

# Modus Operandi ECREA Doctoral Summer School

## 1. Principles of the ECREA Doctoral Summer School

The Summer School is based on a number of principles, whose acceptance is a condition for participation in the Summer School (at both the individual and institutional level). Of these principles, the **student-orientedness** is the most important one. The PhD students and their doctoral projects are at the centre of the Summer School, and its main aim is to enhance the academic quality of each individual project. In contrast to many other summer schools, the lecturers' main task is not to lecture, but to provide support to the participants in their PhD trajectories.

The Summer School provides this support through **structured, high quality and multi-voiced feedback** on the work of each individual PhD student, combined with numerous opportunities for informal dialogues. The feedback consists of a series of extensively elaborated analyses of the strengths and weaknesses of the individual PhD projects, which allow PhD students to structurally improve the quality of their academic work. Although the feedback is provided by experts in the field of Communication and Media Studies, these authoritative voices never become authoritarian and the autonomy of the participants is never questioned. Moreover, feedback is always multi-voiced: Different lecturers and participants always contribute to the analysis of a specific PhD project, enhancing the richness of the feedback and allowing a diversity of perspectives to become articulated, without imposing any specific perspective.

The Summer School combines **a constructive-supportive approach with a critical perspective**. During the feedback sessions, the evaluation consists of a balanced overview of the qualities and problems of a PhD project, in combination with suggested ways of addressing these problems. Moreover, the workshops and the lectures are aimed at supporting and developing the future academic careers of the participants by allowing them to acquire very necessary academic skills. The atmosphere of the Summer School is fundamentally non-competitive, as the talents of all participants will be acknowledged, and participants and lecturers act as peers, cherishing academic collegiality and collaborative work.

The Summer School also expresses the utmost respect for **academic diversity**. We recognise the existence of a plurality of schools, approaches, theories, paradigms, methods, and cultures in academia, which makes the Summer School choose for conversation and dialogue, and not for conversion and conflict. Its commitment to diversity in approaches can only be made possible through an evenly strong commitment to academic rigueur, thoroughness, responsibility, honesty, fairness and quality.

Finally, the Summer School aims to **stimulate connectedness**. First of all, the Summer School is aimed at the construction of long-term academic networks, enabling future collaborations at the international/European level. We recognise the fundamental importance of intellectual exchange for academia and the need to operate trans-nationally. But the Summer School also wants to remain respectful towards the localised context in which it operates, at the urban and national level, avoiding disconnections with civil society, business and state.

## **2. Criteria of partnership of the ECREA Doctoral Summer School**

### **a. European Communication Research and Education Association (ECREA)**

2a§1. ECREA is a member of the Summer School Consortium. ECREA lends its name to the Summer School and supports it, particularly the yearly Summer School book.

2a§2. ECREA also contributes to ensuring and protecting the academic quality of the Summer School. For that reason, the ECREA Executive Board has to approve the election of the International Director of the Summer School (see Part 5).

### **b. Partnership of the Summer School Consortium**

2b§1. In order to remain or become a member of the Summer School Consortium, a partner institution has to meet the following three criteria:

1. The partner institution has to fit into the formal criteria of project(s) used to finance the Summer School (such as the Erasmus IP which is currently the financial backbone of the Summer School).
2. The partner institution and its representatives have to accept and respect the modus operandi of the Summer School.
3. The partner institution has to be an active partner, which implies sending one lecturer to the Summer School every year, and sending at least one PhD student to the Summer School every year.

2b§2. Failure to comply with condition 1 or condition 2 leads to the exclusion from Summer School consortium partnership. Failure to comply with condition 3 (active partnership) twice in a period of three years also leads to the end of the consortium partnership. In the latter case, the partner can reapply for Summer School consortium partnership two years after the end of the consortium partnership.

2b§3. A partner institution remains a member of the Summer School consortium partnership, unless it is excluded or withdraws. A partner institution itself can at any time end the consortium partnership, but is requested to inform the Summer School's Executive committee at the earliest possible moment.

2b§4. New partner institutions can join the Summer School Consortium in response to a "call for candidates" put out by the Summer School Executive Committee, when there are places available in the Summer School Consortium. The total number of places in the Summer School Consortium is decided upon by the Summer School Executive Committee. The criteria for selection are candidate's ability to fulfil the three conditions for membership outlined above, and the academic quality of the institution, its staff members, its PhD programme and its proposed Summer School lecturer, combined with the need for regional diversity within the Summer School Consortium. New partner institutions will be probationary members of the Consortium for a period of three years, during which time the Summer School Executive Committee can end the partnership at any point (for breaking the conditions outlined in 2b§2 or for other reasons).

