

EN8011D: RESEARCH WRITING IN BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

Effective Term

Semester A 2025/26

Part I Course Overview

Course Title

Research Writing in Business Administration

Subject Code

EN - English

Course Number

8011D

Academic Unit

College of Business (CB)

College/School

College of Business (CB)

Course Duration

One Semester

Credit Units

3

Level

D8 - Professional Doctorate

Medium of Instruction

English

Medium of Assessment

English

Prerequisites

Nil

Precursors

Nil

Equivalent Courses

Nil

Exclusive Courses

Nil

Part II Course Details

Abstract

This course aims to help DBA students to cope with the demands imposed on them by the tasks of reading, understanding, and analyzing published disciplinary literature of relevance to their own doctoral studies, and the writing of the literature reviews, research proposals, and journal articles for publication in their specific fields.

Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs)

CILOs		Weighting (if app.)	DEC-A1	DEC-A2	DEC-A3
1	Identify and describe the format, linguistic conventions and rhetorical strategies used in the key sections (i.e., the literature review, the concept map, and the research methodology) of a typical doctoral research proposal;	60	x	x	x
2	Apply the knowledge specified in CILO 1 when writing the key sections of their own research proposals;		x	x	x
3	Identify and describe the format of a journal article and the rhetorical strategies needed in the writing of a journal article in their own disciplines;	30	x	x	x
4	Apply the knowledge specified in CILO 3 needed in writing journal articles in their own disciplines;		x	x	x
5	Identify and apply effective strategies needed to overcome writer's blocks and those needed to manage extensive writing projects such as those specified in CILOs 1-4.	10	x	x	x

A1: Attitude

Develop an attitude of discovery/innovation/creativity, as demonstrated by students possessing a strong sense of curiosity, asking questions actively, challenging assumptions or engaging in inquiry together with teachers.

A2: Ability

Develop the ability/skill needed to discover/innovate/create, as demonstrated by students possessing critical thinking skills to assess ideas, acquiring research skills, synthesizing knowledge across disciplines or applying academic knowledge to real-life problems.

A3: Accomplishments

Demonstrate accomplishment of discovery/innovation/creativity through producing /constructing creative works/new artefacts, effective solutions to real-life problems or new processes.

Learning and Teaching Activities (LTAs)

LTAs	Brief Description	CILO No.	Hours/week (if applicable)
1	LTA 1	Guided group discussions;	1, 2, 3, 4, 5

2	LTA 2	Guided analyses of good and bad samples of literature reviews, proposals, and journal articles provided by the instructor and/or collected by students, relevant to their own research;	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	
3	LTA 3	Guided writing tasks in specific genres or part-genres.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	

Assessment Tasks / Activities (ATs)

ATs		CILO No.	Weighting (%)	Remarks ("- for nil entry)	Allow Use of GenAI?
1	Assignment 1 needs to carry a complete version of the Introduction and a part-draft of the Literature Review in which one part(s) of the theoretical framework of the proposed research is presented. (1000-1500 words)	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	30	-	Yes

2	Developed from Assignment 1, Assignment 2 needs to carry an updated Introduction, a fully-developed Literature Review, and a Methodology chapter which provides an overview of the paradigm and method(s) to be used in the thesis work, and a summary of the different parts of the study (e.g., research instrument, data collection method(s), sampling and treatment of data). (4000-6000 words)	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	70	-	Yes
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Continuous Assessment (%)

100

Examination (%)

0

Minimum Continuous Assessment Passing Requirement (%)

0

Minimum Examination Passing Requirement (%)

0

Assessment Rubrics (AR)**Assessment Task**

Assignment 1: Introduction and Literature Review (for students admitted before Semester A 2022/23 and in Semester A 2024/25 & thereafter)

Excellent

(A+, A, A-) Content & organization - A focused and well - balanced survey of the literature is provided. - The survey is well - connected to the research described in the proposal. - An elaborate and sound critique of the literature is provided which translates well into a convincing justification for the research to be undertaken. - Ideas are very well - sectioned and well - connected with very few logical jumps. - The piece needs very little revision. Citations - Extensive reading is evident as reflected by the impressive number of recognized sources cited (above 30). - Cited ideas are very well integrated. - No sign of plagiarism is detected. - Effective choices of forms (syntax) and citation verbs are made which contributes greatly to the clarity and flow of the text. - The piece reflects the writer' s sophisticated/ mature mastery of citation strategies and citation conventions. Language - Ideas are communicated very clearly, effectively and succinctly. - The piece displays a close - to - perfect and very sophisticated mastery of the syntax and the vocabulary of the English language. - The piece reflects an advanced mastery of the academic register. - No sign of plagiarism is detected.

