

Reading and Writing for the Literature Review

by Dr Margaret Taplin

Aim

The aim of this workshop is to introduce graduate students to some strategies for making and organizing notes while reading for the literature review, and using them as a basis for developing a structured, logical review.

Content

One of the most challenging tasks in writing a thesis or research article is to organize the ideas from the literature in your field and then structure it in a logical and coherent way. In this workshop we will identify the main features of a literature review and examine some good and not-so-good examples.

We will do some hands-on activities to develop and practice some strategies for:

- collecting and organising your notes from your reading
- using these notes to form a structure for your literature review
- writing a cohesive literature review

Organization

This is a 3-hour workshop. It will be in the format of some lecturing to introduce key strategies and hands-on activities to explore these strategies in a practical context.

Enrolment

Each workshop is limited to a maximum of 30 students. While it will target the needs of non-native English speaking students, it will also be suitable for native-speaking students who would like to learn more about these strategies.

There are no prerequisites for this workshop.

Tasks

Students will be required to complete a short written task in which they prepare a set of notes to organize key ideas from their reading, using strategies covered in the workshop, and organize these ideas into a sequential, logical argument. This is required to be submitted no later than two weeks after the workshop.

Learning outcomes

At the end of this workshop, students will be able to:

- identify the differences between good and weak literature reviews
- select the most appropriate strategies for making and organizing notes from their reading
- structure a conventional, thematic literature review in a logical way