UNSW SYDNEY Arts & Social Sciences

School of Education

EDST5147/EDST5036
Thesis Writing and Presentation
Education Project 1

Summer Term 2021

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IMPORTANT:
For student policies and procedures relating to assessment, attendance and student support, please see website, https://education.arts.unsw.edu.au/students/courses/course-outlines/

The School of Education acknowledges the Bedegal people as the traditional custodians of the lands upon which we learn and teach.

1. LOCATION

Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences
School of Education
EDST5147 Thesis Writing and Presentation/EDST5036 Education Project 1 (6 units of credit)
Summer Term 2021

2. STAFF CONTACT DETAILS

Course Coordinator:	A/Prof Richard Niesche
Email:	r.niesche@unsw.edu.au
Availability:	Email to arrange an appointment

3. COURSE DETAILS

Course Name	EDST5147 Thesis Writing and Presentation/ EDST5036 Education Project 1
Credit Points	6 units of credit (uoc)
Workload	Includes 150 hours including class contact hours, readings, class preparation, assessment, follow up activities, etc.
Schedule	http://classutil.unsw.edu.au/EDST_U1.html

SUMMARY OF COURSE

This course is aimed at postgraduate research students to evaluate and develop their thesis writing abilities and skills. Weekly sessions cover the overall structuring of the thesis; writing the introduction; the literature review; the methodology chapter; discussion chapters; the conclusion and the abstract and understanding examiner expectations with an emphasis on managing the writing process over an extended time period and on managing large amounts of texts. The course is informed by current applied linguistic and educational research into advanced academic and professional writing and includes writing a conference paper and journal article and preparing for seminar/conference presentations.

THE MAIN WAYS IN WHICH THE COURSE HAS CHANGED SINCE LAST TIME AS A RESULT OF STUDENT FEEDBACK:

- No changes. Feedback has been very positive.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

Outcomes		Assessment/s
1	Analyse and compare the structure and organisation of the research genres of the thesis, the journal article; the conference paper and the oral presentation	1, 2
2	Explain the choices as to how to structure and organise a research thesis or other research genre with reference to current research into advanced academic and professional writing	1, 2
3	Use the linguistic and discursive resources of academic English to draft thesis chapters, journal articles and conference abstracts	1, 2

PROGRAM LEARNING OUTCOMES

Standard		Assessment/s
1	**Advanced disciplinary knowledge and practices** Demonstrate an advanced understanding of the field of education as it relates to their specialist area of study, and the ability to synthesize and apply disciplinary principles and practices to new or complex environments.	1, 2
2	**Enquiry-based learning** Demonstrate an in-depth understanding of research-based learning and the ability to plan, analyse, present implement and evaluate complex activities that contribute to advanced professional practice and/or intellectual scholarship in education.	1, 2
3	**Cognitive skills and critical thinking** Demonstrate advanced critical thinking and problem-solving skills	1, 2

4. RATIONALE FOR THE INCLUSION OF CONTENT AND TEACHING APPROACH

The first half of the course provides an opportunity for postgraduate students to consider the overall structure and purpose of academic writing. It examines the ways in which research theses in Education are structured and the typical structure and organisation of the various components of a research thesis. This said, through an examination of recently submitted UNSW Education theses, the course also looks at the different ways in which writers are choosing to structure and organise their theses and considers the options available to thesis writers. You are encouraged to consider the extent to which these options are shaped by 'traditions' within your own disciplinary area.

We also look at the rhetorical organisation of the various sections – the ways in which writers use language to develop an argument, take a position, and the strategies they deploy to persuade their reader. We discuss examples from completed UNSW theses and consider how the writers have achieved their purpose. You are encouraged to think about how you would like to 'sound' in your thesis and the kind of 'academic identity' you take on. This section concludes with a discussion of the research on examiners' expectations of research theses. The examiner is, above all, a reader! We will then discuss two other significant research genres: the conference paper and the journal article and provide an opportunity for you to examine a journal article from your field. Most disciplines now expect research students to publish papers from their research in the course of writing their thesis and this can benefit the student in a number of ways. The aim of this component of the course is to help students prepare for a variety of contexts in which they will need to communicate.

5. TEACHING STRATEGIES

This course will be taught with a strong emphasis on student participation. Students will be provided with online material and references to research journals which they will be expected to read prior to each session. Students will have the opportunity of sharing their ideas with each other in an online discussion group. Various activities, e.g., giving feedback in pairs and triads, small group discussions and other practical activities will engage students and enable a deeper understanding of the related issues.

6. COURSE CONTENT AND STRUCTURE

This course is delivered via four intensive seminars over four days.

