

REPORT OF THE VALUE-ADDED COURSE ON

Academic Writing and Understanding the Ecosystem of Research

Conducted between 17-27 October 2022



ORGANISED BY

The Incubation Centre, St. Edmund's College, Shillong

In collaboration with

**The Internal Quality Assurance Cell (IQAC), St. Edmund's College,
Shillong**

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Incubation Centre of St. Edmund's College, Shillong, has notched another achievement in its belt. And yet, there is so much more to achieve.

This course followed the first Value-Added Course (VAC), which was held in August 2022, and incorporated a few critical lessons to elicit outcomes in the form of written work by the students as well as promote analytical writing within their coursework. In attempting this tall, but achievable objective, the support of **Dr. Samrat Adhikari**, Head, Department of Biotechnology, St. Edmund's College, Shillong, is always palpable.

Br. (Dr.) Simon Coelho, Secretary, Governing Body, St. Edmund's College, Shillong, insisted that the lessons learned from the first course (with the students from the Department of Biotechnology) be applied to improve the appeal of the second. His enthusiasm to expose students to new developments in academia is very encouraging.

In delivering a brief opening address to the students on Day 1 of the course, by **Dr. (Capt). K. P. Pallavi Malhan**, Vice Principal (Academics), St. Edmund's College, Shillong, highlighted the College's vision to improve the skill-sets of students and endorsed a result-oriented approach for future courses to be held by the Incubation Centre.

I am grateful for the presence of the two external subject-matter experts. **Dr. Alwin D'souza** and **Dr. Ektaa Jain** were generous with their time and accommodated my requests by adjusting their schedules. Their online interaction with the undergraduate students was based on their personal experiences; it showed them how to make their research projects productive.

As always, **Ms. Priya Paul**, Technical Assistant, St. Edmund's College, Shillong, was on the ball. Her confidence in tackling technical hurdles is infectious and the Incubation Centre is grateful for her support.

Finally, the **students from the Departments of Economics, Political Science and Sociology**, St. Edmund's College, Shillong, were inquisitive about the skills that they could develop from this course. Their impending end-semester exams did not dilute their interest in patiently listening to the various modules and actively engaging in the discussions that followed.

GENERAL INFORMATION

- a. **Title of the Course:** Academic Writing and Understanding the Ecosystem of Research
- b. **Total Contact Hours:** 28
- c. **Date of Approval:** 13 October 2022
- d. **Opening of registration process:** 14 October 2022
- e. **Closing of Registration Process:** 17 October 2022
- f. **Mode of Registration:** [Online \(Google Forms\)](#)
- g. **Date for Commencement of the Course:** 17 October 2022
- h. **Conclusion of the course:** 27 October 2022
- i. **Duration:** 36 hours
- j. **Total No of Students Enrolled:** 61
- k. **Registration Fees:** None
- l. **Course Coordinator:** Dr. Oliver Nelson Gonsalves, Research Facilitator, St. Edmund's College
- m. **External Speakers Involved:**

Dr. Alwin D'souza, Assistant Professor of Agribusiness in the Department of Agricultural Economics and Agribusiness at New Mexico State University

Dr. Ektaa Jain, ICE-CCE Certified Life Coach | Career Transition Coach

COURSE STRUCTURE

The subsequent sub-section will highlight various aspects of the course, such as Course Description, the Programme, and the profiles of the external speakers.

3.1 Course Description:

This five-module Value-Added Course was designed to familiarise the students of the Departments of Political Science, Economics, and Sociology with elementary research etiquettes and enlighten them on the accepted process of publishing their research. Students who are interested in pursuing degrees in higher education *will* encounter terms like “publications”, “working papers”, “original research articles”, “review articles” etc. Further — and more critical to the discussion — they will be expected to *analyse* articles (from course-specified reading lists) and have discussions with their instructors. Students who are dependent on classroom notes and text books will find themselves in unfamiliar waters. Familiarity with the research process will help them cope with the rigours of higher education (for instance, what constitutes plagiarism) and what will soon become a permanent requirement of the academic environment — publications.

A secondary — albeit equally vital objective — is the development of *logic-flow* among students. This is applicable to even those students who may not be interested in pursuing higher education. At the undergraduate-level, students are encouraged to present descriptive responses to test their knowledge of basic concepts. Analytical arguments or critical analysis of subject-specific problems are disseminated at higher levels of education. Model IV of this course will introduce the importance of including critical analysis within their answers; the idea, here, is to help them develop this core competency by learning how to vet information.

Some of the exercises pertinent to the secondary objective will include:

- Creation of organograms and flow charts
- Arguments made from observing tables, graphs, figures

3.2 Programme of the Course:

This course was initially scheduled to include only four modules, over ten days. The fifth module on, *how to write book reviews*, was a continuation of a discussion which the students had broached during the previous modules — the students were interested in improving their writing skills. Book reviews were suggested as a medium for their writing as these are not as time-intensive as research articles, and could be pursued by under-graduate students over the Winter vacations.

Moving on, the presentations by the external subject-matter experts covered the module on, *Publishing the Right Way – Avenues for publishing your work*. The programme of the course is listed in the table below:

Module	Title	Presenter	Hours
I	<i>Basics of Academic/Research Writing</i>	Dr. Oliver Nelson Gonsalves	8
II	<i>What is Plagiarism?</i>	Dr. Oliver Nelson Gonsalves <i>and</i> Dr. Ektaa Jain	8
III	<i>Grasping the Craft of Scientific Communication</i>	Dr. Oliver Nelson Gonsalves	2
IV	<i>Publishing the Right Way – Avenues for publishing your work</i>	Dr. Oliver Nelson Gonsalves <i>and</i> Dr. Alwin D'souza	8
V	Additional sessions on, <i>How to write book reviews</i>	Dr. Oliver Nelson Gonsalves	2

Apart from the five modules, eight hours were allotted for the assessment of the students' assignments and their feedback on the conduct and *content* of the course. **All assignments received feedback** via the Learning Management System (Linways).

3.3 Mode of conduct of the Course:

Based on the suggestion of the Vice Principal (Academics), this course was held in hybrid mode (comprising online and offline sessions). In this case, only the first module was held offline, the venue being the college auditorium. Sessions on the remaining days were held online (on Zoom). The duration of each module was five hours, with the total course comprising twenty-eight contact hours.

A hybrid mode was preferred for three reasons:

- a. Class schedules and practicals required that the conduct of this course be carried *after* regular working hours and, hence, the modules were conducted from 3 – 5 p.m.
- b. An offline session — even for one module — would be easier to convey the objectives of this course and a personal touch would enhance student-teacher interaction after the conclusion of the course.
- c. Weakness of the backups for the internet connection on the College premises. Backups, especially for the internet, take considerable time to kick in. Modules were hosted by the Research Facilitator (on Zoom) from his residence.
- d. Internet connectivity was prioritised since the Course Coordinator demonstrated the utility of Google Scholar, the UGC-CARE database and various other online platforms.

- e. The external subject-matter experts were based out of Shillong.

3.4 Grading Policy:

Students were assigned the following grades, based on the complete course assessments.

Marks	Final Grade
90-100	A+
80-90	A
70-80	B+
60-70	B
50-60	C+
40-50	C
Below 40	Needs improvement

3.5 Profiles of the External Subject-Matter Experts

Two out of the five modules were managed by external subject-matter experts. These experts were personal connections of the Research Facilitator, who felt that the experience that each of these experts had gained in their own fields of expertise would bridge any gap in the subject-specific content of the course. External subject-matter experts were invited to deliver a two-hour PowerPoint presentation over Zoom followed by a discussion.

