



PhD Course Syllabus

“How to publish in A-Journals”

COURSE OVERVIEW

Course Instructor: Prof. Dr. Jan Recker, jan.christof.recker@uni-hamburg.de
(<https://www.bwl.uni-hamburg.de/en/isdi/mitarbeiterverzeichnis/janrecker.html>)

Course Value: 5 credit points

Course Registration: Registration is mandatory, via STiNE.

Course Language: English

Course Objectives: Publishing your research in so-called “A-journals” is tough. Designing and conducting an original study with a good idea is not enough, you also need to publish your findings to be successful as a researcher.

The goal of this PhD course is to develop your academic publishing skills and learn how to write good research articles such that they meet requirements of “A-journals” in terms of theoretical contributions, problematization, methodological rigor, and interestingness. Your learning objective is to develop your skills in appreciating, critiquing, and composing research articles in business and management disciplines. The course will allow you to develop and improve your skills in publishing your current and future research findings in targeted at top-level scientific journals.

The PhD course is taught in a seminar style where we present, discuss, and critique seminal guidelines, apply what we have learned to improve and extend our own publishing skills, and work together to reach a deeper understanding of academic publishing practice.

Prerequisites: You should have completed methodology courses relevant to your study so you can now focus on writing, not design and execution of the study. You should also have made some progress in your own research project, so you have something to write about.

ASSESSMENT

Assessment: (1) Term paper (50%), (2) Revision strategy (30%); (3) Paper presentation (20%)

(1) Term paper (due after the course)

You will need to submit a draft paper about a research project of your own choice. The paper need not be complete. The draft paper should, however, at minimum (a) introduce the research problem, (2) clarify the expected theoretical contribution, and (3) position the research project relative to the existing literature. You will receive written feedback on the draft paper.

The draft must adhere to the following guidelines:

- Maximum of 6 pages excluding title page, appendices, or references but including tables and figures
- 1 inch margin on each side
- 12 pt Times New Roman
- Double--spaced

(2) Revision strategy (due prior to the last session on 24 June 2022)

You will need to analyze the review reports of a paper submitted to a top tier journal and craft a revision strategy. The manuscript and review reports will be provided to you. You need to prepare 2 slides. The first slide must summarize your learnings from the reports. The second slide should outline the revision strategy you would propose if you were the author. You must be prepared to present your revision strategy in class. You need to address the following questions:

- What is the tonality of the reviews?
- How do you weigh the reviews relative to each other?
- What are the main issues?
- Are they consistent across reviewers?
- What are your options for addressing the critical issues?
- How would you design the revision?

(3) Paper presentation (due in one of the sessions)

You will be assigned a seminal paper that you need to review, synthesize, and present upon in class. You should be prepared to deliver a presentation that acts not as a summary of the paper but rather as a **provocative “conversation starter,”** which integrates the assigned reading with your own experience and personal insights. The goal of your presentation should be to start a lively discussion. For example, you could raise interesting questions, take a particular side in an argument, disagree with some argument(s), or otherwise spark a debate. The presentation is meant to be an opportunity to learn about publishing but also to formulate new insights and emerging ideas.

COURSE CONTENT AND SCHEDULE

Session 1: Welcome and Kick-off

Date/Time: 22 March 2023, 11h00 – 12h00

Venue: via Zoom:

<https://uni-hamburg.zoom.us/j/66908918634?pwd=MTN2RnBoMnJVSjNaZlRhbjArVGZHZz09>

Meeting ID: 669 0891 8634

Passcode: 04560605

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+49 69 7104 9922 Germany

Meeting ID: 669 0891 8634

Passcode: 04560605

Find your local number: <https://uni-hamburg.zoom.us/j/ccKlFxbYkb>

Topic(s): In this brief session, we will discuss the organization and conduct of the course, course expectations, and get to know each other. No preparation is necessary.

