

Course Evaluation Report

- **Course title:** SOSANT 9015 - Writing and Method
- **Semester and year:** Autumn 2025
- **Course coordinators:** Charline Kopf and Rebekah Ciribassi
- **Date of course:** 6-7 November 2025
- **Date of summary:** 24 November 2025

1. Assessment of the course

The course aims to develop participants' skills in ethnographic writing by foregrounding the iterative relationship between method, fieldwork, and writing. In line with the course description, instruction emphasized reading ethnographic texts with attention to voice, style, and methodology; producing new writing; giving and receiving feedback; and reflecting on the interrelations between writing, theory, and field experience.

The course was assessed through a Likert scale questionnaire and open-ended questions. Five out of the total eight participating students filled out the evaluation form.

Learning outcomes:

Based on instructor observations and student responses, the course effectively supported the stated learning outcomes. The course encouraged reflection on the writing process, improved student understanding of how ethnographic description and analysis work together, and strengthened students' ability to write with intention and voice. All students responded to the question "I feel more confident about my ethnographic writing after this course" affirmatively.

Teaching methods and organization:

Students rated the teaching style extremely positively. The combination of discussion, writing exercises, peer feedback, reading sessions, and individual/group work was seen as well balanced and supportive. Students' effort and engagement were strong: they completed readings, produced texts for discussion, and engaged in exercises meant to bridge ethnographic method and writing. Feedback from instructors and peers was rated as highly constructive, a key component of the course's examination and pedagogical model.

2. Student's feedback

Main strengths (recurring themes):

- **Excellent teaching atmosphere and structure:** Students praised the supportive environment and the clarity of the course progression.

- **Highly effective exercises:** The color-coding exercise and the implosions exercise were *especially* highly rated across all responding students, but all responses marked *all* of the exercises as useful (from moderately useful to extremely useful).
- **Peer feedback:** Students highly valued the opportunity to read one another's work and appreciated both guidance and modelled feedback practices.
- **Focus on healthy writing:** Both in class and in the survey, students expressed enthusiasm around the discussion of healthy writing practices (both bodily and mental health).

Suggestions for improvement:

- **Course length:** Multiple students wished for more time—either a longer workshop or an additional day. They hoped for more opportunity to discuss individual papers or to engage in extended writing practice in class.
- **Pre-work for exercises:** One suggestion was to assign certain components of the triangle exercise (e.g., selecting a media or art pieces) as homework to make in-class discussion more focused.
- **More structured guidance on peer feedback:** A few students suggested incorporating a brief discussion on how to give effective feedback, aligning well with the course's emphasis on developing professional scholarly communication.

3. Overall assessment and further development

Overall quality:

The evaluation indicates very high satisfaction and strong alignment with the course's formal objectives. Students unanimously rated the course positively, with recommendation scores of 9 and 10 (out of 10) across all participants. The combination of methodological insight, concrete writing tools, and a supportive teaching environment contributed to this consistently high result.

Suggestions for future semesters as a result of this evaluation:

- Consider extending the course (e.g., an additional half or full day) to give more time for more in-depth peer feedback and writing practice.
- Expand or include optional pre-course homework to streamline exercises and allow more in-class depth.
- Add a short module on effective peer-feedback strategies to reinforce the collaborative, methodological aspects of ethnographic writing.

Opportunities for further development:

- We are creating a WhatsApp-based writing group for participants to support continued practice after the course.

- We are providing digital resources summarizing key exercises (e.g., color-coding method, triangle exercise) for continued reference.

Final note:

All students enrolled in this semester's course were at a similar, early stage in their thesis writing process. We felt that the structured activities that we developed for externalizing thinking and developing good writing habits were especially useful for this particular group. For future semesters, we may need to experiment with how different iterations of the course can adapt to different student cohorts and stages in the writing process, with an awareness that specific writing challenges vary as writing progresses.