The profiles of the two subject-matter experts are shown below:

1. **Dr. Alwin D'souza**, Assistant Professor of Agribusiness in the Department of Agricultural Economics and Agribusiness at New Mexico State University



Dr. D'souza has a Ph.D. in Business Administration (Agribusiness) from the Morrison School of Agribusiness at Arizona State University. His research interests primarily lie in identifying mechanisms that lead to efficient production of agricultural commodities and marketing perishable foods in the supply chain. His research focuses on (i) Production Economics, (ii) Risk Management, (iii) Contract Farming, (iv) Food Security, (v) Supply Chain Management, and (vi) Food Loss and Waste.

He has published in peer-reviewed journals such as Applied Economic Perspectives and Policy, Food Policy, Agricultural Economics, Agribusiness, Food Security, The Australian Journal of Agricultural and Resource Economics, and Land Use Policy.

2. Dr. Ektaa Jain, ICE-CCE Certified Life Coach | Career Transition Coach



Dr. Jain takes pride in calling herself an educationist and art connoisseur. Having completed her B.A Hons. Sociology from Lady Shri Ram College for Women & M.A, M.Phil, Ph.D from Jawaharlal Nehru University, she pursued her research work in the field of crafts, education; development. Her doctoral thesis is titled “Craft & Fashion: A Sociological Analysis of Chippa community in Bagru in Rajasthan”. She has been actively involved in Multi-volume Documentation Project of Rashtrapati Bhavan with IGNCA & President’s Secretariat. This included Flora & Fauna of Rashtrapati Bhavan, Life at President Estate, Work on Presidential Bodyguards etc. She has worked as a Guest Faculty at prestigious colleges like LSR, New Delhi. She has also been part of Intl. Conferences and workshops like IIAS Shimla. Her literary contributions have also been published by Routledge, Orient Blackswan and other prominent journals.

Along with the field of academics & writing, she has ventured into the domain of seeking goodness in life through Professional Life Coaching. She is a certified Coach & Trainer with specialisation in student training, confidence & personality building, image consultancy.

The module managed by the subject-matter experts were based on the two core components of this course — *research and publication*. They have extensive publishing experience; Dr. D’souza, in fact, had published an article which is included in the list of suggested readings for Paper III (Indian Economy) of the undergraduate Economics course.¹

¹ D’souza, A. and A.S. Ray (2014), “Structural Transformation in the North-Eastern Region of India: Charting out an agriculture-based development policy” Discussion Paper, Centre for International Trade & Development, JNU. http://www.jnu.ac.in/SIS/CITD/DiscussionPapers/DP04_2014.pdf

LIST OF REGISTERED PARTICIPANTS

Serial No.	Enrollment No.	Full Name	Department	Semester
1	20/ECON/060	Philasara Nongkhlaw	Economics	V
2	20/ECON/063	Ronald K Suting	Economics	V
3	20/ECON/074	Sdangminaka Suja	Economics	V
4	20/ECON/077	Rihokiaki Suja	Economics	V
5	20/ECON/255	Shidariti Kharkongor	Economics	V
6	20/ECON/259	George Fernando Sun	Economics	V
7	20/ECON/262	Droma Tsering Murphew	Economics	V
8	20/ECON/055	Debopriya Bhattacharjee	Economics	V
9	20/ECON/061	Saphi Bapynkmen Lyngwa	Economics	V
10	20/ECON/064	Fedalick Syngkon	Economics	V
11	20/ECON/069	Simran Khatun	Economics	V
12	20/ECON/076	Judi Lalumpui	Economics	V
13	20/ECON/254	Aibanshai Pyngrope	Economics	V
14	20/ECON/266	Krishna Kumari Thapa	Economics	V
15	20/ECON/078	Madhurjya Pratim Das	Economics	V
16	20/ECON/258	Ngayur Mungrei	Economics	V
17	20/POLS/391	Jangminlun Haokip	Political Science	V
18	20/SOCI/206	Muskan Ahmed	Sociology	V
19	20/SOCI/207	Dikshita Phukan	Sociology	V
20	20/SOCI/411	Dragila Molshoy	Sociology	V
21	20/SOCI/416	Indrani Baishya	Sociology	V
22	20/SOCI/211	Imjungrenla Longchar	Sociology	V
23	20/SOCI/230	Daisy Kakati	Sociology	V
24	20/SOCI/403	Sareo Zasoon	Sociology	V
25	20/SOCI/418	Hathoithiem Gangte	Sociology	V
26	20/SOCI/424	Ayushmi Kashyap	Sociology	V
27	20/ECON/269	Da E Kynsai Mitre Pyrngap	Economics	V
28	20/POLS/392	Lalfamkima	Political Science	V
29	21/ECON/068	Krishna Sharma	Economics	III
30	21/ECON/075	Ngamminhao Lhungdim	Economics	III
31	21/ECON/079	Zebeen Riwanmika Pakyntein	Economics	III
32	21/ECON/080	Minggamchi G Momin	Economics	III
33	21/ECON/093	Sharmynrap Biam	Economics	III
34	21/ECON/099	Linda Hidam	Economics	III
35	21/ECON/116	Moromi Barman	Economics	III
36	21/ECON/117	Jitender Singh	Economics	III
37	21/ECON/120	Gugun	Economics	III

38	21/ECON/108	Tage Mammu	Economics	III
39	21/ECON/069	Kashyapi Bezbaruah	Economics	III
40	21/POLS/310	Priya Moshahary	Political Science	III
41	21/POLS/350	Dikshita Das	Political Science	III
42	21/SOCI/373	Ashruta Dutta	Sociology	III
43	22/ECON/003	Vedika Das	Economics	I
44	22/ECON/004	Hracho Hlychho	Economics	I
45	22/ECON/010	Lalhmimgchhuanga	Economics	I
46	22/ECON/019	Naphisabetbha Syiemlieh	Economics	I
47	22/ECON/033	Aibaphylla Basaiawmoit	Economics	I
48	22/ECON/038	Thomas Malsawma	Economics	I
49	22/ECON/056	Vikash Kumar Ray	Economics	I
50	22/ECON/058	Yash Kumar Singh	Economics	I
51	22/ECON/063	Gopal Yudik	Economics	I
52	22/ECON/009	Benjamin Vanlalthlanga	Economics	I
53	22/ECON/026	Lungoulen Chongloi	Economics	I
54	22/ECON/039	Laishram Kangleinganba Singh	Economics	I
55	22/ECON/050	Indaker Kharbangar	Economics	I
56	22/ECON/061	Alex Reang	Economics	I
57	22/ECON/052	Gracy Thabah	Economics	I
58	22/POLS/001	Elena Phebe Awungshi	Political Science	I
59	22/POLS/063	Dasanibha Kharbangar	Political Science	I
60	22/SOCI/052	Sukanya Deka	Sociology	I
61	22/SOCI/058	M Jessica Kom	Sociology	I

Figure 1 (below) is a graphical representation of the list of registered participants:

