

# Summer School

## The Art of Academic Writing



*An initiative of University of Ghana & Amsterdam University  
Medical Centers, University of Amsterdam*



Monday, 24th July – Friday, 28th July 2023

VENUE: International House, University of Ghana, Accra, Ghana

## Organizing committee

*Prof. Eric Osei-Assibey, Dean of International Programs, University of Ghana, Legon*

*Prof. Margaret Lartey, Professor of Medicine, Medical School, College of Health Sciences, University of Ghana*

*Prof. Michael Boele van Hensbroek, Professor of Global Child Health, Amsterdam UMC, University of Amsterdam*

*Prof. Charles Agyemang, Professor of Global Migration, Ethnicity & Health, Amsterdam UMC, University of Amsterdam*

*Dr. Erik Beune, Assistant Professor & Policy Advisor Internationalization, Amsterdam UMC, University of Amsterdam*

## Background

The Summer School: "The Art of Academic Writing" is an initiative of the University of Ghana and the Amsterdam University Medical Centers (*Amsterdam UMC*), University of Amsterdam. The course focuses on developing faculty members, postdocs, postgraduate physicians with research ambitions and PhD students into independent investigators. The course is one week, full time, on site in Accra, Ghana.

The academic environment is becoming increasingly competitive. Faculty members and postgraduate students are expected to provide high quality scientific output (e.g. publications, reports). These publications do not only help to advance knowledge, but have also become an essential criterium for faculty members' career development. The well-known slogan '*Publish or Perish*' says it all! For many faculty members it is a daunting challenge combining the busy tasks of teaching and supervision of students with research and writing scientific publications. Finding effective ways of writing publishable works is therefore crucial for scientific and career success.

## Objectives

The course aims to assist PhD students, postdocs, faculty members, postgraduate physicians with research ambitions in fulfilling this critical niche by providing a crash course on scientific writing and critical methodologies.

The course provides hands-on intensive training on academic writing and includes:

1. Introduction to academic writing;
2. Critical methodologies on systematic review and meta-analysis; including searching different databases and data extraction;
3. Basic statistical techniques for data analysis;
4. Techniques for analysing and interpreting qualitative data.
5. Introduction to grant writing.

The trainees can bring their own dataset (both quantitative and qualitative) or they can make use of databases to be provided by the Course team for hands-on training.

## Outputs/Deliverables

Upon successful completion of this course, trainees will:

- Acquire scientific skills to become more efficient in academic writing;
- Acquire scientific skills in conducting systematic review and meta-analysis;
- Acquire scientific skills in conducting qualitative research;
- Acquire scientific skills to develop competitive grant application;
- Receive a certificate on successfully completing the course.

### How to write a publishable paper

This course covers effective ways and steps of writing publishable scientific papers. In addition, the trainees will also be introduced to current challenges and solutions in conducting scientific research in the era of COVID-19 pandemic drawing on experiences from current ongoing innovative projects. Upon successful completion of this course, participants will be conversant with effective ways of writing publishable papers. This will be supported with critical methods including:

#### *1. Introduction to academic writing*

What makes a paper a good or a bad paper? The participants will receive training and will be introduced to do's and the don'ts including style, and effective ways of writing an abstract, introduction, methodology, result and discussion section. Trainees will be tasked to read a model paper before the course starts.

#### *2. Introduction to Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis*

This course introduces methods to perform systematic reviews and meta-analysis. It covers how to formulate an answerable research question, define inclusion and exclusion criteria, search for the evidence, extract data, assess the risk of bias in various studies e.g. observational studies, and clinical trials, and perform a meta-analysis.

Upon successful completion of this section of the course, participants will be able to:

- describe the steps in conducting a systematic review;
- develop an answerable question using the Participants Interventions Comparisons Outcomes (PICO) framework;
- describe the process used to collect and extract data from reports of various studies;

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- describe methods to critically assess the risk of bias of clinical trials;
- describe and interpret the results of meta-analyses;
- conduct systematic review and perform meta-analysis using the Cochrane RevMan.

Trainees will also be introduced to extensive online research tools, and the best ways to research information on their topics. This will include use of the Amsterdam UMC, University of Amsterdam online catalogue, accessing online academic databases, as well as those available in health and biomedical sciences.

### *3. Biostatistics and Instructor Led Computer Labs: SPSS*

This course provides the basic concepts in statistical methods and tools for data analysis that will be reinforced through hands-on computer labs using SPSS software. This course focuses on a general introduction to the basics of statistics used in biomedical and public health sciences. During the course, hands-on training on statistical software will be given to the participants.

Upon successful completion of this section of the course, participants will be able to:

- define general statistics with some examples;
- define population, sample, variables (qualitative and quantitative) and data (missing, outlying, and censored);
- understand data such as tables, graphs, distributions and summary statistics (mean, standard deviation, median, quartiles);
- understand association measures between variables (e.g. correlation, regression, relative risk, odds ratio) as well as agreement measures between observers (Cohen kappa coefficient).