Good

(B+, B, B-) Content & organization - A fairly focused and fairly balanced survey of the literature is provided. - The survey is fairly well - connected to the research described in the proposal. - A fairly elaborate critique of the literature is provided which can somehow leads to the justification of the research to be undertaken. - Ideas are fairly well - sectioned and fairly well - connected with some obvious but occasional jumps. - The piece needs some minor revision. Citations - Somewhat extensive reading is evident as reflected by a substantial amount of recognized sources cited (20 - 29 references provided). - Ideas cited are fairly integrated and arranged. - No sign of plagiarism is detected. - The piece reflects a somewhat advanced mastery of citation conventions. Language - Ideas are mostly communicated clearly and effectively though not entirely succinctly. - The piece displays a good mastery of the syntax and the vocabulary of the English language with only minor errors evident. - The piece reflects a good mastery of the academic register. - No sign of plagiarism is detected.

Fair

(C+, C, C-) Content & organization - A somewhat focused survey of the literature is provided. - Some parts of the survey are irrelevant to the research described in the proposal. - A rather thin critique of the literature is provided which in general lacks rigor and weakens its force in justifying the project to be undertaken. The core ideas discussed in general lack clarity. - Ideas are adequately sectioned and organized. A noticeable number of logical jumps are observed which make the piece somewhat difficult to follow. - The piece needs some major revision. Citations - Only 10 - 19 recognized sources have been cited. - Ideas cited somewhat lacks integration. - No sign of plagiarism is detected. - The piece reflects a partial mastery of citation conventions. Language - Ideas are somewhat vaguely communicated. - The piece displays a somewhat partial and unsophisticated mastery of the English language. - The piece displays a satisfactory mastery of the academic register. - No sign of plagiarism is evident.

Marginal

(D) Content & organization - A survey of the literature is provided but it lacks a clear focus. - Most parts of the survey are irrelevant to the research described in the proposal. - No critique of the literature is provided. - Ideas are in general poorly connected and inadequately sectioned, which makes the piece very difficult to follow. - The piece needs substantial major revision. Citations - Very few sources have been cited. - Many of the ideas cited are not integrated at all. - No sign of plagiarism is detected. - The piece displays a poor mastery of citation conventions. Language - Ideas in general are very vaguely communicated. - The piece displays a poor mastery of the English - The piece displays a poor mastery of the academic register. - No sign of plagiarism is detected.

Failure

(F) Content & organization - Most of the content requirements set for the assignment are not met. - The ideas are poorly discussed, carrying no focus and showing coherence at all. - Ideas discussed are completely irrelevant to the research described in the proposal. - The survey needs to be rewritten completely. Citations - No reading is evident. Language - Signs of plagiarism are detected. OR - Ideas are all vaguely communicated. - The piece displays an extremely poor mastery of the English language and the academic register. - The piece is extremely difficult to comprehend owing to the great number of language errors.

Assessment Task

Assignment 2: Introduction, Literature Review and Methodology (for students admitted before Semester A 2022/23 and in Semester A 2024/25 & thereafter)

Excellent

(A+, A, A-) Same as the above for the content and organization, citations, and language of the introduction and literature review. Methodology: Content & organization - The writing provides a succinct, well - developed and well - integrated discussion of research actions to be undertaken. - The discussion is well - linked to the literature survey and the concept map. - Ideas are very well - sectioned and well - connected with very few minor logical jumps. - The writing needs very little revision. Language - Ideas are communicated very clearly, effectively and succinctly. - The piece displays a close - to - perfect and very sophisticated mastery of the syntax and the vocabulary of the English language. - The piece reflects an advanced mastery of the academic register. - No sign of plagiarism is detected.