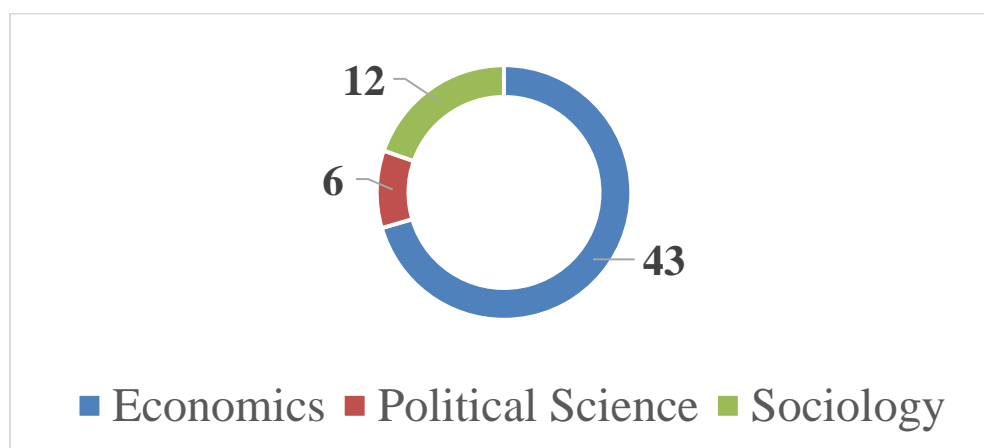


Figure 1: Subject-wise breakup of participants

ATTENDANCE

Sr. No.	Enrollment No.	Full Name	Semester	Attendance (%)
1	20/ECON/060	Philasara Nongkhlaw	V	80
2	20/ECON/063	Ronald K Suting	V	40
3	20/ECON/074	Sdangminaka Suja	V	40
4	20/ECON/077	Rihokiaki Suja	V	80
5	20/ECON/255	Shidariti Kharkongor	V	80
6	20/ECON/259	George Fernando Sun	V	100
7	20/ECON/262	Droma Tsering Murpew	V	60
8	20/ECON/055	Debopriya Bhattacharjee	V	60
9	20/ECON/061	Saphi Bapynkmen Lyngwa	V	60
10	20/ECON/064	Fedalick Syngkon	V	80
11	20/ECON/069	Simran Khatun	V	100
12	20/ECON/076	Judi Lalumpui	V	80
13	20/ECON/254	Aibanshai Pyngrope	V	80
14	20/ECON/266	Krishna Kumari Thapa	V	40
15	20/ECON/078	Madhurjya Pratim Das	V	N.A.
16	20/ECON/258	Ngayur Mungrei	V	N.A.
17	20/POLS/391	Jangminlun Haokip	V	80
18	20/SOCI/206	Muskan Ahmed	V	100
19	20/SOCI/207	Dikshita Phukan	V	100
20	20/SOCI/411	Dragila Molshoy	V	N.A.
21	20/SOCI/416	Indrani Baishya	V	100
22	20/SOCI/211	Imjungrenla Longchar	V	100
23	20/SOCI/230	Daisy Kakati	V	100
24	20/SOCI/403	Sareo Zasoon	V	100
25	20/SOCI/418	Hathoithiem Gangte	V	N.A.
26	20/SOCI/424	Ayushmi Kashyap	V	100
27	20/ECON/269	Da E Kynsai Mitre Pyrngap	V	80
28	20/POLS/392	Lalfamkima	V	N.A.
29	21/ECON/068	Krishna Sharma	III	100
30	21/ECON/075	Ngamminhao Lhungdim	III	40
31	21/ECON/079	Zebeen Riwanmika Pakyntein	III	20
32	21/ECON/080	Minggamchi G Momin	III	100
33	21/ECON/093	Sharmynrap Biam	III	20

34	21/ECON/099	Linda Hidam	III	100
35	21/ECON/116	Moromi Barman	III	20
36	21/ECON/117	Jitender Singh	III	40
37	21/ECON/120	Gugun	III	N.A.
38	21/ECON/108	Tage Mammu	III	20
39	21/ECON/069	Kashyapi Bezbaruah	III	100
40	21/POLS/310	Priya Moshahary	III	100
41	21/POLS/350	Dikshita Das	III	100
42	21/SOCI/373	Ashruta Dutta	III	N.A.
43	22/ECON/003	Vedika Das	I	100
44	22/ECON/004	Hracho Hlychho	I	20
45	22/ECON/010	Lalhmingchhuanga	I	N.A.
46	22/ECON/019	Naphisabetbha Syiemlieh	I	100
47	22/ECON/033	Aibaphylla Basaiawmoit	I	100
48	22/ECON/038	Thomas Malsawma	I	20
49	22/ECON/056	Vikash Kumar Ray	I	20
50	22/ECON/058	Yash Kumar Singh	I	20
51	22/ECON/063	Gopal Yudik	I	20
52	22/ECON/009	Benjamin Vanlalhlhlanga	I	20
53	22/ECON/026	Lungoulen Chongloi	I	100
54	22/ECON/039	Laishram Kangleinganba Singh	I	40
55	22/ECON/050	Indaker Kharbangar	I	20
56	22/ECON/061	Alex Reang	I	20
57	22/ECON/052	Gracy Thabah	I	100
58	22/POLS/001	Elena Phebe Awungshi	I	80
59	22/POLS/063	Dasanibha Kharbangar	I	20
60	22/SOCI/052	Sukanya Deka	I	100
61	22/SOCI/058	M Jessica Kom	I	100

ASSIGNMENTS AND RESULTS

Assignments were disseminated after every module using the Learning Management System (LMS). These were designed by the Research Facilitator to test the students on their understanding of the topics discussed during the various modules. All assignments were based on the *practical aspects* of course.

6.1 Methodology of evaluation:

Each assignment carried ten marks. In total, the four assignments were worth 40 marks. Marks from ALL FOUR assignments were used to obtain a final percentage score.

Thus, if a student scored 38/40, then the final percentage was calculated as 95% (38/40 x100).

Only students who had scored a minimum of 40% and above are eligible for certificates (refer to Appendix B).

6.2 Composition of assignments:

Students were expected to upload on to the LMS their answers to FOUR assignments. Since the relevance of publications is far less at the undergraduate-level, assignments focused on testing research and analytical skills. They were given one week to submit (upload) their answer scripts, which were evaluated by the Research Facilitator. Difficulty levels of each assignment *increased* over the duration of the course. Thus, Assignment 1 was the easiest, while Assignment 4 was the toughest.

