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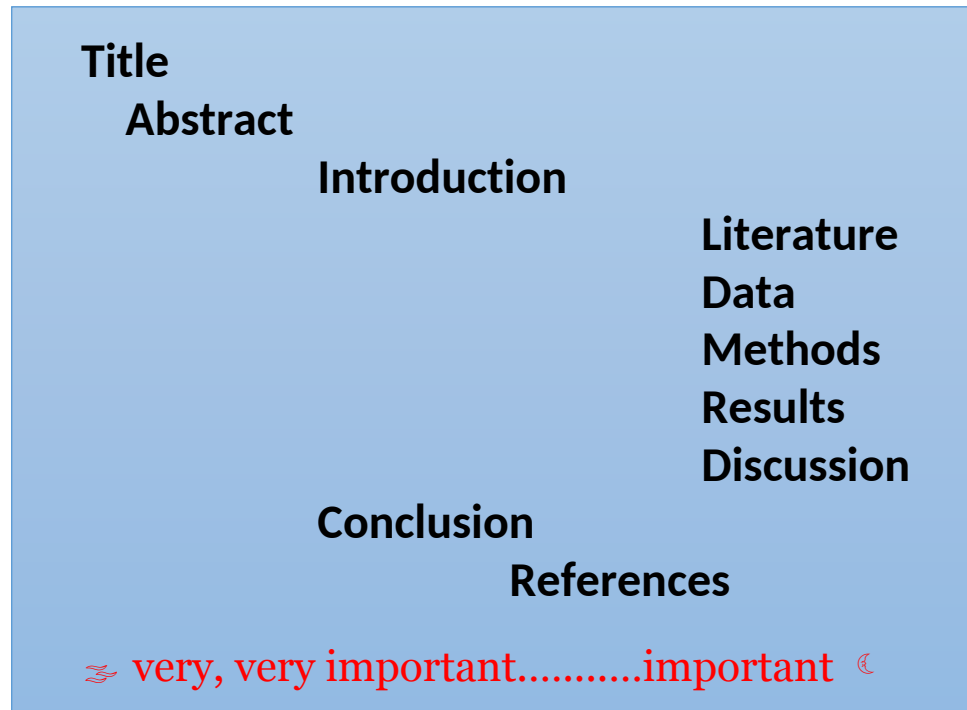
5. **The option of consultancy work (moderation: IS with additional input from PÖ)**

   ❑ 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:

Title
  Abstract
     Introduction
                    Literature
                    Data
                    Methods
                    Results
                    Discussion
       Conclusion
              References

≋ very, very important...........important ☾

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 <u>assignment</u> 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