

The MPhil Core Chapter Writing Course at SOAS

Mehmet Izbudak

Academic Teaching Development

Mi29@soas.ac.uk

Origins

- Collaboration between International Foundation Courses and English Language Studies (**IFCELS**) and the Learning and Teaching Unit (**LTU**)
- Desmond Thomas
- MA skills workshop
- 5 session course vs autonomous short workshops
- Focus on writing skills and “core chapter”
- Upgrading process - MPhil to PhD

Course structure

- Developing research questions within the topic area
- Identifying a research problem to investigate
- Conducting a literature review around the research problem
- Providing a draft structure for the thesis
- Planning and writing upgrading core chapters

Course structure 2

- Developing research questions within the topic area
- Integrating reading and writing in a research project
- Developing key concepts
- Structuring and planning a core chapter and PhD thesis
- Writing process from first draft to final draft

Focus

- Integrated course as opposed to single autonomous workshops
- Interactive sessions – student centred activities
- Cross discipline
- Homework/assignment - continuum

Developing research questions within the topic area

- Title
- Feasibility
- Research questions
- Hypotheses

Integrating reading and writing in a research project

- Reading aims
- Critical approaches to reading and note taking
- Literature review

[Sarah Boseley](#), Health editor

[The Guardian](#), Monday 1 November 2010

Alcohol 'more harmful than heroin or crack'

Heroin causes harm to users, but alcohol causes considerably more harm in the wider community, study finds.

[Alcohol](#) is the most dangerous drug in the UK by a considerable margin, beating heroin and crack cocaine into second and third place, according to an authoritative study published today which will reopen calls for the [drugs](#) classification system to be scrapped and a concerted campaign launched against drink.

Led by the sacked government drugs adviser [David Nutt](#) with colleagues from the breakaway Independent Scientific Committee on Drugs, the study says that if drugs were classified on the basis of the harm they do, alcohol would be class A, alongside heroin and crack cocaine.

Developing key concepts

- Clarifying individual concepts through definition
- Exploring a concept within a wider context
- Relationships between concepts
- Examining different stages of concept development

Structuring and planning a core chapter

- General considerations
- Organisational hierarchy
- Abstract
- Draft table of contents

Writing process from first draft to final draft

- Clarity and coherence
- Structure
- Style

Seven years of success and development

- High uptake
- Coherent and inclusive course
- Flexible [for both teacher and student]
- Interactive
- Term 2 version
- Writing and editing a thesis (3 part Year 3 course)

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