6.3 Results:

The details of the marks scored and the final percentage attained is listed in the table below:

Sr. No.	Student ID	Full Name	A I	A II	A III	A IV	% of Marks	Grade
			10	10	10	10		
1	20/ECON/060	Philasara Nongkhlaw	0	0	0	0	--	--
2	20/ECON/063	Ronald K Suting	0	0	0	0	--	--
3	20/ECON/074	Sdangminaka Suja	0	0	0	0	--	--
4	20/ECON/077	Rihokiaki Suja	0	0	0	0	--	--
5	20/ECON/255	Shidariti Kharkongor	0	0	0	0	--	--
6	20/ECON/259	George Fernando Sun	5.5	6	7	9.5	70	B+
7	20/ECON/262	Droma Tsering Murphew	0	0	0	0	--	--
8	20/ECON/055	Debopriya Bhattacharjee	0	0	0	0	--	--
9	20/ECON/061	Saphi Bapynkmen Lyngwa	0	0	0	0	--	--
10	20/ECON/064	Fedalick Syngkon	0	0	0	0	--	--

11	20/ECON/069	Simran Khatun	0	0	0	0	--	--
12	20/ECON/076	Judi Lalumpui	0	0	0	0	--	--
13	20/ECON/254	Aibanshai Pyngrope	0	0	0	0	--	--
14	20/ECON/266	Krishna Kumari Thapa	0	0	0	0	--	--
15	20/ECON/078	Madhurjya Pratim Das	0	0	0	0	--	--
16	20/ECON/258	Ngayur Mungrei	0	0	0	0	--	--
17	20/POLS/391	Jangminlun Haokip	6.5	6	6	0	46.25	C
18	20/SOCI/206	Muskan Ahmed	4	7	5	6.5	56.25	C+
19	20/SOCI/207	Dikshita Phukan	4	6	7	6.5	58.75	C+
20	20/SOCI/411	Dragila Molshoy	0	0	0	0	--	--
21	20/SOCI/416	Indrani Baishya	7.5	5	6.5	6.5	63.75	B
22	20/SOCI/211	Imjungrenla Longchar	3	5	8	0	40	C
23	20/SOCI/230	Daisy Kakati	8	5	6.5	6.5	65	B
24	20/SOCI/403	Sareo Zasoon	7.5	5.5	6.5	6.5	65	B
25	20/SOCI/418	Hathoithiem Gangte	0	0	0	0	--	--
26	20/SOCI/424	Ayushmi Kashyap	7.5	5	6.5	6.5	63.75	B
27	20/ECON/269	Da E Kynsai Mitre Pyrngap	0	0	0	0	--	--
28	20/POLS/392	Lalfamkima	0	0	0	0	--	--
29	21/ECON/068	Krishna Sharma	10	10	9.5	9.5	97.5	A+
30	21/ECON/075	Ngamminhao Lhungdim	0	0	0	0	--	--
31	21/ECON/079	Zebeen Riwanmika Pakynstein	0	0	0	0	--	--
32	21/ECON/080	Minggamchi G Momin	9.5	5.5	8.5	10	83.75	A
33	21/ECON/093	Sharmynrap Biam	0	0	0	0	--	--
34	21/ECON/099	Linda Hidam	9	7	7	10	82.5	A
35	21/ECON/116	Moromi Barman	0	0	0	0	--	--
36	21/ECON/117	Jitender Singh	0	0	0	0	--	--
37	21/ECON/120	Gugun	0	0	0	0	--	--
38	21/ECON/108	Tage Mammu	0	0	0	0	--	--
39	21/ECON/069	Kashyapi Bezbaruah	5	3.5	7.5	10	65	B
40	21/POLS/310	Priya Moshahary	10	7.5	7.5	6.5	78.75	B+
41	21/POLS/350	Dikshita Das	4	4.5	5	7.5	52.5	C+
42	21/SOCI/373	Ashruta Dutta	0	0	0	0	--	--
43	22/ECON/003	Vedika Das	1	6	9.5	5.5	55	C+
44	22/ECON/004	Hracho Hlychho	0	0	0	0	--	--
45	22/ECON/010	Lalhmingchhuanga	0	0	0	0	--	--
46	22/ECON/019	Naphisabetbha Syiemlieh	9.5	7	9.5	2	70	B+
47	22/ECON/033	Aibaphylla Basaiawmoit	0	5	0	0	12.5	Needs improvement
48	22/ECON/038	Thomas Malsawma	0	0	0	0	--	--

49	22/ECON/056	Vikash Kumar Ray	0	0	0	0	--	--
50	22/ECON/058	Yash Kumar Singh	0	0	0	0	--	--
51	22/ECON/063	Gopal Yudik	0	0	0	0	--	--
52	22/ECON/009	Benjamin Vanlalhlanga	0	0	0	0	--	--
53	22/ECON/026	Lungoulen Chongloi	4	4.5	6	0	36.25	Needs improvement
54	22/ECON/039	Laishram Kangleinganba Singh	0	0	0	0	--	--
55	22/ECON/050	Indaker Kharbangar	0	0	0	0	--	--
56	22/ECON/061	Alex Reang	0	0	0	0	--	--
57	22/ECON/052	Gracy Thabah	9	7.5	8	10	86.25	A
58	22/POLS/001	Elena Phebe Awungshi	9	6	9	8	80	A
59	22/POLS/063	Dasanibha Kharbangar	0	0	0	0	--	--
60	22/SOCI/052	Sukanya Deka	5.5	6.5	8.5	6	66.25	B
61	22/SOCI/058	M Jessica Kom	5	5	9	4.5	58.75	C+

Out of the 61 students who registered for the course, only 21 passed this course. Thus, **this course had a passing percentage of 34.42%**. Forty students did not submit any assignments (listed in the table above as AI, A II, A III and A IV) and two students scored less than 40 per cent. **Figure 2** below is a graphical display of the percentage scores of the 21 students who passed this course.

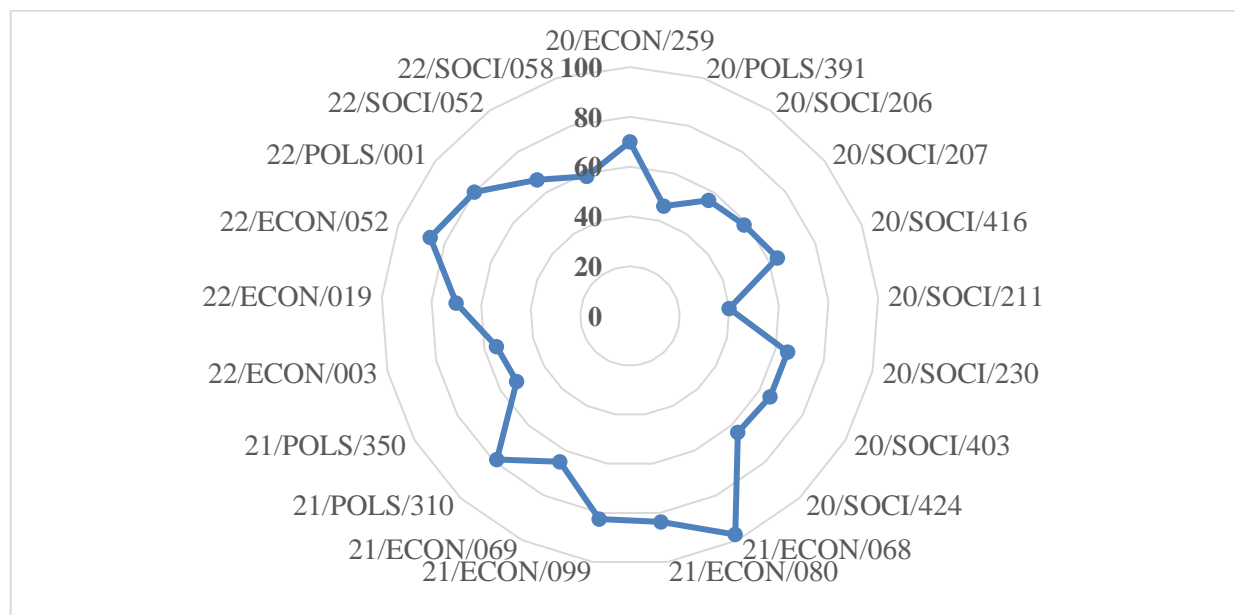


Figure 2: Percentage score of successful students

Note: This data was plotted using MS Excel.

