**uc3m | Universidad Carlos III de Madrid**

**Dissertation Writing Skills in English**

**Lecturer:** Eoin Higgins
**Duration:** 16 hours
**Sessions:** 12, 14, 17, 19, 21, 24, 26, 28 April 2023
17:30-19:30 h. (sessions 12, 17, 19, 24, 26 April)
16:30-18:30 h. (sessions 14, 21, 28 April)
**Classroom:** 4.2.E02, Torres Quevedo Building (Leganés campus)
**English level required**: B2 / C1 (validation from lecturer required)
**Credits:** 2 cross-curricular credits

*A minimum attendance to 75% of the course is required to obtain the credits*

## Objectives

All theses, no matter what the subject or discipline, contain similar sections which involve similar language. In this course, we will analyze the standard structure of a typical doctoral thesis and study the language used for different sections. We will provide input, activities and personalized guidance to help doctoral students make their theses read/sound more natural, fluent and correct.

We will also discuss other issues involved in the writing process: language research, drafting, editing and proofreading, style and "wordiness".

## Contents

- **Introduction:** stating the problem; explaining how you are going to deal with the problem; limiting your scope; outlining the structure of your thesis
- **Background:** presenting the relevant history and the context of your study; explaining current knowledge, theory and practice.
- **Core:** your hypothesis or research questions; explaining the methodology used to test your hypothesis; explaining why you chose the methodology; reporting the results
- **Synthesis:** discussing the implications of your research; drawing conclusions; checking your conclusions match the introduction

## Methodology

Practical individual, pair work and group work activities of text analysis of samples from real doctoral theses; proofreading and editing activities; discussion of style; analysis of typical language and style errors.

Students will be required to do some writing as homework in order to practice the skills and language presented in class.

## Evaluation

Students must attend 75% of the course to receive a passing grade.  The final mark is based on continuous evaluation (50%) and completion of classroom assignments (50%).

## Bibliography and references

Evans D, Gruba, P and Zobel J (2014) *How to Write a Better Thesis* (Third Edition), Springer

Godfrey, J (2013) *The Student Phrase Book: Vocabulary for Writing at University*, Palgrave Study Skills

Mewbur, I (2012) *Taming your PhD*, Thesis Whisperer Books

Morley, J (2015) *The Academic Phrasebank,* University of Manchester (http://www.phrasebank.manchester.ac.uk/)

Williams, K (2010) *Planning Your PhD,* Palgrave Study Skills