2b§5. The Summer School is organised at/by one of the partner institutions for a period of three years, after which it moves to another location. The Consortium Meeting is responsible for selecting a new location.

### **c. Affiliated partners of the Summer School**

2c§1. In addition to the partner institutions mentioned in Part 2b, other academic structures such as doctoral schools and academic networking projects can become affiliated partners of the Summer School.

2c§2. For affiliated partners of the Summer School, only the conditions two and three (mentioned in 2b§1) apply. Failure to comply with condition 2 leads to the exclusion from Summer School consortium affiliated partnership. Failure to comply with condition 3 (active partnership) twice in a period of three years also leads to the end of the consortium affiliated partnership. In the latter case, the partner can reapply for Summer School consortium affiliated partnership two years after the end of the consortium partnership.

2c§3. An affiliated partner institution will provide a subsidy of 750 Euros for each PhD student participating in the Summer School with a maximum of two PhD students. Affiliated partner institution will not send Lecturers to the Summer School, unless otherwise agreed with the Summer School Executive Committee. The number of PhD students that will attend is agreed upon before the Summer School starts. The amount of the subsidy can be revised by the Executive Committee.

2c§4. An affiliated partner institution needs to renew its membership of the Summer School consortium annually.

### **3. Further expectations of partners of the ECREA Doctoral Summer School**

3§1. Each partner institution appoints one Summer School coordinator, and adds the coordinator's contact information to the Summer School database.

3§2. The Summer School coordinator is responsible for promoting the Summer School within the partner institution and to other academic institutions in the country of the partner institution.

3§3. The Summer School coordinator actively recruits every year minimally one PhD student who will attend the Summer School. More PhD students from a partner institution can be recruited, on the basis of the number of places for PhD students that have been attributed to the partner institution by the Executive Committee. The partner institutions and their Summer School coordinator are fully autonomous in selecting their PhD student(s), although there is a strong preference for PhD students who are not at a very early or late stage of their PhD projects since this can have a negative impact on the dynamics of the Student feedback workshops and can have an unbalancing effect on the entire Summer School. PhD students in their second year are preferred. In case the number of applicants from a given partner institution surpasses the attributed number of places of that institution, the partner institution may be requested to make the final selection of its applicants.

3§4. Each year, **before February 15**, the Summer School coordinator proposes one Summer School Lecturer for the Summer School of that year to the Executive Committee. There is a very strong preference for senior academic staff members and/or academic staff members who have already been Summer School Lecturers before. Experience with the supervision of PhDs is also strongly preferred. From the Lecturers, the Executive Committee will select the Flow Managers, who will be responsible for a group of participants.

3§5. After acceptance by the Summer School Executive Committee, the Summer School Lecturer will act as a lecturer-respondent to all PhD student papers that are allotted to him or her. She or he might organise one workshop or lecture, participate in one round table or act as a Flow Manager. The Summer School Lecturer will also need to be available during the course of the Summer School for informal conversations about the work of the PhD students. For these reasons, we prefer Lecturers to stay for a week at the Summer School, although the duration of the stay can be negotiated with the Executive Committee. More detailed instructions are listed in the Appendix.

3§6. The Lecturers are invited to propose a workshop or lecture to the Summer School Executive committee **before March 31**. The Executive Committee can request that Lecturers adjust their proposal to fit the overall structure of the programme. This proposal will include the title of the workshop or lecture, the type of workshop or lecture, and an abstract with a brief description of the content, objectives and format of the workshop or lecture.

Workshops are 60-90 minute meetings that are aimed at training the participants in specific academic skills which are relevant for the participants. There are three workshop types at the Summer School: 1/Workshops targeted at the entire group organised once; 2/Workshops targeted at the entire group organised twice (each time for half the group); 3/Workshops targeted at half of the group (organised in parallel with another workshop).

Lectures are 60 minute meetings that are aimed at providing the participants with insights into a specific (sub)field of Communication and Media Studies, and/or to show them how specific research projects have been organised (and why). There are two lecture types at the Summer School: 1/Lectures aimed at providing participants with a broader overview (on theoretical, paradigmatic, thematic, methodological, ... aspects of communication and media research); 2/ Lectures aimed at providing an insight in how a specific research project was developed (showing the “kitchen of research”).