The final result was computed with the average of the four assessments and appropriate grades were assigned to the students. While the scores (marks) were awarded on Linways, the grades were only included in the certificates. The subject-wise breakup of successful students is depicted in Figure 3.

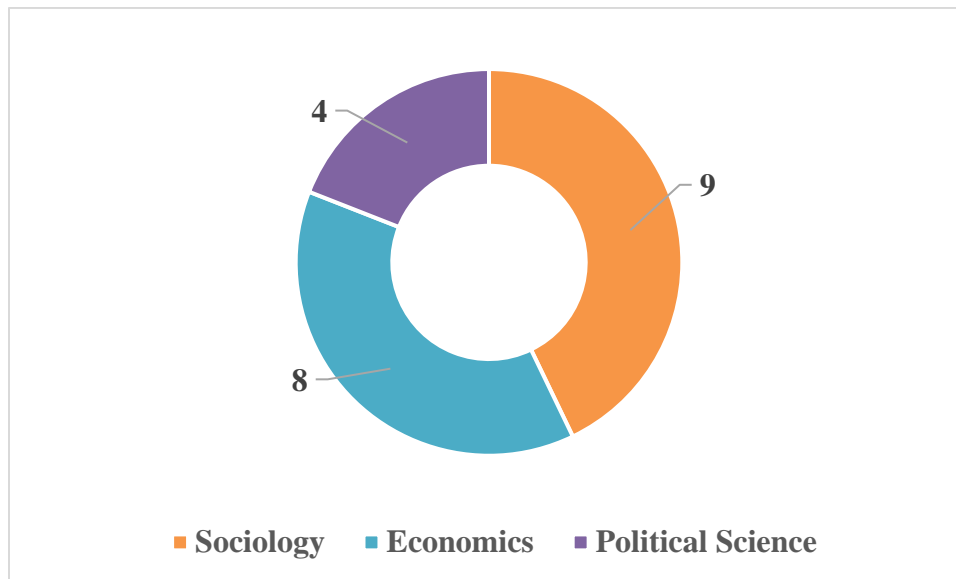


Figure 3: Subject-wise breakup of successful students

Note: This data was plotted using MS Excel.

6.4 Analysis:

Figure 4 (below) shows readers the marks attained by the students of this VAC across four assignments, which were designed by the Research Facilitator.

These assignments were also evaluated by the Research Facilitator. While figure 1 shows the overall performance of students at the end of the course, figure 2 gives readers a more detailed insight of their understanding of the contents and, ultimately, the objectives of this course, across the five modules. Observations and inferences (based on figure 4) are outlined below the figure.

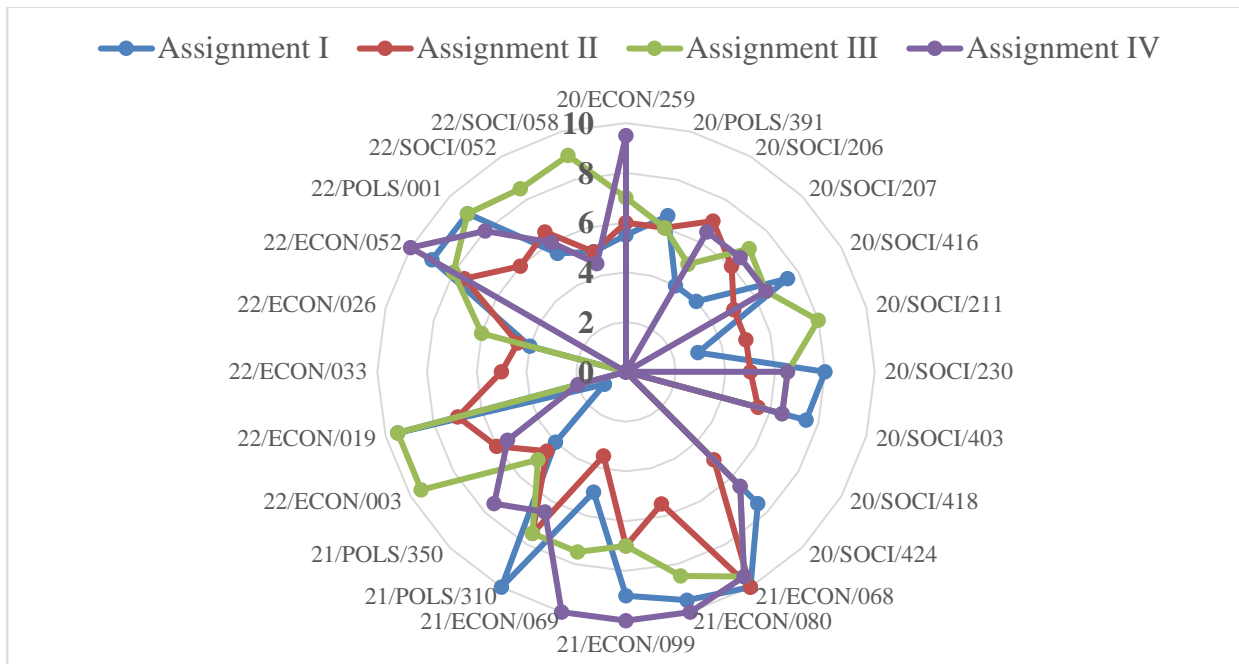


Figure 4: Spread of marks across four assignments*

Note: The data is represented in marks (out of ten) and plotted using MS Excel.

**This figure considers only those students who submitted assignments*

- ion. They are outlined
- As mentioned in **section 6.2**, “Difficulty levels of each assignment *increased* over the duration of the course”. Figure 3 shows that most students attained their highest scores in Assignment IV. Assignment IV, which was a data-interpretation exercise, saw most — but not all — students of Economics perform well. It also saw a majority of the Sociology and Political Science students score poorly since quantitative studies (modules) are not included in their courses (particularly Political Science).
 - Herein, we arrive at the second observation: students are highly attuned to *descriptive* writing, instead of *analytical* writing (which will be discussed in greater detail in the following paragraphs). Take, for instance, Assignment I. Students were asked to “Rewrite and rephrase (using punctuations)” a paragraph. None of the 23 students who submitted their assignments rewrote the paragraph. Instead, students confined themselves to punctuation and a very limited use of the thesaurus.
 - A significant amount of ‘copying’ explains similar scores for some students. The Research Facilitator noticed that several assignments were verbatim copies of others.
 - Scores for assignments II and III show that the students — across all three subjects — have poor writing and comprehension skills. Among other shortcomings, the Research

Facilitator noticed that students have poor punctuation. Moreover, word order, determiners and connectors were also noticeably absent from their assignments.

- e. With regard to Assignment I (find as many readings as possible by showing the weblinks to these readings from your syllabus), the students of Political Science and Sociology were unable to source more than five readings. This indicates that the suggested readings are unavailable in the public domain and, thereby, compel students and teachers to rely on 'textbooks' and 'guides'.