Good

(B+, B, B-) Same as the above for the content and organization, citations, and language of the introduction and literature review. Methodology: Content & organization - The writing provides a fairly well-developed discussion of research actions to be undertaken. - The discussion is fairly well-linked to the literature survey and the concept map. The link can be made more explicit at some points. - Ideas are fairly well-connected with some minor logical jumps that need to be fixed. - The writing needs some very minor revision. Language - Ideas are mostly communicated clearly and effectively though not entirely succinctly. - The piece displays a good mastery of the syntax and the vocabulary of the English language with only minor errors evident. - The piece reflects a good mastery of the academic register. - No sign of plagiarism is detected.

Fair

(C+, C, C-) Same as the above for the content and organization, citations, and language of the introduction and literature review. Methodology: Content & organization - The writing provides a weakly-developed discussion of research actions to be undertaken. - The discussion is weakly-linked to the literature survey and the concept map. The link needs to be made much more explicit. - Ideas are weakly-connected with some major logical jumps that need to be fixed. - The writing needs some major revision. Language - Ideas are somewhat vaguely communicated. - The piece displays a somewhat partial and unsophisticated mastery of the English language. - The piece displays a satisfactory mastery of the academic register. - No sign of plagiarism is evident.

Marginal

(D) Same as the above for the content and organization, citations, and language of the introduction and literature review. Methodology: Content & organization - The writing provides an under-developed discussion of research actions to be undertaken. - The discussion is poorly-linked to the literature survey and the concept map. The link needs to be made much more explicit. - Ideas are weakly-connected with a number of major logical jumps that need to be fixed. - The writing needs substantial major revision. Language - Ideas in general are very vaguely communicated. - The piece displays a poor mastery of the English language. - The piece displays a poor mastery of the academic register. - No sign of plagiarism is detected.

Failure

(F) Same as the above for the content and organization, citations, and language of the introduction and literature review. Methodology: Content & organization - The writing provides a very skimpy discussion of research actions to be undertaken. - There is no link built at all between the literature survey and the concept map. - The writing displays a large number of logical jumps and needs to be rewritten completely. Language - Signs of plagiarism are detected. OR - Ideas are all very vaguely communicated. - The piece displays an extremely poor mastery of the English language and the academic register. - The piece is extremely difficult to comprehend owing to the great number of language errors.

Assessment Task

Assignment 1: Introduction and Literature Review (for students admitted from Semester A 2022/23 to Summer Term 2024)

Excellent

(A+, A, A-) Content & organization - A focused and well - balanced survey of the literature is provided. - The survey is well - connected to the research described in the proposal. - An elaborate and sound critique of the literature is provided which translates well into a convincing justification for the research to be undertaken. - Ideas are very well - sectioned and well - connected with very few logical jumps. - The piece needs very little revision. Citations - Extensive reading is evident as reflected by the impressive number of recognized sources cited (above 30). - Cited ideas are very well integrated. - No sign of plagiarism is detected. - Effective choices of forms (syntax) and citation verbs are made which contributes greatly to the clarity and flow of the text. - The piece reflects the writer' s sophisticated/ mature mastery of citation strategies and citation conventions. Language - Ideas are communicated very clearly, effectively and succinctly. - The piece displays a close - to - perfect and very sophisticated mastery of the syntax and the vocabulary of the English language. - The piece reflects an advanced mastery of the academic register. - No sign of plagiarism is detected.

Good

(B+, B) Content & organization - A fairly focused and fairly balanced survey of the literature is provided. - The survey is fairly well - connected to the research described in the proposal. - A fairly elaborate critique of the literature is provided which can somehow lends to the justification of the research to be undertaken. - Ideas are fairly well - sectioned and fairly well - connected with some obvious but occasional jumps. - The piece needs some minor revision. Citations - Somewhat extensive reading is evident as reflected by a substantial amount of recognized sources cited (20 - 29 references provided). -

Ideas cited are fairly integrated and arranged. - No sign of plagiarism is detected. - The piece reflects a somewhat advanced mastery of citation conventions. Language - Ideas are mostly communicated clearly and effectively though not entirely succinctly. - The piece displays a good mastery of the syntax and the vocabulary of the English language with only minor errors evident. - The piece reflects a good mastery of the academic register. - No sign of plagiarism is detected.

