

## 63000 - Academic writing of scientific texts in English language

### Syllabus Information

**Academic Year:** 2019/20

**Subject:** 63000 - Academic writing of scientific texts in English language

**Faculty / School:** 105 - Facultad de Veterinaria

**Degree:** 566 - Master's in Food Quality, Safety and Technology

**ECTS:** 6.0

**Year:** 1

**Semester:** First semester

**Subject Type:** Compulsory

**Module:** ---

## 1.General information

### 1.1.Aims of the course

**The course and its expected results meet the following aims:**

The overall objective of the course is to prepare the student to face the writing of abstracts and scientific papers associated with his/her profile as researcher. For that matter, a revision of the discursive, linguistic, syntactic, morphological and semantic traits that characterise academic communication within the scientific field will be carried out by means of the analysis of authentic abstracts and papers on topics related to the different subfields of the Food Science and Technology field.

In terms of specific objectives, the student is expected to develop his/her capacity of distinguishing between the language used in this type of texts and that used to deal with the same topics in an extra-academic context. Furthermore, the student is expected to know how to use the proper register and to carry out a correct textual organisation, using thus the most adequate linguistic formulas for the different textual pieces.

Additionally, the student is expected to develop selective reading habits derived from a mastering of the informative structure of these scientific genres, as well as evaluation habits of their correspondent informative quality. This, in turn, will enable the student to self-evaluate his/her own writing production in the near future.

### 1.2.Context and importance of this course in the degree

Since English is the language used worldwide within the scientific communication in the academic context and due to the practical nature of this course, it contributes crosswise to support all the master's courses. This is so not only because it ultimately aims at enabling the student so as to become an active participant of the scientific communication sphere, but it also aims at providing him/her with the necessary skills for the search, reading, analysis and evaluation of papers and abstracts related to the different subjects of his/her specialisation precisely because the student is allowed to select the texts of those topics that are most appealing for his/her research training.

### 1.3.Recommendations to take this course

Since the ultimate objective of this course is to prepare students for the written production of scientific papers and abstracts on their specialisation in English, it is necessary that the enrolled students have an intermediate-high level of English so that they are able to understand a lesson provided in English and are able to actively participate in its development, given the interactive nature of the course.

It is also required that students have enough experience reading scientific texts on their specialisation field and are used to the lexical, grammatical, stylistic and rhetoric specificities of the language used internationally in the scientific communication genres.

## 2.Learning goals

### 2.1.Competences

**By passing the course, the student will be more competent to:**

- Acknowledge the existing differences between the academic genres of scientific communication (in terms of both writing and semantic, morphological and syntactic characteristics) of those written texts revolving around a similar topic that are used outside the academic context (dissemination texts, private communications, newspaper articles,

etc.)

- Understand, interpret, analyse and assess scientific texts of his/her specialisation pertaining to the genres of abstracts and research articles, and to know how to spot specific information within a text, as a result of his knowledge on the text's rhetoric structure.
- Communicate in writing the results of his/her research works using the proper linguistic and discursive approach and knowing how to organise the information following the established international standards for the scientific communication within the academic context.

## 2.2. Learning goals

To pass this subject, the student will have to demonstrate the following results:

- S/he is able to acknowledge the existing differences between the general use of English and its varieties in the academic context, and to distinguish written academic English from other texts revolving around the same topic but with a different communicative goal from that of scientific communication.
- S/he is able to easily identify the inner structure of the different sections that form an abstract and the informative purpose of each one of them, and s/he knows and is able to use the expressions, syntactic structures and lexical formulas normally employed in order to indicate the different informative segments (moves) in this genre.
- S/he is able to synthesise the information related to a scientific research work following the standards used in the formation of abstracts in terms of informative level, textual structure, use of linguistic forms that characterise the scientific discourse of this genre.
- S/he distinguishes between the different types of abstracts depending on their communicative purpose, and s/he is able to use them in terms of informative level, textual structure, and use of linguistic forms.
- S/he is aware of and knows how to employ, both in reading and writing, the rhetoric structure, the syntactic, morphological and lexical characteristics of scientific articles and s/he is used to the specificities of the scientific papers belonging to his/her field of knowledge published in international journals.
- S/he is able to write an article or paper about a research topic of his/her scientific field of interest, omitting or inventing (when necessary) those research data that can only be known once the corresponding research is finished, but nevertheless proving his/her linguistic ability when writing an authentic text in the future.

## 2.3. Importance of learning goals

The subject intends to ease for students the reading of abstracts and scientific papers of their field of specialisation through the acknowledgement and analysis of the discursive, morphosyntactic and semantic traits that define scientific genres, as well as to provide them with the necessary tools for the writing of this type of texts within their thematic framework of interest. Since English is the scientific communicative means worldwide, all reference bibliography for this course will be published and provided in the before mentioned language so that, besides enabling students for the writing of their own papers in English, this course also intends to ease them the search and reading of the necessary texts so as to meet the objectives of the overall master's degree.