6.5 Recommendations:

Based on the observations and inferences from section 6.4, this report submits the following recommendations:

- a. **Presentation skills:** During the five modules, none of the students participated in active discussions or volunteered to answer a question. At present, and *probably* due to the large student-teacher ratio in the college, students have few opportunities to present their assignments or projects in class. As a result, students are reticent and uncommunicative and impedes student-teacher interaction. It is recommended that any extra classes which are scheduled for Honours students include classroom presentations and discussions.
- b. **Plagiarism:** Fears of plagiarism have compelled teachers to rely on submissions of written assignments. However, an unintended consequence of such processes has led to unfamiliarity with basic software, such as Microsoft Office suite. Additional classes which instruct students on the uses of softwares like Microsoft Word and Microsoft PowerPoint, as well as familiarity with e-mail etiquette, will equip students with a basic and necessary skillset to navigate modern workplaces.
- c. **Quantitative knowledge:** Students from Political Science and Sociology require additional classes on data-collection and data-interpretation. For instance, the students from Political Science were unaware of the branch of 'psephology' (the statistical study of elections and trends in voting)². Moreover, they were not aware of the official source for data on elections in India. While the prescribed syllabus by North-Eastern Hill University (NEHU), Shillong, does not cover data-interpretation, students who pursue a Master's degree will be expected to study reports that contain data in tabular or graphical formats.

² Oxford English Dictionary: Indian Edition, tenth edition.

FEEDBACK FROM STUDENTS

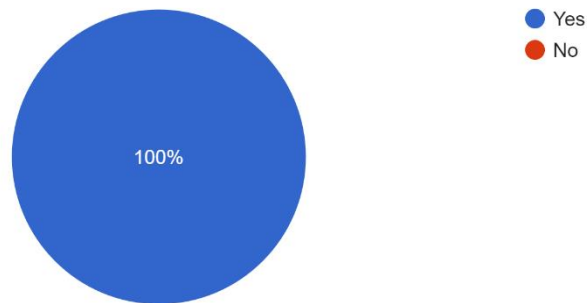
A Google Form was designed to assess feedback from the students. The link (URL) of this form is:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSf_RWRdrl19fZOvPTPpIFo6uGJH5gRviOEJlwtZJLgbe-XISg/viewform?usp=pp_url

Out of the 61 students who registered for this course, only 13 responded to the Research Facilitator's request for feedback. The analysis is depicted below.

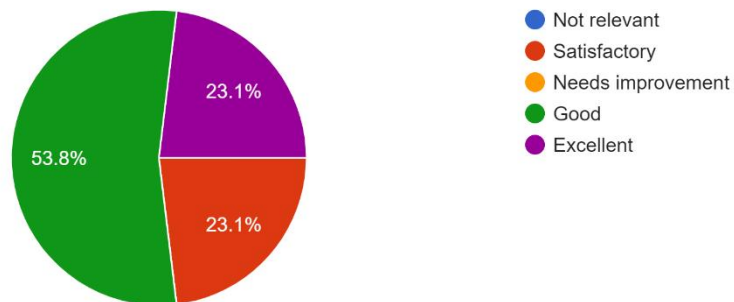
Were the objectives of the course clear to you?

13 responses



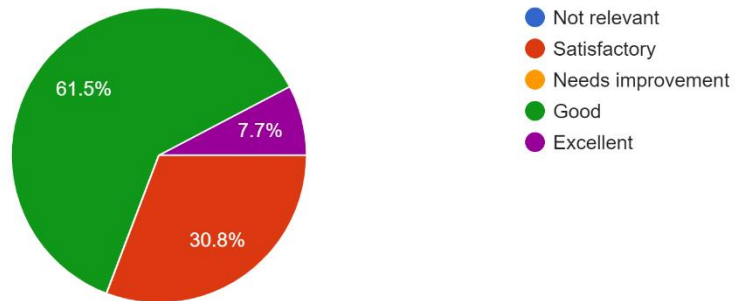
How relevant was the content of the course?

13 responses



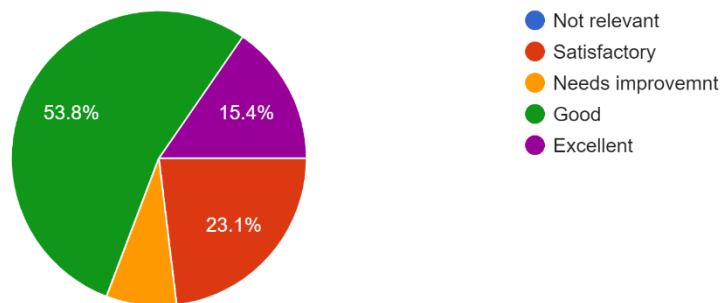
How was the structure (organisation/planning) of the course?

13 responses



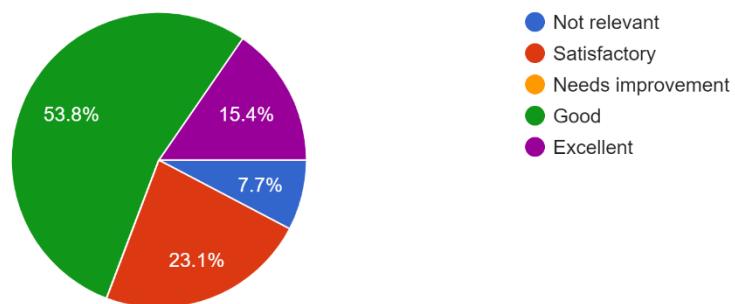
Did the content of the course enhance your understanding of research in your subject?

13 responses



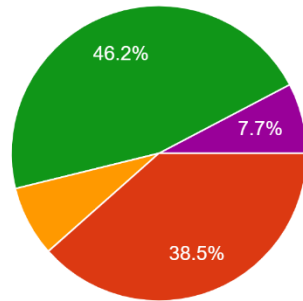
Did the course content familiarise you with the ecosystem (process) of publishing your work in academic journals?

13 responses



How relevant did you find the assignments?

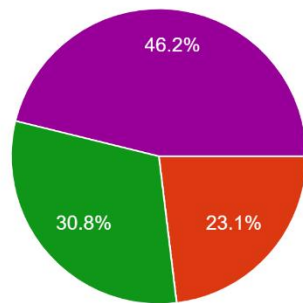
13 responses



- Not relevant
- Satisfactory
- Needs improvement
- Good
- Excellent

Were the sessions interactive enough?

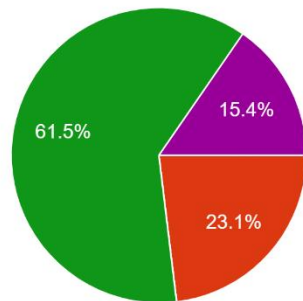
13 responses



- Not relevant
- Satisfactory
- Needs improvement
- Good
- Excellent

How would you describe this course to your friends?

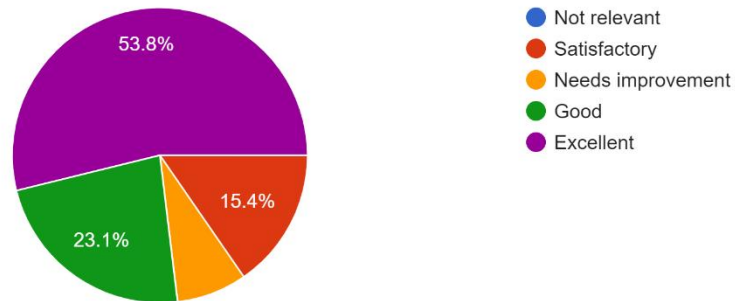
13 responses



- Not relevant
- Satisfactory
- Needs improvement
- Good
- Excellent

Were the sessions by the external speakers relevant?

