after the deadline (if they received a place or not). The class is limited to 16 students to ensure individualized attention in the writing exercises.

Contact person: Terese Bergfors, ICM, tel 471 4543, terese.bergfors@icm.uu.se

Credit points: 3

Examination form: The examination consists of the writing exercises assigned throughout the eight-week period. Some of these will be done during the class and others must be completed at home. All of the writing assignments must be completed to receive the course credits. Attendance at the lectures is obligatory. In the event of illness, up to one absence can be replaced with an extra writing assignment.

Lecturers:

Christer Geisler, Dept. of English

Terese Bergfors, Structural Biology, ICM, & previous co-editor of Acta Crystallographica

Expected learning outcomes of the course:

After the course, the students should be able to:

1. Use the classical IMRAD structure to write, in acceptable English, a scientific journal article containing: Title, Authors List, Abstract, Materials and Methods, Results, Discussion, References. (Figures will *not* be covered).
2. Recognize and correct the most common mistakes in English grammar in their manuscripts.
3. Understand the submission, editorial, and referee processes.

Topics to be covered include:

1. What is the IMRAD style?
2. Structure and content: How is an article constructed? How is a (good) paragraph constructed? The importance of topic sentences.
3. Why is the title so important? How do I write a concise abstract?
4. How to write the Introduction with the CARS model.
5. How to construct an argument in the Discussion section.
6. Exercises in writing and English grammar. Tutorials and individualized exercises for problems specific to certain language backgrounds. British vs. American English.

Course literature:

- Robert Day's **How to Write and Publish a Scientific Paper**, 4th edition or later. *No need to buy the book. You will get a copy without cost as part of the course.*

Updated 21 December 2017