Module	Lecture Topic
Day 1	In this introductory day of our course, we will discuss the overall aims of the course and how it aims to help you with your thesis writing and other types of research writing. The session will focus specifically on factors that can affect thesis writing, thesis structure, and writing the Introduction. I will introduce the four questions framework. As we are meeting in an intensive mode, there will be activities for students to engage in and opportunities for discussion through the day.
Day 2	There are many approaches to writing a literature review and a methodology chapter. In this session, we will look at the typical ways literature reviews and methodology sections of research theses in educational fields are organised and structured. We will discuss the functions of these two key components of your thesis and look at examples from completed theses. There will be opportunities for discussion and activities that involve you in thinking and writing. We will also look at the research into examiners' expectations of a literature review Please bring a literature review chapter and a methodology chapter from a thesis in your field to class. Digital version is fine.
Day 3	In this session, we look at writing findings/discussions chapters. We also look at writing the conclusion and the research into examiners' expectations in more detail. We will talk about how your frame your study's contribution and its implications and once again there will be writing and thinking activities. Please bring a discussion chapter to class as well as a conclusion chapter
Day 4	This is the final day of our intensive course. We focus on writing conference abstracts and journal article introductions. I will share with you my experience of being a journal editor and reviewer and provide advice on getting published in academic journals. Activities will relate to this focus. Please bring a journal article from a journal you would like to publish in to class.

7. RESOURCES

Recommended Resources

Evans, D., Gruba, P., & Zobel, J. (2011 (3rd edition). *How to write a better thesis*. Melbourne, Australia: Melbourne University Press. - There are several editions of this book.

Murray, R. (2017). *How to write a thesis*. (4th edition). Maidenhead, England: Open University Press. There are several earlier editions of this book which are very helpful too.

Paltridge, B., & Starfield, S. (2007). *Thesis and dissertation writing in a second language*. London: Routledge.

Paltridge, B., & Starfield, S. (2020). *Thesis and dissertation writing in a second language: A handbook for students and their supervisors*. 2nd edition. London: Routledge. This book provides details of many other resources that support thesis writing.

8. ASSESSMENT

Assessment Task	Length	Weight	Student Learning Outcomes Assessed	Program Learning Outcomes Assessed	Date due
Assessment task 1: Analysing organisational patterns of PhD theses	2000 words	30%	1-3	1-3	Friday 15th January by 5pm
Assessment task 2: PhD thesis chapter analysis and discussion	4000 words	70%	1-3	1-3	Monday 1st February by 5pm

Submission of assessments

Students are required to follow their lecturer's instructions when submitting their work for assessment. All assessment will be submitted online via Moodle by 5pm. Students are also required to keep all drafts, original data and other evidence of the authenticity of the work for at least one year after examination. If an assessment is mislaid the student is responsible for providing a further copy. Please see the Student Policies and Procedures for information regarding submission, extensions, special consideration, late penalties and hurdle requirements etc. https://education.arts.unsw.edu.au/students/courses/course-outlines/

Assessment Details

Assessment Task 1: Analysing organisational patterns of PhD theses

Analysing the macrostructures and organisational patterns of three PhD theses.

The assessment aims to raise your awareness of the ways in which thesis writers in the social sciences and humanities structure and organise their theses. You will need to select three recently submitted Australian PhD or master's theses from the *Trove* https://trove.nla.gov.au/ website or UNSWorks https://www.unsworks.unsw.edu.au/primo-explore/search?vid=UNSWORKS and, after analysing the Title Page and the Table of Contents, describe the overall organisation the author has chosen, drawing on the recommended readings (see below). In addition to describing the thesis type/shape, your paper should comment on the overall presentation, the layout of the title page, the number of chapters, the function of each of the chapters, the use of chapter titles, numbering systems, typography and any other features that you find of interest for each of the three theses.

You should consider the extent to which the theses you are examining conform to the three types discussed in the literature. Finally, you should conclude with a comparison of the similarities and differences of each thesis regarding the Title Page and Table of Contents and comment on what you have learned from doing this activity.

Recommended readings: (full book references above for recommended reading)

Evans, D., Gruba, P. & Zobel, J. (2011 3rd edition). Chapter 2: 'Thesis structure'.

Paltridge, B. & Starfield, S. (2007/2020). Chapter 5: 'The overall shape of theses and dissertations.

Starfield, S. & Ravelli, L. (2006). 'The writing of this thesis was a process that I could not explore with the positivistic detachment of the classical sociologist': Self and structure in New Humanities research theses. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes*, 5 (3), 222-243.

Assessment 2: Thesis chapter analysis and discussion

Analysis of a thesis Introduction and a discussion chapter

Part 1

Select the Introduction chapter from a recent (post-2010) PhD thesis in the Social Sciences or Humanities submitted at an Australian university. Using the Creating a Research Space (CARS) framework analyse the chapter in terms of the author's use of the Moves and Steps. Comment on why you think the author has chosen to organise their chapter in this way and how you as a reader react to this organisation. If you were advising the author on how to improve this chapter what would you suggest?

