



Hamburg Financial
Research Center

Doctoral Course
Planning, Writing, and Presenting Academic Research
Spring 2026



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General Information

Lecturer:	Prof. Dr. Peter Limbach
Credits:	5 ECTS
Language of instruction:	English
Max. number of participants:	7
Course dates:	February 23-24, 2026
Location:	University of Hamburg
Participation fee:	790€ (Doctoral students) / 990€ (PostDocs)

Course Description

People are busy and there are tons of research papers and conferences out there, which is why you are always fighting for attention and competing for conference participation and journal space. On top of that, people are impatient, get distracted, and tend to misunderstand what you say and write. In this hands-on interactive course, participants will learn how to deal with these issues to successfully convey their message and sell their research. As part of the course, participants work on (1) planning and pitching their own research ideas or papers, (2) presenting and discussing research by established authors, (3) writing concise abstracts and introductions, and (4) preparing self-contained tables and figures that allow readers to skim but still understand papers. The course also provides a Q&A session and some insights into the planning of research projects and the editorial process.

Learning Objectives

- Improve your ability to plan, pitch, and execute academic research.
- Improve your communication skills, both verbal and written.
- Improve your writing skills (e.g., how to write an abstract and introduction; how to facilitate skimming; flow; structuring a paper, tables and figures; English language and writing style).

- Improve your presentation skills (e.g., slide design and the structure of a presentation; English language; body language; psychological aspects; answering questions the right way).
- Learn how to discuss a paper (e.g., how to convey criticism; the structure of a discussion; which aspects of a paper to criticize; how to assess empirical work).
- Comprehend why writing and presenting papers is important and why you need to write in a concise way, how similar writing and presenting are, and what you should and should not do.
- Recognize that more or less every paper can be criticized and what that means for your own research, papers, and presentations as well as for the selection of topics to work on.
- Improve your economic and econometric understanding and reasoning.
- Understand the editorial process.

Course Mechanics

- The instructor discusses important aspects of planning, writing and presenting research papers and provides an introduction to research paper pitches and discussions. Topics include the reasons why scholars should present and discuss academic work; reasons why projects fail as well as publishing strategies; writing tips (e.g., how to write an abstract and introduction, how to structure a paper, how to write good English language and avoid typical flaws); presentation and discussion techniques (e.g., structure of a presentations, slide design, language, body language, psychological aspects); tips what projects to start/abandon.
- Course participants have to present and/or discuss academic papers. The instructor as well as the other course participants provide feedback to each presenter. Among other issues, the feedback will address presentation techniques, language, and the content of the presentations and discussions.
- The instructor provides personal examples, such as his own presentations, discussions, and papers as well as referee reports and anecdotes. For example, the instructor provides his own discussions of some of the discussed/presented papers (as a blueprint) and elaborates on important theoretical and econometric aspects of those papers to highlight i) discussion techniques, ii) econometric and economic reasoning, and iii) how to convey constructive criticism in a pleasant and factual way.
- Three exercises: i) Abstract writing – participants have to write an abstract of at most 150 words of their own research paper, idea or dissertation; ii) Short presentations – participants have to present/pitch their own research or research idea; iii) Elevator pitch of a research idea or paper. The instructor as well as the other course participants provide feedback on how the abstract is written (including the instructor's revision of each abstract), how the pitch slides are designed and presented, and whether the elevator pitch is persuading.
- Writing: The instructor explains how to write abstracts and introductions as well as the body of the paper, and how to structure tables. Examples will be provided.

- Insights into the submission and publication process, e.g., cover letter, R&R and rejection, what to do after getting an R&R or rejection.
- If time is left, the instructor discusses issues related to success and failure in academia.
- On demand: 1-on-1 or group meetings to discuss research (ideas).

Examination

- Actively participate in the seminar (e.g., hand in questions, provide feedback to others)
- Prepare a 6-minute presentation (pitch) of your own research, including the research question and motivation, hypotheses, empirical setup (data/tests) or theory (and maybe results)
- Prepare a 30-60 second verbal elevator pitch of a research idea or paper
- Write an abstract of 100-150 words of your paper, current work or dissertation
- Read the papers you have to present and/or discuss and prepare the respective presentations (instructions will be provided)
- Not mandatory: Hand in one of their own research papers in order to discuss it in group

Target Group and Prerequisites

The course is tailored for doctoral candidates and early-stage postdocs. The course targets participants from all areas of business administration and economics (particularly accounting, economics, finance, management). Course participants need some research to present – very early work-in-progress is sufficient. Basic knowledge of empirical methods (i.e., OLS and panel data) is helpful.

About the Lecturer

Peter Limbach is Professor (W3) of Finance and Corporate Governance at the University of Bielefeld. He is also a research fellow of the Centre for Financial Research (CFR), Cologne. Peter holds a German Diploma (equivalent to MSc) in economics from the University of Bonn and a PhD (Dr. rer. pol.) in finance from the Karlsruhe Institute of Technology (KIT). He spent several months at the Rotterdam School of Management as a visiting PhD. Between December 2016 and May 2021, Peter held the position of CFR Junior-Professor of Investments at the University of Cologne. In 2020, he substituted the Professorship Financial Economics (Prof. Dr. Isabel Schnabel) at the University of Bonn. Peter's research covers topics in corporate finance and financial markets, corporate governance and sustainability, as well as financial accounting. He has published in leading scientific journals, including the Accounting Review, the Journal of Economic Behavior and Organization, the Journal of Financial and Quantitative Analysis, and Management Science. Peter organizes one of Europe's leading virtual accounting and finance research seminar series. Since 2022, he serves as co-editor of Management Review Quarterly, handling submissions in the areas of accounting, finance, and governance.