3§7. The representatives of partner institutions and their Lecturers are expected to give their full support to the Executive Committee in its preparation of the programme and to comply with the assigned deadlines. In order to ensure a structured and coherent programme of the Summer School, the Executive Committee can request partner institutions to propose a different Lecturer or request Lecturers to adapt their proposed lectures or workshops.

3§8. The Summer School Lecturers will also be expected to contribute a chapter to the yearly Summer School book.

#### **4. Financial arrangements for participating lecturers and PhD students**

4§1. All PhD students must apply to the Summer School following the requirements and deadlines stipulated in the Call for participation that is published by **January 30** each year. There are three types of PhD students attending the summer school: 1/PhD students whose universities are consortium partner institutions, 2/PhD students whose universities are affiliated partner institutions that subsidise the Summer School, and 3/ PhD students whose universities are not a partner (affiliated) institution but who are individual members of ECREA or whose institution is an institutional member of ECREA.

4§2. For participating PhD students whose universities are consortium partner institutions, the following will be provided, if allowed for by the Summer School funding:

- a reduced participation fee,
- summer school materials (including 2 Summer School books),
- accommodation, breakfast, coffee and lunches,
- partial travel refund.

In order to obtain this travel refund, participating PhD students will have to send their original boarding passes and tickets, travel agent invoices and receipts to the Programme Director in time. This deadline will be communicated to the participants before the Summer School starts. Missing documents after the deadline will result in no refund.

4§3. For participating PhD students whose universities are affiliated partner institutions that subsidise the Summer School, the following will be provided, if allowed for by the Summer School funding:

- a waived participation fee,
- summer school materials (including 2 Summer School books),
- accommodation, breakfast, coffee and lunches.

4§4. For participating PhD students whose universities are not a partner (affiliated) institution but who are individual members of ECREA or whose institution is an institutional member of ECREA (see <http://www.ecrea.eu/memberlist>), the Summer School will provide:

- summer school materials (including 2 books),
- accommodation, breakfast, coffee and lunches.

4§5. There is a maximum of 10 places available for students who apply to the Summer School as ECREA members. Their selection is made by the Executive Committee based on their applications in response to the call for applications. The criteria include: structure and quality of the submitted abstract, year of study (strong preference for projects which are not in their early or late stages) competence in English (the working language of the Summer School), compatibility with other PhD projects in terms of areas, topics, methodology etc., and regional diversity. The Executive Committee prepares the list of accepted students and a waiting list in case of potential cancellations.

4§6. For participating Lecturers, the following will be provided (if the Summer School budget allows for it):

- a waived participation fee,
- summer school materials (including 2 Summer School books),
- accommodation, breakfast, coffee and lunches,
- full travel refund.

4§7 The participation fee is set by the Executive Committee each January before the call for new applicants is released. The Summer School is a non-profit venture and the participation fee is kept as low as possible without jeopardising the financial viability of the programme. Students, whose universities are members of the Summer School Consortium are entitled to a reduced participation fee. In the case that a major fee increase is deemed necessary to ensure the financial viability of the programme, the Executive Committee will consult the Programme Committee and the Consortium Meeting.

## **5. Decision-making structures and procedures of the ECREA Doctoral Summer School**

5§1. The Summer School uses a three-tier management structure; it has an Executive committee, a Programme Committee and a Consortium Meeting.

5§2. The Executive Committee consists of a Programme Director and an International Director, who are in charge of operational activities of the Summer School. The Programme Director is the representative of the local organisers and is in charge of the practical organisation of the Summer School, while the International Director acts as a liaison to the Programme committee, the Consortium Meeting and ECREA.

5§3. The Programme Director is appointed after the approval of a new Summer School location by the Consortium Meeting, for as long as the Summer School remains in that location. The Programme Director is proposed to the Programme Committee by the Summer School coordinator of the partner institution that organises the Summer School. The International Director is elected for an indeterminate period by the Programme Committee, with the approval of the ECREA Executive Board. The International Director can be dismissed by the Programme Committee by simple majority.

5§4. Amongst other operational tasks, the Executive Committee is fully responsible and autonomous in preparation of the final programme of the Summer School in accordance with the basic principles of the Summer School (see section 1 of the Modus Operandi) and stipulations made by the financing institution (currently, the Erasmus Lifelong Learning Intensive Programme grant). This includes the selection of Lecturers and their lectures and workshops, the division of the PhD students into groups (termed Flows), the selection of Flow Managers. The division into flows is based on the criteria of shared research areas, topics, approaches, theories, and methods with the aim of securing the most coherent groups as possible to facilitate the higher quality of the feedback during the Student feedback workshops.