Session 2: How publishing works and what significant contributions are

Date/Time: 29 March 2023, 09h00 – 16h30

Venue: Room 0005.1, Moorweide 18

Readings: will be finalized in advance. At this point, readings include:

- Schminke, M. (2004). From the Editors: Raising the Bamboo Curtain. *Academy of Management Journal*, 17(3), 310-314.
- Huff, A. S. (1998). *Writing for Scholarly Publication*. Sage. Chapter 1: Writing as Conversation (pp. 3-17)
- Davis, M. S. (1971). That's Interesting: Towards a Phenomenology of Sociology and a Sociology of Phenomenology. *Philosophy of the Social Sciences*, 1(4), 309-344.
- Bergh, D. D. (2003). From the Editors: Thinking Strategically about Contribution. *Academy of Management Journal*, 46(2), 135-136.
- Straub, D. W. (2009). Editor's Comments: Why Top Journals Accept Your Paper. *MIS Quarterly*, 33(3), iii-x.
- Rynes, S. (2002). From the Editors: Some Reflections on Contribution. *Academy of Management Journal*, 45(2), 311-313.
- Whetten, D. A. (1989). What Constitutes a Theoretical Contribution? *Academy of Management Review*, 14(4), 490-495.
- Colquitt, J. A., & Zapata-Phelan, C. P. (2007). Trends in Theory Building and Theory Testing: A Five-Decade Study of the *Academy of Management Journal*. *Academy of Management Journal*, 50(6), 1281-1303.

Session 3: Building a manuscript and writing a powerful introduction

Date/Time: 10 May 2023, 09h00 – 16h30

Venue: Room 0005.1, Moorweide 18

Readings: will be finalized in advance. At this point, readings include:

- Bem, D. J. (2003). Writing the Empirical Journal Article. In J. M. Darley, M. P. Zanna, & H. L. Roediger III (Eds.), *The Compleat Academic: A Practical Guide for the Beginning Social Scientist* (2nd ed., pp. 185-219). American Psychological Association.
- Alvesson, M., & Sandberg, J. (2011). Generating Research Questions Through Problematicization. *Academy of Management Review*, 36(2), 247-271.
- Grant, A. M., & Pollock, T. G. (2011). Publishing in AMJ—Part 3: Setting the Hook. *Academy of Management Journal*, 54(5), 873-879.
- Rai, A. (2018). Editor's Comments: The First Few Pages. *MIS Quarterly*, 42(2), iii-vi.
- Cornelissen, J. P. (2017). Editor's Comments: Developing Propositions, a Process Model, or a Typology? Addressing the Challenges of Writing Theory Without a Boilerplate. *Academy of Management Review*, 42(1), 1-9.
- Grover, V., & Lyytinen, K. (2015). New State of Play in Information Systems Research: The Push to the Edges. *MIS Quarterly*, 39(2), 271-296.

Session 4: Handling reviews and building revision strategies

Date/Time: 7 June 2023, 09h00 – 16h30

Venue: Room 0005.1, Moorweide 18

Readings: will be finalized in advance. At this point, readings include:

- Rai, A. (2019). Editor's Comments: The First Revision. *MIS Quarterly*, 43(3), iii-viii.
- Daft, R. L. (1995). Why I Recommended That Your Manuscript Be Rejected and What You Can Do About It. In L. L. Cummings & P. J. Frost (Eds.), *Publishing in the Organizational Sciences* (2nd ed., pp. 164-182). Sage.
- Saunders, C. (2005). Editor's Comments: Looking for Diamond Cutters. *MIS Quarterly*, 29(1), iii-viii.
- Lee, A. S. (1995). Reviewing a Manuscript for Publication. *Journal of Operations Management* 13(1), 87-92.
- Sarker, S., Agarwal, R., Goes, P. B., Gregor, S., Henfridsson, O., Saunders, C., & Tan, B. C. Y. (2015). Roles and Responsibilities of a Senior Editor. *Journal of the Association for Information Systems*, 16(9), i-xx. <https://doi.org/10.17705/1jais.00407>