13 responses



Do you have any **SUGGESTIONS** for the Research Facilitator on how to improve this course?[‡]

- a. Give more assignments.
- b. The course was great, however, if the entire course session were in an offline mode, then personally, the learning and understanding would have been even better.
- c. We got to learn many more things.
- d. I would recommend that the course be taken offline rather than online, in college itself, because as for me while the course was taking place, I had a really tough time trying to join the classes due to the timings since I live far and the classes would start even before I reach home. However, the fact that I was given the chance to attend one of the most desired and intellectual courses makes me feel really grateful to have been a part of it.
- e. Whatever has been taught to us is more than enough in this short span of time and it was very well instructed.
- f. This course was really useful but the fact that it was done online made it a little difficult to understand.
- g. It was a unique opportunity to be able to join this course. I learned how to link my subject with other disciplines. I wish to have a longer duration for the course to familiarize with the topic and system of functioning more importantly put it into practice. I do hope that the forthcoming sessions would focus not only on the general ideas and approaches towards research but also provide a space to focus on our subject of interest especially pertaining to our majors.

[‡] The most significant suggestions are included here. The remaining five students responded that there were no further improvements required.


FINANCIAL STATEMENT

There were no financial implications on the College.

APPENDICES

The following materials were used as supplementary material to enhance the merit of this course:

9.1 Appendix A (Brochure)



Value-Added Course - Academic Writing and Understanding the Ecosystem of Research
Organised by the Incubation Centre,
in collaboration with the Internal Quality Assurance Cell (IQAC), St. Edmund's College, Shillong

Introduction
Research – especially at the undergraduate level – has become the focus of capability-enhancement activities within Indian universities. It is being promoted to enhance the skill-sets of Indian graduates and prepare them for opportunities in higher education and in industry. Such an initiative not only requires familiarity with contemporary research practices but also an understanding of the “ecosystem of research” (National Education Policy 2020, 45) i.e. the publication process

Objectives
This five-module Value-Added Course is designed to familiarise the students of the Departments of Political Science, Economics, and Sociology (ALL semesters) with elementary research etiquettes and enlighten them on the accepted process of publishing their research. A secondary – albeit equally vital objective – is the development of *logic flow* among students.

Course Content

Content	Hours
Module I: Basics of Academic/Research Writing	8
Module II: What is Plagiarism?	8
Module III: Grasping the craft of scientific communication	4
Module IV: Publishing the Right Way – Avenues for publishing your work (distributed across three days)	8

Target Participants
The course is only open for the students and faculty of the Departments of Political Science, Economics, and Sociology, St. Edmund's College (ALL semesters).

Course Fee
No Course Fee

Presenters

- Dr. Oliver N. Gonsalves, Research Facilitator
- Subject-specific external speakers; one for each subject

Assessments*
At the end of every module, students will be sent assignments (via Limways' student portal). These assignments will focus on the practical aspects of research, based on the knowledge disseminated during the module that was covered on that particular day. Aside from assignments, students will also be graded according to their level of involvement in the class discussions.

Mode
This course will follow a Hybrid (Blended) format.

How to Apply?

REGISTER HERE

For queries, please contact**

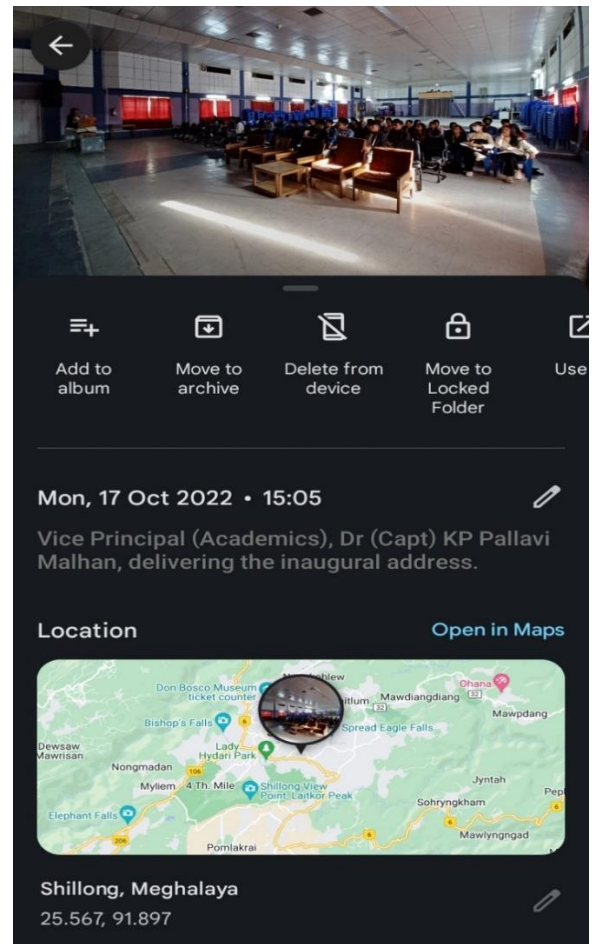
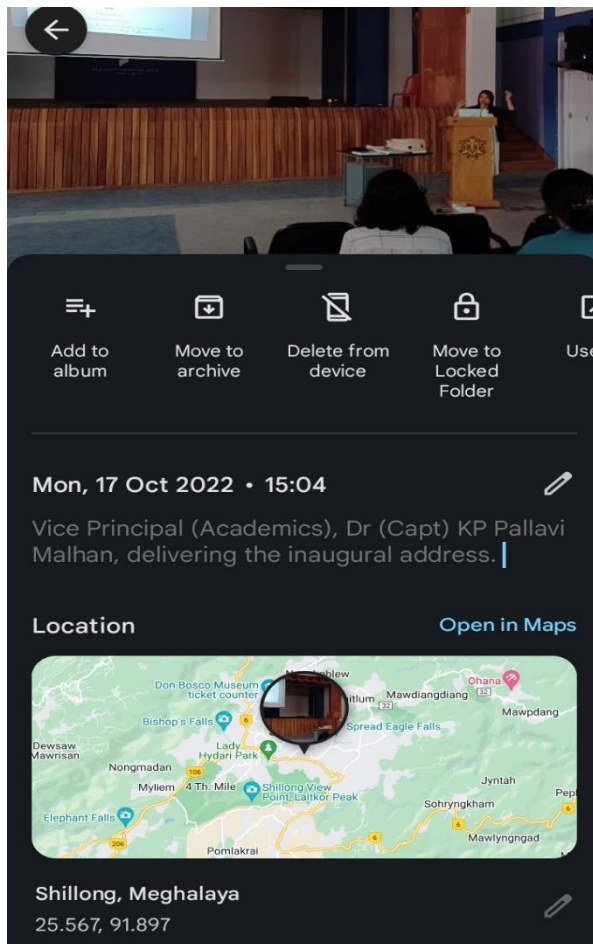
Dr. Oliver N. Gonsalves
Research Facilitator
E-mail id:
olivernelsongonsalves@gmail.com