### *4. Qualitative Research Methods*

This course provides an introduction to qualitative research, key methods, study design, analysis and write up, and the practical and ethical considerations for qualitative fieldwork.

Upon successful completion of this section of the course, participants will be able to:

- describe and recognize the central elements and essential characteristics of qualitative research;
- develop answerable qualitative research goals and questions;
- describe different types of qualitative data collection methods;
- explain the different methods of qualitative data analysis;
- master analytical (coding) techniques using different programs such as Atlas.ti qualitative analysis software.
- demonstrate critical understanding of the practical dynamics of qualitative research;
- apply above knowledge to designing, conducting and reporting credible qualitative research in health and healthcare.

## 5. Grant writing

Acquiring research grants is an epitome of scientific success, but it is undoubtedly a tough nut to crack due to the competition rate. Developing a competitive grant application is very time consuming and requires patience and persistence. Mastering the art of grant writing can go a long way to help you succeed in acquiring sufficient funds for your scientific research. The trainees will be introduced to grant writing, do's and don'ts, setting up research consortium, and major funding bodies such as NIH, European Commission, Wellcome Trust etc and the application process.

Upon successful completion of this section of the course, participants will be able to:

- describe the key steps in developing competitive grant proposals;
- gain insights into do's and don'ts of grant proposals;
- effective ways of setting up a consortium for grant writing;
- conversant with the major funding bodies and the application process.

## PRACTICAL MATTERS

### When & Where?



Monday, 24th July – Friday, 28th July 2023

VENUE: International House, University of Ghana, Legon, Accra

### Who

The course will recruit 25-30 trainees per year from Ghana and 5 PhD students from the Amsterdam UMC, University of Amsterdam. Trainees will be chosen from the application pool with the aim to create a diverse group with a mix of backgrounds including faculty members, postdocs, PhD students, physician postgraduates with research ambitions. Students from Ghana and Amsterdam are expected to attend in person, assuming that there are no COVID pandemic travel restrictions.

### Eligibility

Candidate must

- Be a faculty member, postdoc, postgraduate physician, PhD.
- Demonstrate a commitment to a research career.
- Have a basic understanding of research methods.

### Course fee

The fee is \$250.00, including course, lunch, snacks and coffee/tea, and mentorship for maximum of six months. Prospective participants will receive 30% discount (\$75.00) if they register and pay their fees before 1<sup>st</sup> July 2023.

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## Accommodation

Participants need to organise their own accommodation at their own expense. Accommodation is available on the University of Ghana campus on request.

## Application

Application materials must include:

- Current CV (including mailing address, phone and email address).
- Concise statement of interest in a research career and how this course would fit in the planning.
- Support/recommendation letter from candidate's Institutional supervisor or mentor.
- A signed statement indicating the candidate's willingness to attend the full course and participate in any mentorship activities.

## Deadline for application: May 1, 2023

Send your application or ask for more information:

Students in Ghana: Ms Rosemary Tagoe, Study Abroad Coordinator, International Programmes Offices, University of Ghana: [sacip@staff.ug.edu.gh](mailto:sacip@staff.ug.edu.gh).

Students in Amsterdam UMC: International Office: [internationaloffice@amc.uva.nl](mailto:internationaloffice@amc.uva.nl)

## Profile of Trainers

### *Professor Eric Osei-Assibey*



*Prof. Professor Eric Osei-Assibey is an Associate Professor of Economics & the Dean of the International Programmes, University of Ghana. He is also a Senior Research Fellow at the Institute of Economic Affairs (IEA), Accra and a Non-resident Research Fellow at the CEQ Institute, Tulane University, USA. Prof. Osei-Assibey holds PhD in Development Economics from Nagoya University. Professor Osei-Assibey's research interests are in monetary policy, banking regulations and financial inclusion issues. He is also an expert in development macroeconomic and fiscal policy issues, international finance issues, poverty and social protection issues. He has published extensively and has consulted for many government agencies and international organizations, including government agencies such as the Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Trade and Industry, etc., and for development partners including UNICEF, UNDP, UNFPA, the World Bank, etc. He is a member of the International Banking, Economics and Finance Association (IBEFA), USA and the African Economic Research Consortium (AERC) network, Kenya, as well as, an eminent member and lead Subject Matter Expert of Chartered Institute of Supply Chain Management (CISCM). He is also a Visiting Professor in many universities outside Ghana and serves on a number of boards within and outside the University, a board member of Universal Merchant Bank (UMB) and Callens Solutions Plc. Professor Osei-Assibey also chairs the Sub-National Technical Committee on Good Financial Grant Practice and a member of the University of Ghana Superannuation Board as well as Legon Hall Council. He is currently an International Ambassador for Graduate School of International Development, Nagoya University, Japan.*

