

Digital Summer School on Religion and Development (2020)

PhD Working Session, 24 July 2020

Managing my research

Presenters: Ignatius Swart & Philipp Öhlmann

1. Round of introduction (moderation: PÖ)

- ❑ What is my discipline and what is the most common publication type in my discipline (e.g. books, articles, chapters in edited volumes)?
- ❑ The different components of academic life: TEACHING, RESEARCH, COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT
 - ✓ How much experience do I need to have in each of these areas to embark on an academic career?
 - ✓ Should I prioritise research and publication?
 - ✓ What is community engagement in the context of the academia?

2. How do I build a research career? (moderation: IS with additional input from PÖ)

- Are universities the only pathway to build a research career?
- Embarking on a post-doctoral research project? A sine qua non? What does it entail: obtaining a post-doctoral fellowship?
- What do I do when I am not successful in obtaining a funded post-doctoral position?
- What to publish (books/articles)?
- How do I get my first book published?
- Where to publish? (international journals? local journals? Is it worthwhile aiming for top international journals or should I rather publish more articles in mid-ranked journals?)
- If you publish a book, you can consider trying to get it into a book series, e.g.:
<https://www.lit-verlag.de/Publikationen/Reihen/Studies-on-Religion-and-Culture-Studien-zu-Religion-und-Kultur.-Religious-Communities-and-Sustainable-Development-Religioese-Gemeinschaften-und-nachhaltige-Entwicklung/>

3. Teaching (moderation: IS with additional input from PÖ)

- How much teaching experience should I have in view of a desired academic appointment – vis-à-vis a research profile?

Case in point: Let us for instance compare the differences between the South African and German systems.

- What is the relationship between research and teaching?

Can I be a good teacher without also prioritising research?

Should I choose between research and teaching?

☾ A good option to connect the two might also be research-based teaching, e.g. having students conduct their own mini-research projects/empirical research assignments as part of their course.

4. Let's talk a bit more about community engagement / outreach (moderation: IS with additional input from PÖ)

- Could community engagement become the prioritized avenue to obtain a university job?
- If it cannot be the prioritized avenue, could a strong community engagement profile strengthen your chances to obtain an academic position / university job?
- Should there be an indispensable link between community engagement and research / community engagement and teaching?
- Is there an indispensable link between socially committed research (R & D as a case in point!) and community engagement?
- What should be the preferred way: Engaging in community outreach within the university / outside the university?

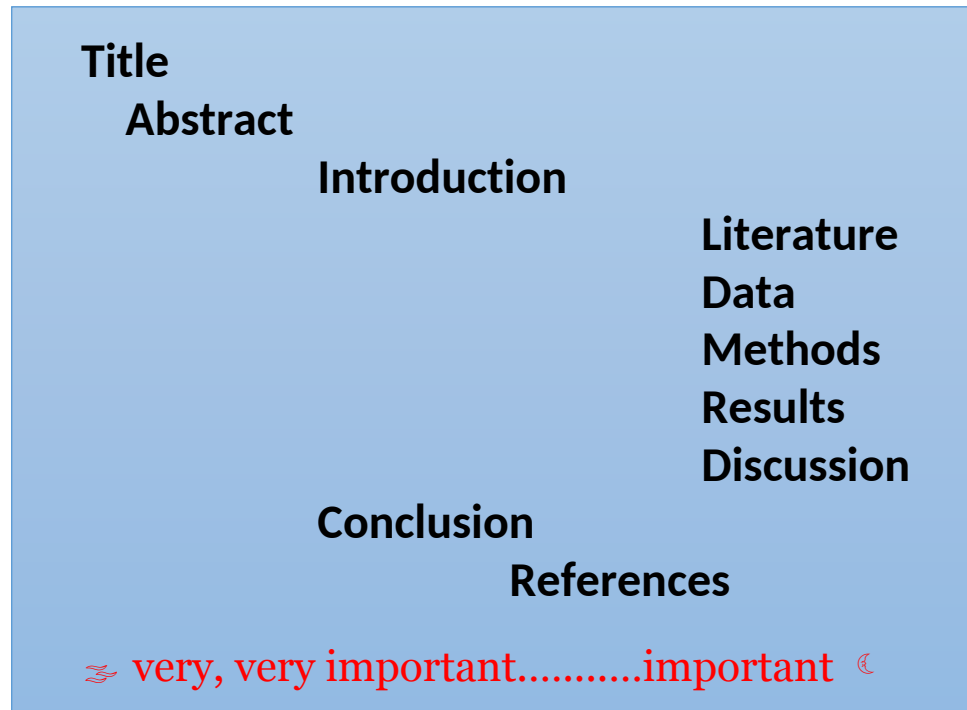
5. The option of consultancy work (moderation: IS with additional input from PÖ)

- Should I do consultancy work? Can it enhance my prospects of obtaining an academic position?
- Could consultancy work be a viable addition to the threefold of research, teaching and community engagement?
- Is there a direct connection between consultancy work and research?

6. Considering the importance of formality in academia regarding papers, applications, CVs (moderation: PÖ with additional input from IS)

- The importance of well-structured papers

Typical structure of a research paper:



See e.g.: <https://www.enago.com/academy/tips-effectively-structure-research-paper/>
<https://libguides.usc.edu/writingguide/academicwriting>

6. Considering the importance of formality in academia regarding papers, applications, CVs (moderation: PÖ with additional input from IS)

- ❑ The importance of a good abstract

Reason for writing/Motivation: What is the importance of the research? Why would a reader be interested in the larger work?

Problem: What problem does this work attempt to solve? What is the scope of the project? What is the main argument/thesis/claim?

Methodology: An abstract of a scientific work may include specific models or approaches used in the larger study. Other abstracts may describe the types of evidence used in the research.

Results: Again, an abstract of a scientific work may include specific data that indicates the results of the project. Other abstracts may discuss the findings in a more general way.

Implications: What changes should be implemented as a result of the findings of the work? How does this work add to the body of knowledge on the topic?

Adapted from: <https://writingcenter.unc.edu/tips-and-tools/abstracts/>. See also e.g.: <https://scientific-publishing.webshop.elsevier.com/manuscript-preparation/bad-vs-good-abstract/>

- ❑ Assignment (optional): Send an abstract of your work to us (philipp.oehlmann@hu-berlin.de, igswart@uwc.ac.za) and we'll comment it and post the abstract and comments on Miro.

6. **Considering the importance of formality in academia regarding papers, applications, CVs (moderation: PÖ with additional input from IS)**

❑ Some issues of crucial importance

- ✓ spell-check / copy-editing
- ✓ proper (English) language use
- ✓ consistent style

see e.g.: Chicago Manual of Style, <https://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/home.html>

- ✓ references properly formatted

❑ Clear layout of applications, papers, CVs etc.

- ✓ **THE IMPORTANCE OF BUILDING AND UPDATED AND ATTRACTIVE CV**
Let's do a google search: **What is an attractive CV?**

7. Opportunities for doctoral and post-doctoral research funding: An assignment to report back on at the session “International research collaboration,” Thursday, 30.07.20

Search the following website and tell us what you have discovered:

<https://asntech.github.io/postdoc-funding-schemes/>

<https://opportunity4researchers.com/international-post-doctoral-fellowship-opportunities/>

<https://www.opportunitiesforafricans.com/category/scholarships/phd/>

<https://doingaphdinafrica.org/>

<https://www.daad.de/en/>

<https://www.humboldt-foundation.de/web/home.html>