

## **GGGS Seminars on Methods in Business Research**



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Reading, Doing & Publishing  
Research in Strategy & Management

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## 1. Course summary

The purpose of this workshop will be to help participants develop a familiarity with the article writing and publishing process in the areas of management, strategy and organization studies. The workshop will be very “hands on” and interactive. We will examine the different journals, review a variety of different types of academic writing and come to understand the dynamics of the publication and review process. Participants will also have the opportunity to share and discuss some of their own writing projects.

Topics to be covered in the lectures and seminars:

1. Journal Fair: Introduction of various publication outlets
2. Choosing and starting a publication project
3. Learning about writing from reviewing
4. Writing theory based articles and literature reviews
5. Publishing and the publication process

**2. Module leader(s)** Prof. Ann Langley

**3. Prerequisites** n/a

## 4. Application and enrolment

Interested candidates are asked to send their application, including a short letter of motivation, *no later than January 31, 2015*. Applications should be sent by email to [researchmethods@ggs.de](mailto:researchmethods@ggs.de). Candidates will be informed of the decision regarding their acceptance until February 15. The number of participants is limited to 20 students. The course fee of 300 Euros includes registration, tuition, coffee breaks and drinks as well as lunch. Cancellations after registration are only partly refundable.

## 3. Aims (learning outcomes and competencies)

### 3.1 Objectives

This seminar is intended for doctoral students and post docs in the field of strategy and management who are interested in improving their research skills. The title of the course expresses its three main objectives and components which are summarized below:

*Reading:* At the end of the seminar, students should be able to competently evaluate research articles in strategy and management that use a wide range of methodological approaches. To achieve this, the seminar will be structured to incorporate readings using a different methodological approach at each session (e.g., questionnaires, secondary data bases, typological analysis, experiments, ethnography, histories, case studies, etc.).

*Doing:* At the end of the seminar, participants should have a practical feel for the requirements of different types of methods in strategy and management through the participation in certain mini-exercises that will be presented to other members of the class. These may include documentary search, data collection, data base construction and qualitative and quantitative data analysis.



*Publishing:* At the end of the seminar, students should have greater awareness of the requirements for publishing articles in various types of outlets in the strategy and management field. Part of the seminar will therefore be devoted to examining the various journals in the field and discussing the publication process. During the seminar, all participants will be asked to submit an article (as single author or as co-author) based on their previous or current work. This submission could be to a journal or to a conference (Academy of Management, AIMS, SMS). Students will be encouraged to collaborate with others participating in the seminar (co-signing articles where appropriate) in order to improve the quality of their contributions. Time will be allowed to discuss evolving submissions.

### 3.2 Learning Outcomes

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In particular, participants will:

- learn about designing research studies
- be given support in how to formulate an appropriate research question;
- be able to distinguish between different research approaches;
- be able to distinguish academic literature according to quality;
- apply the knowledge gained in the seminar to a real research project

### 3.3 Qualifications

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Knowledge and understanding: Understanding of the nature of research and the research process. Knowledge of research designs and methodologies. Knowledge of how to conduct appropriate case-based research.

Competencies: The competence to understand research approaches and their implications on research designs. The competence to distinguish better from weaker research. The competence to conduct research and interpret research results.

Communication skills: Effectively formulating and communicating research problems or questions and procedures.

Soft skills: Skills to structure complex problems logically and understandably. Skills to use theoretical ideas as a resource for thinking and acting.

## 4. Organization of the seminar

**Dates:** April 4-7, 2015

**Delivery Schedule:** 4 days

The ordering and content of sessions may be adjusted slightly to accommodate interests of participants.

### Preparation

Prior to the start of the seminar, participants will be invited to read the first six chapters of the book by Huff (1999) and to do a certain number of the exercises. Instructions will be given prior to the course via email.

### **Reading**

Huff, A.S., Writing for Scholarly Publication, Thousand Oaks, CA : Sage, 1999.



