

Writing to Be Published: English Academic Writing Conventions and Style

Dr. Paul Skandera

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1. Course description

Nothing counts more in the academic world than being published. The reviewing process, however, and science as a whole are basically conservative: Some of the best written work is often rejected because it departs substantially from a comprehensive set of universally accepted writing conventions or does not conform to a style that publishers consider a prerequisite for publishing (or both). While in many anglophone countries university students receive a thorough mandatory training in academic writing skills, in non-English-speaking countries such training is frequently lacking or felt to be inadequate. Coupled with the fact that they do not usually write in their mother tongue, this puts authors from non-English-speaking countries at a serious disadvantage in global academic competition.

This two-day intensive course teaches you how to turn your papers into publishable articles. It is aimed at doctoral students, researchers, and academics who publish in English or *want* to publish in English and aim to further improve their command of the subtleties of convention and style. The course deals with a broad range of writing conventions, from the presentation of abbreviations and numbers to the use of capitalization and italicization, to the quotation of sources and their documentation; and it addresses selected stylistic issues, such as pronoun reference, gender-neutral language, and personal vs. impersonal style. The rules taught are based mainly on the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*, which has been adopted by many academic disciplines and is used by writers across the world.

2. Syllabus

Wednesday, June 15, 2022, 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon

- Punctuation (script pp. 6-13)

Wednesday, June 15, 2022, 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

- Capitalization (script pp. 16-25)
- Italic type (script pp. 26-31)
- Numbers (script pp. 38-43)
- Quotations and in-text references (script pp. 45-49)
- Abbreviations (script pp. 50-53)
- Footnotes (script pp. 64-66)

Thursday, June 16, 2022, 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon

- Tenses (script pp. 89-91)
- Subject-verb agreement (script pp. 92-94)
- Pronouns (script pp. 95-101)
- Misplaced and dangling modifiers (script pp. 102-105)
- Relative clauses (script pp. 106-109)

Thursday, June 16, 2022, 1:00 p.m. to 3:45 p.m.

- Plurals and possessives (script pp. 110-120)
- Parallel constructions (script pp. 121-123)
- Gender-neutral language (script p. 129)

3. Recommended reading

Chicago Manual of Style (17th ed.). (2017). Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

MLA Handbook (formerly *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*) (9th ed.). (2021).
New York: The Modern Language Association of America.

Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (7th ed.). (2020).
Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

4. Course requirements

Participants are expected to attend all sessions and participate actively in the discussions. In preparation for the course, participants can skim through the relevant pages of the script as indicated in the syllabus above. The script will be distributed prior to the course.

5. Course instructor

Dr. Paul Skandera, M.A. Born 1964 in Athens, Georgia, USA. Raised in Flensburg, Germany. Lives in Innsbruck, Austria. Studied English Language and Linguistics in Philadelphia, New York, Kiel, Freiburg i. Br., and Chemnitz. Master's thesis on grammatical change in modern American English. Doctoral dissertation on idiom in Kenyan English. Previously taught at the University of Freiburg i. Br., the University of Zurich, Freiburg International Business School, St. Gallen Hochschule für Angewandte Wissenschaften, LIMAK Johannes Kepler University Business School in Linz, and SAP Business School Vienna. Currently lecturer at the University of St. Gallen (HSG) and regular visiting lecturer at the University of Basel, SAL School of Applied Linguistics in Zurich, Steinbeis University in Berlin, the University of Luxembourg and Management Center Innsbruck. Member of the Swiss Association of University Teachers of English (SAUTE), the European Society for the Study of English (ESSE), and the International Association of Teachers of English as a Foreign Language (IATEFL). Author and editor of numerous publications in the field of English language teaching and linguistics. Owner of SKANDERA englische sprachdienste since 1992.