Marginal

(B-, C+, C) Content & organization - A survey of the literature is provided but it lacks a clear focus. - Most parts of the survey are irrelevant to the research described in the proposal. - No critique of the literature is provided. - Ideas are in general poorly connected and inadequately sectioned, which makes the piece very difficult to follow. - The piece needs substantial major revision. Citations - Very few sources have been cited. - Many of the ideas cited are not integrated at all. - No sign of plagiarism is detected. - The piece displays a poor mastery of citation conventions. Language - Ideas in general are very vaguely communicated. - The piece displays a poor mastery of the English - The piece displays a poor mastery of the academic register. - No sign of plagiarism is detected.

Failure

(F) Content & organization - Most of the content requirements set for the assignment are not met. - The ideas are poorly discussed, carrying no focus and showing coherence at all. - Ideas discussed are completely irrelevant to the research described in the proposal. - The survey needs to be rewritten completely. Citations - No reading is evident. Language - Signs of plagiarism are detected. OR - Ideas are all vaguely communicated. - The piece displays an extremely poor mastery of the English language and the academic register. - The piece is extremely difficult to comprehend owing to the great number of language errors.

Assessment Task

Assignment 2: Introduction, Literature Review and Methodology (for students admitted from Semester A 2022/23 to Summer Term 2024)

Excellent

(A+, A, A-) Same as the above for the content and organization, citations, and language of the introduction and literature review. Methodology: Content & organization - The writing provides a succinct, well - developed and well - integrated discussion of research actions to be undertaken. - The discussion is well - linked to the literature survey and the concept map. - Ideas are very well - sectioned and well - connected with very few minor logical jumps. - The writing needs very little revision. Language - Ideas are communicated very clearly, effectively and succinctly. - The piece displays a close - to - perfect and very sophisticated mastery of the syntax and the vocabulary of the English language. - The piece reflects an advanced mastery of the academic register. - No sign of plagiarism is detected.

Good

(B+, B) Same as the above for the content and organization, citations, and language of the introduction and literature review. Methodology: Content & organization - The writing provides a fairly well-developed discussion of research actions to be undertaken. - The discussion is fairly well-linked to the literature survey and the concept map. The link can be made more explicit at some points. - Ideas are fairly well-connected with some minor logical jumps that need to be fixed. - The writing needs some very minor revision. Language - Ideas are mostly communicated clearly and effectively though not entirely succinctly. - The piece displays a good mastery of the syntax and the vocabulary of the English language with only minor errors evident. - The piece reflects a good mastery of the academic register. - No sign of plagiarism is detected.

Marginal

(B-, C+, C) Same as the above for the content and organization, citations, and language of the introduction and literature review. Methodology: Content & organization - The writing provides an under-developed discussion of research actions to be undertaken. - The discussion is poorly-linked to the literature survey and the concept map. The link needs to be made much more explicit. - Ideas are weakly-connected with a number of major logical jumps that need to be fixed. - The writing needs substantial major revision. Language - Ideas in general are very vaguely communicated. - The piece displays a poor mastery of the English language. - The piece displays a poor mastery of the academic register. - No sign of plagiarism is detected.

Failure

(F) Same as the above for the content and organization, citations, and language of the introduction and literature review. Methodology: Content & organization - The writing provides a very skimpy discussion of research actions to be undertaken. - There is no link built at all between the literature survey and the concept map. - The writing displays a large number of logical jumps and needs to be rewritten completely. Language - Signs of plagiarism are detected. OR - Ideas are all very vaguely communicated. - The piece displays an extremely poor mastery of the English language and the academic register. - The piece is extremely difficult to comprehend owing to the great number of language errors.

Part III Other Information

Keyword Syllabus

Literature review, critical reading, structuring of a literature review, argumentation, citation conventions, citation strategies, writing of a research proposal and a journal article, journal conventions

Reading List

Compulsory Readings

Title	
1	Lecture handouts and supplementary materials provided by the instructor.