5§5. The Programme Committee oversees the work of the Executive Committee and is responsible for strategic decisions such as changes to partnership, the format of the summer school, the fee structure, etc. The members of the Programme Committee are elected by the Consortium Meeting for a three year term.

5§6. The Programme Committee consists of nine members, six of whom are representatives of partner institutions that are (or have been) Summer School coordinators, lecturers or directors for several years. The remaining three places in the Programme Committee are for one representative of the previous Summer School local organisers, one representative of the current Summer School local organisers, and a representative of ECREA.

5§7. The Consortium Meeting consists of the Executive committee, the Programme Committee, all Summer School coordinators of the partner institutions and all Summer School coordinators of the affiliated partner institutions. If necessary, the Summer School coordinators may mandate Summer School Lecturers to represent them. The Consortium Meeting elects the Programme Committee, and decides on a new location of the Summer School. It can at any time formulate proposals to the Executive Committee and the Programme Committee.

5§8. Membership of the Executive committee, the Programme Committee and the Consortium Meeting may overlap.

## **6. The Summer School book**

6§1. Each year, the intellectual work of the Summer School is published in a book. The publication and distribution of the book, which appears in an on-line and a printed version, is supported by the Summer School and ECREA. Additional partners or financing sources can be attracted to finance the publication and distribution of the Summer School book.

6§2. The Summer School book consists of the chapters submitted by the Summer School Lecturers (3000 to 4000 word chapters usually based on the lectures or on the workshops), a selection of (six) student chapters (selected by Flow Managers) and all the abstracts of the PhD projects presented at the Summer School. The book is published by an academic publishing house and all chapters undergo blind review by the editors.

6§3. The editors of the Summer School book are the members of the Executive Committee and the Flow Managers. Additional editors can be appointed by the Executive Committee.

6§4. The print version of the Summer School book is distributed to all participating students and lecturers, the consortium coordinators, and the coordinators of ECREA's institutional members. If financially feasible, the book is also distributed to a selection of university libraries suggested by the participating students. The on-line version of the book is made publically available (free of charge) in order to promote the work of the Summer School.

6§5. The Summer School books are currently published by Tartu University Press and are available through the book series website: <http://www.researchingcommunication.eu>, but the Executive Committee can select another publisher

6§6. The detailed instructions for contributors are prepared and circulated by the Executive committee during the preparation stage of the Summer School.

## Appendix 1: Formats and instructions for Lecturers

### **General instructions**

- A stay of about 6 days is preferred, but shorter (or longer) stays are possible. We need most lecturers to be present at the mid-week slots (Tue-Thu on the 1<sup>st</sup> week and Mon-Wed on the 2<sup>nd</sup> week), because our student feedback workshops are organised then.
- Please upload a short biography, a picture, and a (keyword) list of your fields of expertise in the Summer School database on the Summer School website (<http://www.comsummerschool.org/>).
- In order to allow for the refund of travel, lecturers are required to keep all relevant documentation (including boarding cards) and send it to the Programme Director immediately after the end of the Summer School. Owing to limited resources, the Summer School cannot pay a per diem.

### **Lecturer roles at the student feedback workshops**

- The Summer School lecturers are allocated one (sometimes two) student feedback workshop(s), which usually consist(s) of three student papers.
- Each of these papers will be discussed during a one hour slot. Papers will first be briefly presented by the PhD student and then commented upon by one student-respondent, the Summer School lecturer and the flow manager, each for 10 minutes. After that there will be a brief response from the presenter, followed by an evenly brief discussion with all present.
- The Summer School lecturers are required to download the papers allocated to them, and to read and analyse them before the actual student workshop takes place, in order to guarantee high-quality feedback.
- During the student feedback workshops, constructive and balanced critique in line with the Summer School principles, is preferred. Usually respondents start with fleshing out the strengths of the PhD projects, and then discuss possible problem areas and ways of addressing them, bearing in mind that the PhD students are (in principle) free to accept or reject the comments.
- The Summer School lecturers are free to read more than simply the papers they have been allocated, and to attend other student feedback workshops, or talk to these students at other times. The Summer School Executive committee will alert them to the papers that might be of particular interest.

