

Enjoy the ride: Writing, Project Management and Mindset Skills for doctoral students

In-person course (mainly)

Facilitator: Dr. Nadia Hakim Fernández

Duration 5 sessions (4 sessions of 3 hours 15 mins. + 1h30 troubleshooting session. 14h30 hours in total)

Sessions: On Fridays, the 6th, 13th, 20th and 27th of February. + Troubleshooting session on March the 6th.

Sessions 1 (onsite), 2 (onsite), 3 (onsite), 4 (onsite) | 10h30 to 13h45.

Session 5 will be from 12h30 to 14h (online).

Classroom for in person sessions: 18.0.A11, Carmen Martín Gaité Building ([Getafe campus](#))

Credits: 2 cross-curricular ECTS

You will have to attend to 4 out of 5 sessions to get your credits.

Rationale

This workshop is based on the idea that skills are something we learn and practice (not a birth “gift”), and that the sooner we start learning them, the better.

Our ability to generate ideas in writing from our own, non-standard, perspective, using our analytical skills and critical thinking, and with the future we want to help create with our research in mind, is especially important at a time when AI has permeated our daily lives with the promise of lightening our workload, but also with the threat of reducing our ability to think for ourselves.

In this sense, it becomes essential to know how to land on a page the ideas that are roaming around in our heads, and to discern what research or writing tasks we can delegate to these technologies and which ones we cannot. These technologies should serve as boosters, not as an oracle dictating the direction we are taking.

We are focusing on the 4 pillars that will hold you up through this challenging journey: 1) motivation and mindset, 2) project and time management, 3) writing, and 4) connect to colleagues while in the process.

These are skills that will serve you even after you finish the doctoral stage.

Goals

At the end of the course you will have tools to:

- Find motivation and meaning for your work,
- Think strategically about your thesis and have a roadmap,
- Measure your own progress.
- Improve the relationship with your supervisor(s)
- Have a work system that adapts to your style

- Create a writing system of your own.
- Write the outline of the next written work-in-progress to be delivered.

Requirements

You already have an idea for a research topic and you have already started or even finished the empirical part of your research. You have to write a draft with a deadline for this semester or end of year.

A requirement for signing up for this workshop is your interest these tools (and not only the credits).

This workshop is especially useful for those with a “personal” project (those who have the liberty to choose **their own research problem and project**), and also for those needing to find a daily work system that works for them.

Practicalities

5 sessions (4 sessions of 3 hours 15 mins. + 1h30 troubleshooting session. 14h30 hours in total). You will have to attend to 4 out of 5 sessions to pass.

Programme

1. Mindset and the importance of the big picture (3h15)

Why a PhD? Your present and future. The big picture of research and writing in an academic context. Why do we procrastinate and what to do about it? Am I good enough for this job? Make friends with your inner critics and work from your strengths.

2. Project management (3h15)

Map out your project. Design objectives you can accomplish. Systems for daily work. Improve your supervision communication and dynamics.

3. Write more, enjoy more (1): Getting started (3h15)

A word on Large Language Models and academic writing. Writing techniques: breaking the ice. Learning to “read” the structure of your text. Outlining your ideas.

4. Write more, enjoy more (2): Building momentum (3h15)

Who’s your audience? What does “finding your own voice” really mean? Write for an academic argument. Writing as a social and even cultural practice: busting the myth of the loner intellectual.

5. Troubleshooting session (1 h30). This is a group session to discuss some of the pitfalls of the transition from research to writing, and different solutions based on real cases brought up by the participants.

Methodology

The sessions will combine explanations and time for individual and in-group practice. There will be specific assignments between one session and the next, leading to a final handout.

Time needed for individual practice during the week: 1 hour approximately.

There will be the chance to get together to write for 2 extra hours between one session and the next. The proposed schedule will be agreed upon during class. These sessions will be optional and managed by the participants.

Course evaluation

To get a “pass”, you will have to:

- attend to 4 out of 5 sessions,
- fill out a questionnaire on your project,
- hand an extended outline for your manuscript, as well as a work plan.

There will be 20 seats available.

Priority will be given to researchers with a concrete writing project, and also needing these tools.

About the facilitator

Nadia Hakim-Fernandez has a PhD in Sociology from the Open University of Catalonia (UOC) and the Interdisciplinary Internet Institute (IN3), and is the founder of Mind Academia, where she mentors predoctoral and postdoctoral researchers. For more information, please visit: www.mindacademia.net

Bibliography

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Boyle Single, P. (2010). Demystifying Dissertation Writing: A Streamlined Process from Choice of Topic to Final Text. Stillwater, Stylus Publishing.

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