Recommended readings: (full book references above)

Evans, D., Gruba, P. & Zobel, J. (2011 3rd edition). Chapter 5: 'The introductory chapter'.

Paltridge, B. & Starfield, S. (2007). Chapter 6: 'Writing the introduction'.

Starfield, S. & Ravelli, L. (2006). 'The writing of this thesis was a process that I could not explore with the positivistic detachment of the classical sociologist': Self and structure in New Humanities research theses. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes*, 5 (3), 222-243.

Part 2

Select a discussion chapter from a recent (post-2010) PhD or master's thesis in the Social Sciences or Humanities submitted at an Australian university. Using the Move framework for discussions presented in class discuss the extent to which the author uses these moves in structuring the chapter. You should consider not only which moves are present and comment on why you think the author has used them but also on those not adopted by the author and suggest why this might be so. Finally, you should comment on whether the author explicitly identifies the significant contribution of the thesis to the field of study and the extent to which language features such as hedging are used. If you were advising the author on how to improve this chapter what would you suggest?

Recommended readings: (full book references above)

Paltridge, B. & Starfield, S. (2007). Chapter 10: 'Writing discussions and conclusions.

Evans, D., Gruba, P. & Zobel, J. (2011 3rd edition). Chapter 9: 'The discussion and interpretation'.

Holliday, A. (2007 2nd edition). *Doing and writing qualitative research*. London: Sage. Ch 8. Making appropriate claims.

UNSW SCHOOL OF EDUCATION
FEEDBACK SHEET
EDST5147/EDST5036 THESIS WRITING AND PRESENTATION

Student Name: Student No:
Assessment Task 1: **Analysing organisational patterns of PhD theses**

SPECIFIC CRITERIA	(-) ⟶ (+)				
Understanding of the question or issue and the key concepts involved • Addresses the question/issue • Understanding of the question/issue • Understanding of relationship to relevant theory, research and practice • Information presented is relevant • Understanding of the complexities and interrelationships involved					
Depth of analysis and/or critique in response to the task • Depth of analysis • Well-reasoned arguments • Sound analysis of problem					
Familiarity with and relevance of professional and/or research literature used to support response • Appropriate research references to support responses • Sound range of research references					
Structure and organisation of the response • Appropriate nature of structural organisation • Logical and coherent structure • Clear presentation of ideas to enhance readability					
Presentation of response according to appropriate academic and linguistic conventions • APA style for citations and references & complete reference list • Clarity and appropriateness of language style • Word count within 10% of limit set.					
GENERAL COMMENTS					

Lecturer: **Date:**

Recommended: /20 (FL PS CR DN HD) **Weighting: 30%**

NB: The ticks in the various boxes are designed to provide feedback to students; they are not given equal weight in determining the recommended grade. Depending on the nature of the assessment task, lecturers may also contextualize and/or amend these specific criteria. **The recommended grade is tentative only, subject to standardisation processes and approval by the School of Education Learning and Teaching Committee.**

UNSW SCHOOL OF EDUCATION
FEEDBACK SHEET
EDST5147/EDST5036 THESIS WRITING AND PRESENTATION

Student Name: Student No:
Assessment Task 2: **Thesis chapter analysis and discussion**

SPECIFIC CRITERIA	(-) ⟶ (+)				
Understanding of the question or issue and the key concepts involved • Addresses the question/issue • Understanding of the question/issue • Understanding of relationship to relevant theory, research and practice • Information presented is relevant • Understanding of the complexities and interrelationships involved					
Depth of analysis and/or critique in response to the task • Depth of analysis • Well-reasoned arguments • Sound analysis of problem					
Familiarity with and relevance of professional and/or research literature used to support response • Appropriate research references to support responses • Sound range of research references					
Structure and organisation of the response • Appropriate nature of structural organisation • Logical and coherent structure • Clear presentation of ideas to enhance intelligibility					
Presentation of response according to appropriate academic and linguistic conventions • APA style for citations and references & complete reference list • Clarity and appropriateness of language style • Word count within 10% of limit set.					
GENERAL COMMENTS					

Lecturer: **Date:**

Recommended: /20 (FL PS CR DN HD) **Weighting: 70%**

NB: The ticks in the various boxes are designed to provide feedback to students; they are not given equal weight in determining the recommended grade. Depending on the nature of the assessment task, lecturers may also contextualize and/or amend these specific criteria. **The recommended grade is tentative only, subject to standardisation processes and approval by the School of Education Learning and Teaching Committee.**