### **Session 1: Introductions and Journal Fair**

- Workshops introduction and objectives and logistics.
- Introductions, identification of participants' research interests.
- Mapping and understanding different journal outlets

#### **Reading**

Adler, N., Harzing, A.-W. "When knowledge wins: Transcending the sense and nonsense of academic rankings," *Academy of Management Learning & Education*, 8(1), 2009, (72-95).

#### **Pre-session exercise**

Each participant will be asked to review two different publication outlets prior to the session to feed in to the discussion. Copies of issues of various journals will be brought to the class so that we can familiarize ourselves with them.

### **Session 2: Choosing and starting a publication project**

Participants should bring to this session the results of various exercises (to be indicated) in Huff's book and be prepared to present and discuss them with other participants. This should allow everyone to better define their most promising writing project, the probable outlet and audiences to be targeted, and the exemplars that might provide the best role models.

#### **Reading**

Huff, A.S., Chapters 1-6.

### **Session 3: Learning about writing from reviewing**

- How to evaluate articles clearly but constructively.
- Evaluation criteria for empirical research
- The research process: traditional and less traditional views
- What journal editors expect from a reviewer.

#### **Reading**

Lee, A.S., «Reviewing a manuscript for publication», *Journal of Operations Management*, 13(1), 1995, (87-92).

Schwab, D.P., «Reviewing empirically based manuscripts: Perspectives on Process», in Cummings, L.L. and Frost, P.J., Chapter 10, *Published in Organization Sciences*, (eds. Cummings L.L. and Frost, P.J.), Homewood, Illinois : Irwin, 1995, (171-181).

Romanelli, E., «Becoming a reviewer: Lessons somewhat painfully learned», Chapter 11 in *Rhythms of Academic Life*, (195-202).

Meyer, A., «Balls, strikes and collisions on the base path: Ruminations of a veteran reviewer», Chapter 17 in *Rhythms of Academic Life*, (257-268).

#### **Pre-session exercise**

Article for review. We will share the real reviews of the selected article after the session.

### **Session 4: Writing theory based articles and literature reviews**

- What is theory?
- What are the characteristics of a good theory-based article?
- Reviews of conceptual articles in strategy.
- Using exemplars to understand good writing practices

## Reading

- Whetten, D.A., «What constitutes a theoretical contribution?», *Academy of Management Review*, 14(4), 1989, (490-495).
- Sutton, R.I. and Staw, B.M., «What theory is not», *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 40(3), 1995, (371-384). Comments by Karl Weick and by Paul DiMaggio (385-397).
- Gagliardi, P., «Theories empowering for action», *Journal of Management Inquiry*, 8(2), 1999, (143-147).
- Corley, K.G. & Gioia, D.A. "Building theory about theory building: What constitutes a theoretical contribution," *Academy of Management Review*, 96(1), 2011, (12-32).

## Pre-session exercise

Articles for review: Everyone will pick a classic or favorite article to analyse

## Session 5: Wrap-up and discussion

This could be a shorter session to discuss outstanding issues and offer support. This might include a discussion of short term and longer term publication strategies, publication ethics, non-academic or other forms of publishing (practitioner-based; teaching cases; quantitative research; books, book chapters, editing journals or special issues, etc.). To structure such a session, we might divide the class into small groups to bring forward ideas about different issues.

## 5. Teaching Method

Sessions will consist of a mix of learning activities and pedagogical methods: lectures, individual and group exercises, discussions of readings, and discussion of own works. I hope to benefit also from the previous experience of class participants to enrich the discussion and learning.

## 5. ECTS Credit Points

4 ECTS credits (total workload 100 hours)

- Reading: 36 hours
- Classroom time: 28 hours
- Exercises: 36 hours

## 7. Assessment Method

There will be no formal assessment for this seminar. However, students will be expected to demonstrate that they have:

- understood how specific research methods are grounded in particular research traditions.
- described and evaluated research methods and demonstrated the ability to make appropriate methodological choices for conducting their own research.
- shown communication, leadership and team working skills.

## 8. Language of Instruction

English