Additional Readings

Title	
1	Artemeva N. (2000). Revising a research article: Dialogic negotiation. In P. Dias & A. Paré (eds.), <i>Transitions: Writing in academic and workplace settings</i> pp.74-87. Cresskill, N.J.: Hampton Press Inc.
2	Bhatia, Vijay K. (1993): <i>Analysing genre: Language use in professional settings</i> . London, Longman.
3	Bhatia, Vijay K., (2004). <i>Worlds of written discourse: A genre-Based view</i> London, Continuum.
4	Brett, P. (1994). A genre analysis of the results section of sociology articles. <i>English for Specific Purposes</i> 13, 1, 47-59.
5	Casanave C. & Vandrick S. (eds.) (2003). <i>Writing for scholarly publication: Behind the scenes in language education</i> . Mahwah, N.J.: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 2003.
6	Flowerdew, J. (2008). Scholarly writers who use English as an Additional Language: What can Goffman's "Stigma" tell us? <i>Journal of English for Academic Purposes</i> 7, 77-86.
7	Flowerdew, J. & Dudley-Evans, T. (2002). Genre analysis of editorial letters to international journal contributors. <i>Applied Linguistics</i> 23/4, 463-489.
8	Gosden H. (2003). 'Why not give us the full story?' : Functions of referees' comments in peer reviews of scientific papers. <i>Journal of English for Academic Purposes</i> 2, 87-101.
9	Hart, C. (1998). <i>Doing a literature review: Releasing the social science research imagination</i> . London: Sage.
10	Holmes, R. (1997). Genre analysis and the social sciences: An investigation of the structure of research article discussion sections in three disciplines. <i>English for Specific Purposes</i> 16, 4, 321-337.
11	Kamler B. (2008). Rethinking doctoral publication practices: Writing from and beyond the thesis. <i>Studies in Higher Education</i> 33, 3, 283-294.
12	Kanoksilapatha B. (2005). Rhetorical structure of biochemistry research articles. <i>English for Specific Purposes</i> 24, 269-292.
13	Kourilova M. (1998). Communicative characteristics of reviews of scientific papers written by non-native users of English. <i>Endocrine Regulations</i> 32, 107-114.
14	Kwan, B. (2006). The schematic structure of literature reviews in doctoral theses of applied linguistics. <i>English for Specific Purposes</i> 25, 30-55.
15	Kwan, B. (2008). The nexus of reading, writing and researching in the doctoral undertaking of humanities and social sciences: Implications for literature reviewing. <i>English for Specific Purposes</i> 27 (1), 42-56.

16	Kwan, B. S.C. (2009). Reading in preparation for writing a PhD thesis: Case studies of experiences, <i>Journal of English for Academic Purposes</i> 3(3), 180-191.
17	Kwan, B.S.C. (2010). An investigation of instruction in research publishing in doctoral programs: The Hong Kong case. <i>Higher Education</i> 59(1), 55-68.
18	Lim, J. M. H. (2006). Method sections of management research articles: A pedagogically motivated qualitative study. <i>English for Specific Purposes</i> , 25, 282-309.
19	McNabb, R. (2001). Making the gesture: Graduate student submissions and the expectation of journal referees. <i>Composition Studies</i> 29, 1, 9-26.
20	Meloy J. M. (2002). <i>Writing the qualitative dissertation: Understanding by doing</i> (second edition). Mahwah, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
21	Murthy, U.S., & Wiggins C. J., Jr. (2002). Why manuscripts are rejected: An analysis of JIS rejections. <i>Journal of Information Systems</i> 16 (Spring), 41-48.
22	Peacock, M. (2000). Communicative moves in the discussion section of research articles. <i>System</i> 30, 479-497.
23	Peters, R. L. (1997). <i>Getting What You Came For</i> (revised edition). New York: Noonday.
24	Ridley, D. (2008). <i>The literature review: A step-by-Step guide for students</i> . U.S.: Sage.
25	Swales, J.M. & Feak, C. (2000). <i>English in today's research world</i> . Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.
26	Swales, J. M. (2004). <i>Research genres: Explorations and applications</i> . New York: Cambridge University Press.
27	Weissberg, R. & Buker S. (1990). <i>Writing up research: Experimental research report writing for students of English</i> . Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall Regents.
28	On-line theses available at the CityU library website
29	Free-downloading concordancing tool: AntConc (http://www.antlab.sci.waseda.ac.jp/software.html)
30	Licensed EAP corpus: MICASE