

Short-self evaluation of the PhD course on International Publishing – fall 2022.

Course coordinator: Fulvio Castellacci (TIK Centre).

Since its beginning in the fall 2019, the course has received on the whole a good feedback from the PhD students, which assess that the course was useful and improved their knowledge of the process of international publishing.

The course seeks to provide a combination of information and practical suggestions on how to publish internationally, as well as a critical discussion of the peer-review publication system and some other ethical and practical challenges that PhD students meet when they seek to publish their work internationally. On the whole, it seems that the course participants appreciate this mix of practically-oriented suggestions and more general critical discussions of the Norwegian and international publication system.

For the exam, the participants are asked to write a short essay that maps and discusses relevant publication outlets (journals and books) for their own PhD project. The exercise is supposedly useful for the PhD students, and it does not require a very extensive work for the participants. The results of the exams have so far shown that the PhD students have provided a good mapping and discussion of publication outlets that are relevant for their project. From the point of view of the lecturers, this PhD course is engaging and fun to teach. The themes of the lectures are interesting and relevant, and the course participants are highly motivated and eager to learn, and they actively contribute to discussions during the lectures. There are usually nice and useful discussions during the course.

Regarding specific feedbacks previously received from the participants and recent changes recently implemented in the course, there are three relevant aspects to note.

One aspect is that the course would benefit from having a broader representation of lecturers from various disciplines in the social sciences. At the same time, though, this is only a two-day course, in which there is not enough time to have several sessions. To address this suggestion previously made by some participants, the course in the fall 2021 and 2022 has introduced one change. It has added one new session in which the participants have been divided in different groups based on their thematic interests and Department affiliation, and worked on discipline-specific examples together with lecturers from different Departments. According to the most recent feedbacks from the participants in the course fall 2022, this change has been well-received, and it will therefore be maintained also in the next editions of this course.

The second aspect is that some participants previously pointed out that roundtables 1 and 2 have some overlaps and repetitions with the corresponding lectures 1 and 2. To address this point, these two roundtables have been cut in the course in the fall 2022.

The third aspect that needs some attention is that a few participants every year have already substantial experience with international publishing before they begin this course, and they thus consider that the course is “too basic” for them, and that they would like to have a more advanced and challenging course. However, this course is explicitly thought as an *introduction* to international publishing which addresses PhD students at an early stage of their doctoral work. This is clearly stated in the course description, and I point this out clearly

and explicitly at the very beginning of this course. Therefore, it seems that there is for some of the participants a slight mismatch between the course's objectives and learning goals (which aims at delivering an introductory course meant for young researchers with limited experience in international publishing) and some of the PhD students' expectations (which would like to have a more advanced course because they already have already prior experience in international publishing).

This aspect is not easy to address, given the heterogeneity of the participants to this course. I am not sure that it will be appropriate and feasible to present more advanced topics during this course. A two-day general introduction course does not make this possible; and it is not obvious to think of more advanced topics related to international publishing that would be of common interest for such a broad and heterogenous audience of PhD students. I think that a more advanced course on this theme should not be provided by the Faculty, but it should instead be be discipline-specific, and it should therefore be organized separately by the various Department if they wish so.