### **Professor Charles Agyemang**



*Prof. Charles Agyemang is a Professor of Global Migration, Ethnicity and Health and Principal Investigator at Amsterdam University Medical Centres, University of Amsterdam. He received his PhD in medicine from Erasmus Medical Centre, University of Rotterdam, and Master degree at Edinburgh University Medical School. His research is focused on ethnic inequalities in cardiovascular diseases (CVDs); and NCDs in low- and middle-income countries. Prof. Agyemang has over 20 years research experience has authored/co-authored over 350 published papers, and edited several books. He is the PI of the RODAM study – European Commission funded project on gene-environmental interaction on obesity & diabetes among African migrants. He is a fellow of the prestigious European Research Council (ERC) under the Consolidation Award programme. Prof. Agyemang is currently the Vice President of the Migrant Health section of the European Public Health Association and Scientific Chair of Global Society of Migration, Ethnicity, Race & Health. He is Section (Global Health) Editor for Journal of the American Heart Association (JAHA) and an Associate Editor for Internal and Emergency Medicine, and serves as an Editorial Board member for several journals. He is member of the WHO taskforce on NCDs in Migrant and was a member and a rapporteur of the Planning Committee for WHO Global Consultation on Migrant Health. He is a member of the Lancet Racial Equality Advisory Board.*



### **Professor Margaret Lartey**

*Prof. Margaret Lartey is a Professor of Medicine and a Physician with specialist training and interests in dermatology and infectious diseases. Prof. Margaret Lartey is immediate past Dean of the University of Ghana Medical School. Prof. Margaret Lartey continues to actively teach medical students and residents in Dermatology and Infectious Diseases and an examiner of both the Ghana College of Physicians and Surgeons and the West African College of Physicians. Her research areas include the skin and HIV, Pharmacokinetics of Antiretrovirals, HIV Co-infections among others. She has published widely around her areas of interest. She is a deputy editor-in-chief of the Ghana Medical Journal and a member of the Council for Science Editors. She holds international grants and is involved in the training of graduate students both at the Masters and PhD level locally and internationally. She has local and international training in mentorship and is actively involved in career mentorships.*



### **Professor Michael Boele van Hensbroek**

*Prof Michaël Boele van Hensbroek is a Professor of Global Child Health and paediatric infectious disease specialist, and leads the Amsterdam Centre for Global Child Health, Emma Children's Hospital, Amsterdam UMC. He previously worked in Gambia (1991-1995) conducting research on the treatment of severe malaria in children. He is currently involved in several research projects in Malawi, Uganda, Kenya, South Sudan, Indonesia and Greece in the area of malaria, anaemia, HIV, nodding syndrome, fever, coma and convulsions, and research capacity building. He is a member of (and chairing) several DSMB's and TSC's of international multicentre studies. He chairs two committees focusing on international health at the University of Amsterdam and*



is the vice-chair of the national Medical and Ethics committee - CCMO (Centrale Commissie Mensgebonden Onderzoek).

### Professor Daniel Sarpong



*Prof. Sarpong, trained biostatistician, is a Senior Research Scientist in the Department of General Internal Medicine and Executive Director of the Office of Health Equity Research (OHER) at the Yale School of Medicine, University of Yale. Prof. Sarpong's research focuses on translational research exploring innovative approaches to mitigating biological and social determinants of health disparities in primarily chronic diseases. Before joining Yale University in the School of Medicine, He was a Tenured Professor of Biostatistics, Endowed Chair of Health Disparities, and Director of the Center for Minority Health and Health Disparities (CMHDRE) at the Xavier University of Louisiana. Additionally, he served as the Director of the Community Engagement Cores of Xavier RCMI Cancer Center and the Louisiana Clinical and Translational Science (LA CaTS) Center. During 2000 and 2010, he was Director and Co-Principal Investigator of the Jackson Heart Study Coordinating Center (JHSCC), Director of Data Management, Quality Assurance, and Information Technology, and Senior Biostatistician of the JHSCC at Jackson State University.*

### Dr René Spijker



*Dr Rene Spijker is a trained molecular biologist with a specialisation in immunology from Utrecht University and Imperial College London. After research experiences at LUMC in Leiden (Signal transduction of ex-vivo T lymphocyte activation in the treatment of ALL), Hubrecht Institute- Developmental biology & Stem cell research (Differentiation of human Embryonic stem cells towards cardiomyocytes), and AMC in Amsterdam (Apoptosis in Chronic lymphocytic leukaemia) he started his current career as an information Specialist. Since 2008 Rene works as an information specialist with Cochrane Netherlands and the AMC in Amsterdam. He's a member of the Council for the International Cochrane Collaboration since 2017, and a member of the Cochrane information specialist executive since 2011. His interests and focus are in the field of information retrieval and automation of systematic reviews. To this end he's been a member of the organising committee of Cochranetech in 2014, CLeF ehealth 2017/2018/2019, and the organising committee of ICASR (International collaboration of automation of systematic reviews).*