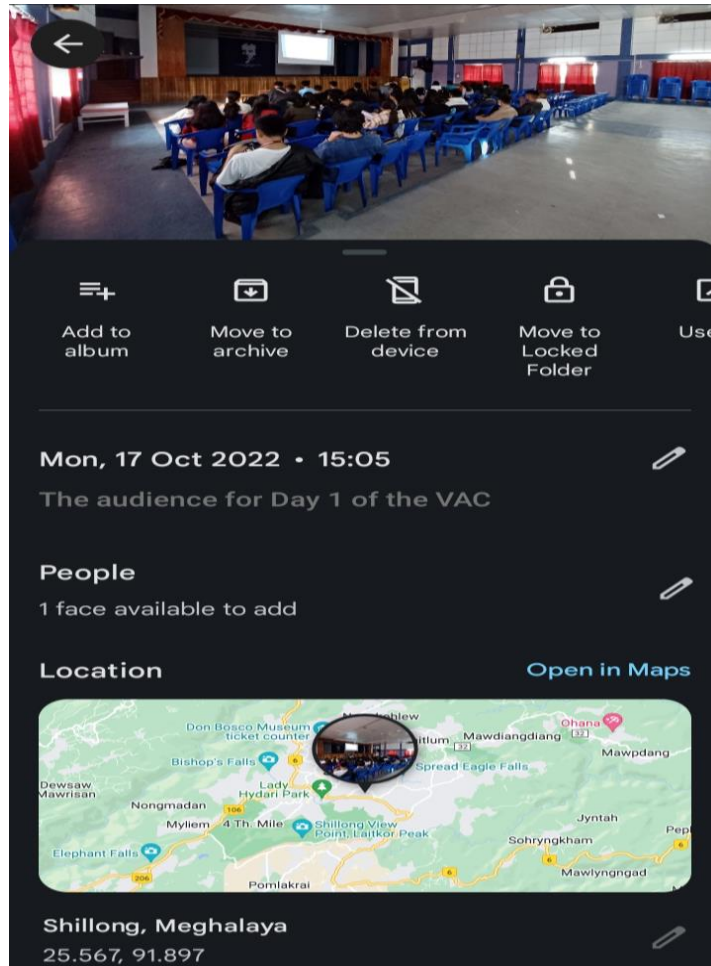
Important Dates

Registration Opens	14 th Oct 2022
Registration Closes	17 th Oct 2022 (1 p.m.)
Course starts	17 th Oct 2022
Timings	3:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.
Module I	17-19 th Oct 2022 (offline)
Module II	20 th -21 st Oct 2022 (online)
Module III	22-24 th Oct 2022 (online)
Module IV	25-27 th Oct 2022 (online)

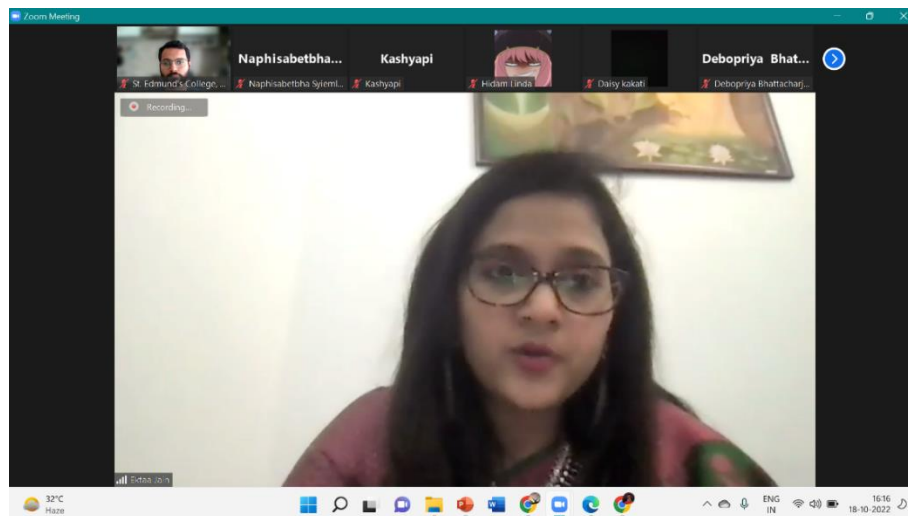
*Participants who have completed ALL modules of the 36-hour course (including the evaluation of assignments) will be provided with certificates.
**All correspondence will be through e-mail only

9.2 Appendix B (Geo-tagged photographs of the offline session and screenshots of the online sessions {by the external resource persons})

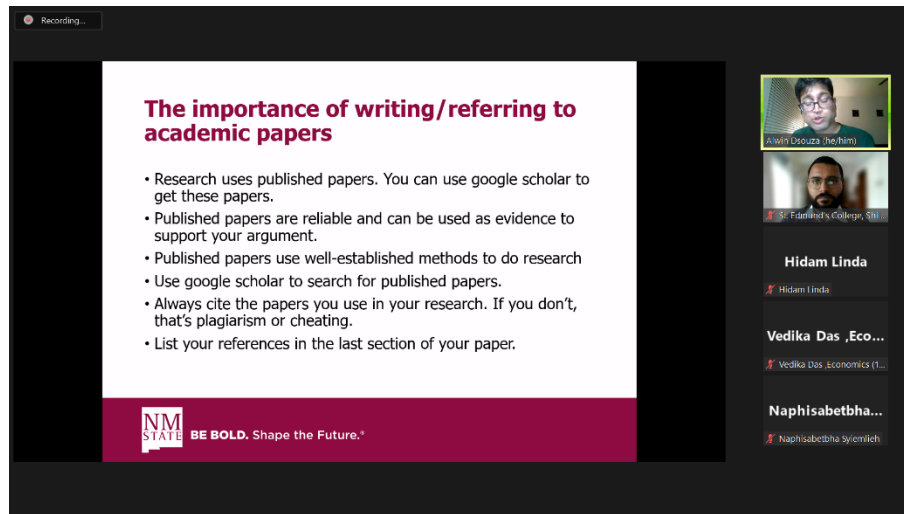




Online talk by Dr. Ekta Jain (below), ICE-CCE Certified Life Coach | Career Transition Coach



Online talk by Dr. Alwin D'souza (below), Assistant Professor of Agribusiness, Department of Agricultural Economics and Agribusiness, New Mexico State University



Recording...

The importance of writing/referring to academic papers

- Research uses published papers. You can use google scholar to get these papers.
- Published papers are reliable and can be used as evidence to support your argument.
- Published papers use well-established methods to do research
- Use google scholar to search for published papers.
- Always cite the papers you use in your research. If you don't, that's plagiarism or cheating.
- List your references in the last section of your paper.

NM STATE BE BOLD. Shape the Future.®

Alwin D'souza (he/him)

Dr. Edmund's College, Shillong

Hidam Linda

Vedika Das ,Eco...

Naphisabtbha...

9.4 Appendix D (Template of the Certificate)



St. Edmund's College

Shillong

CERTIFICATE OF MERIT

Awarded to
XXXX

For completing the ten-day Value-Added Course on
Academic Writing and Understanding the Ecosystem of Research
with **GRADE A**

This course was organised by the Incubation Centre,
in collaboration with the Internal Quality Assurance Cell (IQAC), St. Edmund's College, Shillong
from 17 to 27 October 2022

Certificate ID: SECICVAC022022008





Dr. Oliver Nelson Gonsalves
Research Facilitator



Rajesh Dutta
Head, Department of Economics



Prof. Sumit Deb
IQAC Coordinator



Br. (Dr) Simon Coelho
Principal-in-charge

Grade	A+	A	B+	B	C+	C
Marks	90-100%	80-90%	70-80%	60-70%	50-60%	40-50%



Research Facilitator
St. Edmund's College
Shillong - 793003