## 3. Assessment (1st and 2nd call)

### 3.1. Assessment tasks (description of tasks, marking system and assessment criteria)

The student will have to demonstrate that s/he reached the intended learning results through the following assessment tasks:

- **Significant individual participation** in the practical activities and tasks developed throughout the whole classroom teaching. **(10%)**
- Individual execution of a series of written tasks set to practice the correct usage of the proper linguistic forms for the scientific written communication genres within the academic context: a **bionote (10%)**; an **email (10%)**; and an **abstract** elaborated from a scientific paper provided by the teacher **(10%)**. The necessary materials and tools for the fulfilment of these tasks will be provided in advance through the Moodle platform besides being tackled in class.
- Furthermore, the students will have to analyse the rhetoric structure of a series of abstracts and research papers of their choice once they have acknowledged the specificities of these genres (in terms of informative organisation within the different textual sections and the identification of different moves) after the theoretic explanation and practice in class. After the analysis of different abstracts and research articles and the acknowledgement of their specificities, the students will be required to elaborate a compulsory individual task consisting in **writing an abstract or a research paper** on a topic of their choice, preferably linked to their specific research profile **(60%)**. This mainly aims at checking that students have acquired the necessary skills so as to face both the reading and writing of scientific research texts. Precisely for that matter, the correct use of proper linguistic forms for each textual section, the use of adequate register, the adaptation of the informative structure, and the abundance and

variety of formulas used will be assessed in the final abstract or research paper. Nevertheless, the scientific value of the work or the truthfulness of the results obtained will not be taken into consideration, since it is not an authentic research work.

Therefore, in order to pass the subject, the student will have to attend the practical and theoretical lessons, do and hand in the required individual tasks for each macro lesson, do and hand in the bionote, the email and the guided abstract and, finally, do and hand in the final compulsory task.

## 4. Methodology, learning tasks, syllabus and resources

### 4.1. Methodological overview

**The learning process designed for this course is based on the following issues:**

The course has a mainly practical focus and it is mainly developed by means of individual and group tasks and exercises meant to practice and assess the knowledge learnt in the classroom lessons which require an active participation of the students, including within the theoretical lessons.

For that matter, prior to each session, the students will be provided (through the Moodle platform) with the materials and guideline for each lesson so as to optimise time and to have the chance to delve deeper in those aspects that are more problematic and/or require a more considerable explanation or illustration. Each session is to last two hours. In the first half of the session which will last approximately fifty minutes, a theoretical presentation of the corresponding topic and its exemplification by means of using authentic materials from texts related to research topics related to the field of Food Science and Technology will be delivered. The remaining ten minutes will be used to solve doubts and questions about the matter at hand. The second half of the session will be dedicated to the practice of the concepts learnt previously by means of exercises focused on the analysis of texts corresponding to the intended genres (abstracts and research articles and papers) as well as on the implementation of the acquired knowledge about the rhetoric, morphosyntactic and semantic characteristics which define this textual typology.

Throughout the lessons, the students will have to carry out individually under the teacher's supervision a series of exercises related to the aspects and topics developed in class. Moreover, students will have to carry out individually and at home a series of practical exercises which will be assessed so as to demonstrate the students' acquisition and comprehension of the theoretical knowledge dealt with in class. All the necessary materials for the development of those exercises will be provided beforehand through the Moodle platform and the deadlines will be notified at the beginning of the course.

Once the classroom lessons finish, students will have to carry out an individual task consisting in the elaboration and writing of an abstract or scientific paper revolving around a topic of their choice, in which they will have to demonstrate all the concepts dealt with in class.

### 4.2. Learning tasks

The course will be developed in 30 sessions two hours long, following the official schedule of the master's degree (**60 hours**).

Individual development and execution of written exercises for the implementation of concepts learnt in the classroom sessions described in the previous section.

Individual development and execution of a final task consisting in the elaboration and writing of an abstract or research paper about a topic of the student's choice.

### 4.3. Syllabus

**The course will address the following topics:**

? The concept of Academic English; overview of Academic English main features; Scientific English in academic contexts.

- Formal grammar style; some non-vocabulary-related recommendations for maintaining a formal academic writing style.
- Writing concisely: strategies for reducing wordiness.
- Use of tense and voice in scientific academic texts.
- Improving the flow of the text: the use of connectors.
- Comparing and contrasting.
- Causality and result.
- Academic vocabulary: the academic list.
- Subject-verb agreement.
- The purpose of abstracts; types of abstracts.
- Typical informative sections within the abstract; Possible structures.
- Analysis and evaluation of selected sample abstracts.
- Overall structure of scientific research articles: the sections of the article.
- The introduction: purpose and structure.
- The inner sections of the introduction; expressions used in the different moves (1).
- The inner sections of the introduction; expressions used in the different moves (2).

- The materials and methods section; rhetorical functions and techniques; process sequencing.
- The results section; rhetorical functions and techniques; comparison and contrast; cause-effect relationships.
- The Discussion section; summarising results; drawing conclusions; Use of hedging devices.
- The title of the research article; types of titles; recent trends; acknowledgements and references.

#### 4.4.Course planning and calendar

##### **Schedule of classroom sessions and tasks delivery:**

Classroom sessions will take place in the first semester of the academic year. The assessment written tasks carried out individually will have to be handed on the established dates that will in turn be notified to the students at the beginning of the course. The final task will have to be handed in once classroom sessions finish but before the deadline, which will be notified to the students at the beginning and throughout the semester.

The official schedule of the master and the timetable of the theoretical and practical sessions of the course will be available throughout September on the Faculty of Veterinary Studies website: <https://veterinaria.unizar.es/academico/master-cta-2015>

The teacher's office hours will be notified to the students at the beginning of the course and reminded throughout the semester as well as any change, although it is highly recommended to contact the teacher in person or by email before so as to avoid overlaps or unnecessary waits.

#### 4.5.Bibliography and recommended resources

Both bibliography and recommended resources are updated and available on the Library's website (look up recommended bibliography in <https://biblioteca.unizar.es> ) as well as on the course's Moodle page.