### Professor Ellis Owusu-Dabo

*Prof. Ellis Owusu-Dabo is currently a Pro-Vice Chancellor & Professor of Epidemiology and Global Health at Kwame Nkrumah University of Science & Technology, Kumasi, Ghana. He was the past Dean of the School of Public Health, Kwame Nkrumah University of Science & Technology, Kumasi, Ghana. His area of expertise is in Medical Epidemiology and applied public health technologies. As a teacher, he has trained undergraduate and postgraduate students, as well as mentored young faculty at both local and international levels. Prof. Owusu-Dabo is highly driven in his research interest area, mainly non-communicable diseases in low-income country settings. He has secured and managed multimillion United States dollar research grants from principal granting institutions such as the EU, NIH, The World Bank and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation as*

well as many bilateral organisations. He serves on several boards at both local and international levels, and has a massive network of individuals and organisations he works with. Prof. Owusu-Dabo has published over 200 research articles in peer-reviewed journals. As Perelman International Scholar of the University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine, his passion is in building capacities of next generation scientists and health systems to help solve Africa's health problems through scientific research collaborations.

### Dr Erik Beune



Dr. Erik Beune is an Assistant Professor and Policy Advisor Internationalization at Amsterdam University Medical Centers, University of Amsterdam. He has a background in Interdisciplinary Social Science and in Physiotherapy. He received his PhD from Amsterdam University Medical Centers at the Department of General Practice on culturally appropriate hypertension care among African origin populations. His research is focused on the development, implementation and evaluation of culturally sensitive interventions (e.g. physical activity, obesity prevention, adherence to treatment recommendations) into public health and primary care, for disadvantaged groups in multi-cultural settings. Mixed methods and community based participatory research designs are main methods used. He is project manager of several EU funded studies ((pros)-RODAM, EuroDHYAN). He is responsible for the Internationalization of the Faculty of Medicine, University of Amsterdam and is also involved in training of medical students about socioeconomic inequalities and diversity.

### Dr Raphael Awuah



Dr Awuah holds a PhD in Population Studies (with a focus on population health) from the University of Ghana and was an Exchange Research Scholar at the Population Research Institute, Pennsylvania State University. He has over 10 years of experience in multidisciplinary research projects and global initiatives. Dr Awuah has expertise in social and behavioural research conceptualization and design, management and analysis of quantitative and qualitative data, coordination, and systems strengthening. His interest focuses broadly on the associations between population dynamics and health outcomes. Specifically, his work over the years seeks to contribute to efforts in addressing the burden of non-communicable diseases in communities, and to use a data-driven approach to reduce deaths and serious injuries from road traffic crashes in cities. Dr Awuah is currently the Regional Technical Advisor, Africa on Road Injury Surveillance for Vital Strategies, a global public health organization, where he is responsible for guiding and providing technical assistance to city governments to strengthen road injury surveillance systems.

### Dr Charles Hayfron-Benjamin



Dr Charles Hayfron-Benjamin is a senior lecturer in physiology at the University of Ghana Medical School and a medical specialist in anaesthesiology and critical care medicine at the Korle Bu Teaching Hospital. He holds a Medical Degree (MChB) degree and MPhil in Physiology from the University of Ghana Medical School, a Ph.D. in Medicine from the Amsterdam University Medical Centre, University of Amsterdam, and

*dual specialist qualifications in anaesthesiology from the Ghana College of Physicians and Surgeons and the West African College of Surgeons. Dr Hayfron-Benjamin also has training in pulmonary and vascular medicine at the Amsterdam University Medical Centre where he did his Ph.D., and currently serves as the consultant for pulmonary function testing at the University of Ghana Medical School. He has been directly involved in the training of medical students, surgical residents, and anaesthesia diplomates (via the Ghana College of Physicians and Surgeons), and Masters/Ph.D. students. His research work focuses on the biological basis of lung/vascular dysfunction in individuals with diabetes and sickle cell disease.*

### **Eva van der Linden, MD**



*Dr. Eva van der Linden is a Postdoc at the department of Public and Occupational Health of the Amsterdam UMC. Her research is on epidemiology and epigenetics of cardiovascular disease risk factors, particularly hypertension, among African populations. She is involved in the RODAM study, comparing Ghanaians living in different settings in Ghana and Europe and following them up over time. She received a grant to visit National Institute of Health, Bethesda, USA, to learn more about ethnic diversity and epigenetics. She lectured in several courses and supervised various bachelor and master students. In this summer school, she will share her experience with performing systematic reviews and meta-analysis.*

