

EN4579: RESEARCH SKILLS IN ENGLISH STUDIES

Effective Term

Semester A 2024/25

Part I Course Overview

Course Title

Research Skills in English Studies

Subject Code

EN - English

Course Number

4579

Academic Unit

English (EN)

College/School

College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences (CH)

Course Duration

One Semester

Credit Units

3

Level

B1, B2, B3, B4 - Bachelor's Degree

Medium of Instruction

English

Medium of Assessment

English

Prerequisites

Nil

Precursors

Nil

Equivalent Courses

Nil

Exclusive Courses

Nil

Part II Course Details

Abstract

This course introduces students to diverse research methods and skills in English studies. Students will explore various research paradigms and corresponding methodologies in applied linguistics and literary studies. Through critical analysis of sample studies, students will learn to evaluate research questions and practice applying a range of data collection methods and interpretive/analytical approaches. They will develop their own research questions and propose their own study, for which they will submit a research proposal. The main aim is to prepare students to formulate a feasible research design and conduct research under guidance from EN faculty during their final year of study (the BA research project).

Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs)

CILOs		Weighting (if app.)	DEC-A1	DEC-A2	DEC-A3
1	Identify research gaps/problems through conducting library searches and select relevant literature so as to inform the design of a research study		x	x	x
2	Acquire a critical understanding of the various research traditions in English studies as well as their corresponding epistemologies, data collection methods, and interpretative tools or techniques		x	x	x
3	Examine and evaluate various kinds of research questions, data collection approaches, and methods of analysis in sample studies		x	x	x
4	Evaluate both the advantages and disadvantages of different research methods or combinations thereof, with reference to different kinds of research questions		x	x	x
5	Apply the knowledge and skills gained from CILOs 1-4 to design a research study		x	x	x

A1: Attitude

Develop an attitude of discovery/innovation/creativity, as demonstrated by students possessing a strong sense of curiosity, asking questions actively, challenging assumptions or engaging in inquiry together with teachers.

A2: Ability

Develop the ability/skill needed to discover/innovate/create, as demonstrated by students possessing critical thinking skills to assess ideas, acquiring research skills, synthesizing knowledge across disciplines or applying academic knowledge to real-life problems.

A3: Accomplishments

Demonstrate accomplishment of discovery/innovation/creativity through producing /constructing creative works/new artefacts, effective solutions to real-life problems or new processes.

Learning and Teaching Activities (LTAs)

LTAs		Brief Description	CILO No.	Hours/week (if applicable)
1	Lectures and in-class activities	Each week students will discuss major research methodologies/ epistemologies in English studies through lectures and small group discussions	2, 3, 4	

2	Weekly readings and discussions	Students will explicate and identify key concepts and ideas from readings on selected research approaches and paradigms.	2, 3, 4	
3	Small group work and in-class presentations	Students will identify possible research topics, formulate and revise research questions, and propose approaches for data collection and analysis, for small group work and in-class presentations.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	
4	Independent research and written assignments	Students will apply their knowledge and research skills to design and complete an independent research written assignments.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	

Assessment Tasks / Activities (ATs)

	ATs	CILO No.	Weighting (%)	Remarks (e.g. Parameter for GenAI use)
1	Class participation and activities Students are expected to participate actively in class and complete various short writing tasks and in-class discussions.	2, 3, 4	10	Individual work
2	Individual tasks Students will complete various in-class writing tasks and presentations to demonstrate their knowledge of course materials and to consider their application.	1, 2, 3, 4	25	Individual work
3	Research proposal Students will form small groups to collaboratively design and plan for a research proposal.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	35	Group work

4	Test Students will be evaluated on their knowledge and application of major research methodologies and approaches covered in class.	2, 3, 4	30	Individual Work
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Continuous Assessment (%)

100

Examination (%)

0

Assessment Rubrics (AR)**Assessment Task**

Class participation and activities

Criterion

Active class participation and performance in class activities

Excellent (A+, A, A-)

An excellent record of participation.

Attended nearly all classes punctually, always participated actively and constructively in class and group activities.

Good (B+, B, B-)

Very satisfactory participation.

Satisfactory attendance and punctuality. Frequently participated actively and constructively in class and group activities.

Fair (C+, C, C-)

Satisfactory participation.

Satisfactory attendance and punctuality. Generally participated actively and constructively in class and group activities.

Marginal (D)

Participation not fully satisfactory and/or inconsistent.

Failure (F)

Participation unsatisfactory. Did not meaningfully engage with class and group activities.

Assessment Task

Individual tasks

Criterion

Quality of the responses

Excellent (A+, A, A-)

The tasks demonstrate an excellent understanding of the subject matter and include very thoughtful reflections and responses.

Good (B+, B, B-)

The tasks demonstrate a good understanding of the subject matter and offer generally thoughtful reflections and responses, although they may be weak on some points.

Fair (C+, C, C-)

The tasks demonstrate an adequate understanding of the most important concepts, although some tasks are incomplete, and major weaknesses are present in the reflections and responses.

Marginal (D)

The tasks demonstrate a very limited understanding of the subject matter. Multiple tasks are incomplete or do not address the prompts.

