
“Almost there: preparing for the viva defense”

Target group

Doctoral candidates who will soon be handing in their PhD thesis or have just submitted it.

Objectives

The seminar aims at preparing students for the viva defense by honing presentation skills so as to effectively argue points convincingly and think on one's feet during the question and answers session.

Description

The workshop provides information about the formal procedure, the requirements, the social setting of a Ph.D. examination and the do's and don'ts of a PhD examination. In this seminar we will use video recording as a tool to enable the participants to capitalize on their strengths and to improve their performance. This workshop places particular emphasis on preparing strategically one's position in the lead up to the viva defense and dealing with the questions & answers session in the second part of the viva defense.

Contents in brief

- Selecting a committee: what should I take into account?
- The do's and don'ts in oral Ph.D. examinations.
- How do I stay my ground during the Q&A?
- How do I deal with stage fright?
- How do I structure the preparation phase most effectively?

Methodology

- Video recording.
- One to one coaching.
- Working with a partner.
- Plenum discussion.
- A mix of theory and practice.

About the lecturer

Dr. Matteo Garavoglia was educated at the universities of London (SOAS), Paris (Sciences Po) and Berlin (FUB). He has lived in twelve countries across the world and is fluent in English, French, Spanish and Italian with a working knowledge of German and a basic understanding of Portuguese. Dr. Garavoglia is currently the Italy Program Fellow at the Centre on the United States and Europe at the Brookings Institution in Washington DC. He is also Research Associate at the Centre for International Studies at the University of Oxford and serves as Adjunct Professor at Johns Hopkins University's Paul H. Nitze School of Advanced International Studies. His research focuses on European Union humanitarian assistance, development aid, election observation, democracy support, human rights, migrants and refugees. Dr. Garavoglia worked with Impulsplus for a number of years and provides workshops on the following subjects: "Almost there: preparing for the viva defence"; "Team communication: key roles and intercultural contexts"; "Rhetoric and speaking in public: an introduction to theory and practice"; "Leading teams in academia: multiple perspectives for greater effectiveness"; "Visible and influential: networking across boundaries and cultures"; "Just landed: an introduction to life and academia in Germany".