In addition to taking the role of respondent at the student feedback workshops, lecturers are invited to hold a workshop or a lecture, or to participate in a round-table.

### **Lecturer workshops**

- Workshops are 60-90 minute meetings that are aimed at training the participants in specific academic skills relevant to participants.
- There are three workshop types at the Summer School: 1/Workshops targeted at the entire group organised once; 2/Workshops targeted at the entire group organised twice (each time for half the group); 3/Workshops targeted at half of the group (organised in parallel with another workshop).
- There is a strong need for workshops, and lecturers are encouraged to offer a workshop (rather than a lecture).



- Lecturers need to send in the title of the workshop, a brief description of the objectives and format, and their preference for the workshop type before 31 March. It is extremely difficult to build a good program if we receive the information late. The Executive committee can ask lecturers to adjust their proposal to fit the overall structure of the programme.
- Workshops should be real workshops, with 1/ only a (reasonably) short introduction (discussing what is really necessary to do the exercise, avoiding providing the participants with redundant information); 2/ clear instructions for the participants (what you expect them to do, how and with whom); 3 /a clear overview of the different steps and the timing.
- When organising a workshop please keep in mind that participants are PhD students, and often already experienced (and/or) trained researchers, usually in the second year of their PhD. They still have a lot to learn, but they are not Masters students.
- One often used model is the subgroup model: 1/introduction; 2/subgroup work; 3/plenary report of the subgroups 4/ lecturer feedback and comments. Another model is the phased model: 1/introduction part one, 2/group work; 3/intermediary report; 4/ introduction part two; 5/group work; 6/general report 7/ lecturer feedback and comments.
- Examples of existing workshops are the “Writing an abstract workshop”, “Making a poster workshop” and “Powerpoint presentations.”
- Possible workshop titles are: "Methods - discourse analysis"; "Methods - ethnography"; "Methods - quantitative research - the pitfalls"; "Methods - qualitative research - the pitfalls"; "Methods - Use of images in research"; “Methods – quantitative research - survey design”; “Methods – qualitative research – interviewing”; "Literature review - how to connect your research material to theories"; "Research design"; "Writing European research projects (FP 7 et al.)"; "How to teach" and "The European educational landscape (comparing European experiences)".
- Lecturers who return to the Summer School are requested NOT to change the topic of their workshop, but - if necessary and possible - to improve the quality of the original workshop.

### **Lectures and round tables with lecturer involvement**

- Lectures are 60 minute meetings that are aimed at providing the participants with insights into a specific (sub)field of Communication and Media Studies, and/or to show them how specific research projects have been organised (and why).
- There are two lecture types at the Summer School : 1/Lectures aimed at providing participants with a broader overview (on theoretical, paradigmatic, thematic, methodological, ... aspects of communication and media research); 2/ Lectures aimed at providing an insight in how a specific research project was developed (showing the “kitchen of research”).
- Both lecture types can consist of individual lectures or round tables (with more than one lecturer)
- One third of the time attributed to the lecture or round table should be reserved for questions and discussion. The lecturers are strongly requested to respect the time schedule.
- There is a less strong need for lectures, and you might want to consider organising a workshop (and not a lecture).
- The lecturers are required to send in the title of the lecture, a brief description of the objectives and format, and their preference for the lecture type before March 31. It is extremely difficult to build a good program if we receive the information late. The

Executive committee can request the lecturers to adjust their proposal to fit the overall structure of the programme.

- Lecturers who return to the Summer School are requested NOT to change the topic of their lecture, but - if necessary and possible - to improve the quality of the original lecture.

### **Lecturers and the informal contacts with the participants**

- Apart from the more formal activities, the lecturers are requested to remain as available as possible for questions from the participants.
- Please try to avoid lecturer-only dinners; the participants appreciate it enormously if you join them for dinner.
- It would also be greatly appreciated if experienced lecturers could assist the new lecturers.
- In order to facilitate the informal conversations, the lecturers are invited to be available (as a group) for one one-hour evening slot at a local cafe.

### **The Summer School book**

- All lecturers are strongly requested to contribute a chapter to the Summer School book (see <http://www.researchingcommunication.eu>).
- The 3000 to 4000 word chapters can be based on lectures or on workshops. Other topics are also possible after approval by the book's editors.
- All lecturer chapters need to be **ready before the Summer School ends**. If necessary, please make sure that the language editing has been done before the Summer School starts.