Failure (F)

The tasks fail to demonstrate an understanding of the subject matter. Many tasks are incomplete or do not address the prompts.

Assessment Task

Research proposal

Criterion

Quality of the proposal

Excellent (A+, A, A-)

The proposal carefully outlines a well thought out research study. It draws very effectively upon the course content and/or sample studies and includes a coherent and feasible proposal for important and timely research.

Good (B+, B, B-)

The proposal adequately outlines a generally well thought out research study. It draws upon the course content and/or sample studies where appropriate and includes a coherent research proposal, which may include some minor weaknesses.

Fair (C+, C, C-)

The proposal outlines a research study in reasonably clear terms. It draws upon some of the course content and includes a coherent research proposal, though considerable weaknesses may be present.

Marginal (D)

The proposal outlines a research study which is flawed or considerably lacking. It fails to draw upon course content or does so ineffectively, and the research proposal is rather weak and poorly motivated.

Failure (F)

The proposal does not outline a research study.

Assessment Task

Research proposal

Criterion

Language

Excellent (A+, A, A-)

Language use is very clear, correct, and appropriate for the genre.

Good (B+, B, B-)

Language use is largely clear, correct, and appropriate for the genre. Minor errors are present but generally do not impede understanding.

Fair (C+, C, C-)

Language use is somewhat clear and mostly correct, although errors occasionally impede understanding. Genre conventions are not always followed.

Marginal (D)

Language use is at times ineffective and inappropriate for the genre. Language errors frequently impede understanding.

Failure (F)

Language use is unclear and inappropriate for the genre, and the large number of errors prevent understanding.

Assessment Task

Text

Criterion

Mastery of course concepts and methodological approaches

Excellent (A+, A, A-)

The test demonstrates a very thorough understanding of concepts in research methods and an exemplary ability to apply and comment on specific research methods or interpretive tools and techniques.

Good (B+, B, B-)

The test demonstrates a sound understanding of concepts in research methods and a strong ability to apply and comment on specific research methods or interpretive tools and techniques.

Fair (C+, C, C-)

The test demonstrates an adequate understanding of concepts in research methods and some ability to apply and comment on specific research methods or interpretive tools and techniques.

Marginal (D)

The test shows little evidence of the student's understanding of concepts in research methods. Discussions and applications of specific research methods or interpretive tools and techniques are insufficient or incomplete.

Failure (F)

The test was not submitted and/or does not show any evidence of the student's understanding of concepts in research methods. Discussions/applications of specific research methods or interpretive tools and techniques are missing.

Part III Other Information

Keyword Syllabus

Literature Searches, Research Questions, Research Paradigms and Methodologies

Reading List

Compulsory Readings

Title	
1	Da Sousa Correa, D., & Owens, W. R. (Eds.). (2009). The handbook to literary research (2nd ed.). Routledge.
2	McKinley, J., & Rose, H. (Eds.). (2019). The Routledge handbook of research methods in applied linguistics. Routledge.
3	Paltridge, B. & Phakiti, A. (2018). Research methods in applied linguistics: A practical resource. Bloomsbury.

Additional Readings

Title	
1	Andrews, R. (2003). Research questions. Bloomsbury Publishing.
2	Chalhoub-Deville, M., Chapelle, C. A., & Duff, P. A. (Eds.). (2006). Inference and generalizability in applied linguistics: Multiple perspectives. John Benjamins Publishing.
3	Creswell, J. W. (2018). Educational research: Planning, conducting, and evaluating quantitative and qualitative research. Pearson.
4	Creswell, J. W., & Creswell, J. D. (2017). Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches. Sage Publications.
5	Creswell, J. W. & Poth, C. N. (2018). Qualitative inquiry & research design: Choosing among five approaches. Sage Publications.
6	Gutpa, S. (2010). The place of theory in literary disciplines. In D. Correa & W.R. Owens (Eds.), The handbook to literary research (pp.109-130). Routledge.
7	Hyon, S. (2018). Introducing genre and English for specific purposes. Routledge.
8	Johnson, D. (2010). Literary research and interdisciplinarity. In D. Correa & W.R. Owens (Eds.), The handbook to literary research (pp.131-147). Routledge.
9	Mackey, A., & Gass, S. M. (2016). Second language research: Methodology and design (2nd ed.). Routledge.
10	Owens, W.R. (2010). Editing literary texts. In D. Correa & W.R. Owens (Eds.), The handbook to literary research (pp. 69-86). Routledge.
11	Rubin, H. J., & Rubin, I. S. (2012). Qualitative interviewing: The art of hearing data (2nd ed.). Sage Publications.
12	Saldaña, J. (2016). The coding manual for qualitative researchers (3rd ed.). Sage Publications.
13	Sato, M. & Ballinger, S. (2016) Peer interaction and second language learning: Pedagogical potential and research agenda. John Benjamins.
14	Zhang, L. J. & Zhang, D. (2019) Think-aloud protocols. In McKinley, J. & Rose, H. (Eds). The Routledge handbook of research methods in applied linguistics. (pp. 302 – 311) Routledge.