

# ***Proposal Writing and Scholarly Publication***

## Course for Doctoral Students in Economics or Business Economics

**Instructor: Prof. Dr. Uschi Backes-Gellner, Prof. Dr. Kerstin Pull  
Teaching Assistant: Simone Tuor**

**Spring Term 2009  
Seminar: March 30 - April 3, 2009**

### **Aims of the course**

We will discuss various topics related to writing a dissertation or working papers and publishing them in refereed journals. We focus particularly on how to find a topic, how to structure the argument (paper) and how to sell a paper (idea) as well as how to handle revisions and resubmissions.

The aim is pursued by three different course elements. Firstly, each student presents a piece of the required literature and thereby works out general guidelines based on their text. Secondly, students present and discuss their own work and receive feedback from the audience in general and from one fellow student in particular in form of a referee report to their work. During the discussion, we will put special emphasis on the quality of the text (style, argumentation, clarity). As a third element of the course, there will be inputs and presentations by leading researchers and experts on a small selection of crucial issues. We also plan a presentation on Do's and Don'ts when writing in English.

### **Target audience and preconditions for participation**

The seminar is particularly designed for doctoral students in economics or business economics. The seminar will take place en bloc in order to enable the external PhD students to attend. Students are required to read the mandatory literature before the course starts. Full attendance is mandatory.

Course registration **until March 6** is mandatory. Individual assignments will be sent out by **March 10**.

For further details and questions please contact Simone Tuor ([simone.tuor@isu.uzh.ch](mailto:simone.tuor@isu.uzh.ch), +41 (0)44-6345192).

### **Credit Requirements**

In order to obtain a "Doktorandenseminarschein", all of the following requirements have to be met:

- Presentation of general guidelines on scholarly writing from an assigned piece of required reading (20-30 min)
- On the spot discussion of another piece of required reading (5-10min)
- Mind map and narrative table of content of dissertation project or working paper (2 pages)
- Presentation of dissertation project (working paper) based on mind map and narrative table of content (20-30 min)
- Referee report on one fellow students' working paper/dissertation chapter based on mind map and narrative table of content with respect to style, clarity of argument etc. (2 pages)
- On the spot discussion on one fellow student's research project (5 min)

## Literature

Literature is posted on the course web page (password-protected, password will be distributed after final registration)

### 1. Learn from the Big Shots: How to Find a Topic

Dixit, A. (1994): My System of Work (Not!)

Mankiw, N.G. (1994): My Rules of Thumb

### 2. Style Guide for Economists

Cochrane, J.H. (2005): Writing Tips for Ph.D. students.

Always a good idea to start is The Economist's Style Guide:

The Economist Style Guide. Profile Books, ISBN-13: 978-1861979162.

### 3. How to Write a Lot

Silvia, P.J. (2007): How to Write a Lot. A Practical Guide to Productive Academic Writing. American Psychological Association. Washington D.C.

### 4. Which Journal?

Journal Rankings

Mission Statements

Review Statistics and Processes, Editors' Reports

### 5. Refereeing and How to Deal With Referee Reports

Chilton, S.: The Good Reviewer

Hamermesh, D.S. (1992): The Young Economist's Guide to Professional Etiquette. The Journal of Economic Perspectives, 6(1), pp. 169-179.

Harrison, D. (2002): Obligations and Obfuscations in the Review Process. Academy of Management Journal, 26(6), pp. 1079-1084.

### 6. The Reviewing Process: Empirical Facts and the Personal View

Gans, J.S., and G.B. Shepherd (1994): How Are the Mighty Fallen: Rejected Classic Articles by Leading Economists, The Journal of Economic Perspectives, 8(1), pp. 165-179.

Ireland, R.D. (2008): Revisiting AMJ's Revise-And-Resubmit Process, Academy of Management Journal, 51(6), pp. 1049-1050.

Van Dalen, H.P., and A. Klamer (2005): Is There Such a Thing Called Scientific Waste? Tinbergen Institute Discussion Paper

### 7. Your Dissertation as a Research Project

Davis, D.: Ph.D. Thesis Research: Where Do I Start?

A lot of hints (writing, refereeing, how to incorporate referees' advices) on the *Review of International Economic's* web page:

<http://www.roie.org/how.htm>

Another page with lots of advice:

<http://www.iies.su.se/~masa/tips4economists.html>