

**City University of Hong Kong**

**Information on a Course  
offered by Department of English  
with effect from Semester B in 2014 / 2015**

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**Part I**

Course Title: Research Methods in English Studies

Course Code: EN6471

Course Duration: 1 semester

No. of Credit Units: 3

Level: P6

Medium of instruction: English

Prerequisites: Nil

Precursors: Nil

Equivalent Courses: Nil

Exclusive Courses: Nil

**Part II**

**1. Course Aims:**

This course will teach you to research, analyze, evaluate, and apply critical approaches and methods in the field of English studies. The main aim is to prepare you to create your own independent research study through the preparation of a detailed research proposal. You will be exposed to a variety of approaches to research methods that will prepare you to write your research proposal in Applied English Studies, English literary or Cultural Studies.

## 2. Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs)

*Upon successful completion of this course, students should be able to:*

No.	CILOs	Weighting (if applicable)
1.	analyse and evaluate a range of research questions in a variety of English research studies or English literary and cultural studies	N/A
2.	analyse and evaluate a set of basic concepts, theories and research methods in Applied English Studies, English Cultural or Literary Studies	N/A
3.	analyse, evaluate, compare and contrast both the advantages and disadvantages of different research methods, with reference to different kinds of research questions in Applied English Studies, English Cultural or Literary Studies	N/A
4.	apply the knowledge and skills gained from CILOs 1-3 to analyse the research questions and evaluate the appropriateness of the research methods and conclusions of a range of research articles, and to generate concrete suggestions of how to improve the research design of these studies	N/A

## 3. Teaching and learning Activities (TLAs)

*(designed to facilitate students' achievement of the CILOs)*

This section is indicative of likely activities and tasks students will undertake to learn in this course. Final details will be provided to students in their first week of attendance in this course.

CILO No	TLAs	Weeks (if applicable)
CILO 1	Students will learn to analyse and evaluate a range of different research questions in a variety of educational research studies through:  a) interactive lectures delivered by the instructor; b) guided, small group, in-class exploratory tasks that involve the use of authentic research questions in existing research studies; c) guided out-of-class research article reading tasks.	1 <sup>st</sup>
CILOs 2-3	CILOs 2-3 will be achieved through:  a) interactive lectures delivered by the instructor; b) guided, small group, in-class exploratory tasks that involve the use of authentic research studies exemplifying different kinds of research methods; c) guided out-of-class research article reading tasks.	2 <sup>nd</sup> -6 <sup>th</sup>

CILO No	TLAs	Weeks (if applicable)
CILO 4	CILO 4 will be achieved through: a) guided out-of-class research article reading tasks; b) student-led (in small groups) discussion of research articles; c) small group presentations of critical analysis of research articles d) instructor-led discussion of critical analysis of research articles	7 <sup>th</sup> -13 <sup>th</sup>

#### 4. Assessment Tasks/Activities

(designed to assess how well the students achieve the CILOs)

This section is indicative of likely activities and tasks students will undertake to learn in this course. Final details will be provided to students in their first week of attendance in this course.

CILO No	Type of assessment tasks/activities	Weighting (if applicable)	Remarks
CILOs 1-4	<b>Individual Research Proposal</b> Each student will write a research proposal. The proposal will be 2000 to 3000 words in length (excluding references and appendixes). Detailed guidelines and examples will be provided to students to exemplify the format and different sections of the research proposal.	100% of course grade	

#### 5. Grading of Student Achievement: Refer to Grading of Courses in the Academic Regulations for Taught Postgraduate Degrees.

Grading pattern: Standard (A+, A, A-....F). Grading is based on student performance in assessment tasks/activities.

#### Assessment form: Research proposal

Grade A+, A, or A-	Grade B+, B, or B-	Grade C+, C, or C-	Grade D	Grade F
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Shows full understanding of main concepts and their application;</li> <li>◆ All relevant information is included in</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ The main concepts are competently discussed and applied;</li> <li>◆ The information included in discussion and</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ The concepts selected for analysis are sufficient, and partially applied;</li> <li>◆ Only partial information is included in</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ The concepts selected for analysis are sketchy and inadequate;</li> <li>◆ Incomplete information is included in discussion and</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ The concepts selected for analysis are highly inadequate;</li> <li>◆ Very limited or inaccurate information is incorporated in</li> </ul>

<p>discussion and analysis;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ The topic is comprehensively analyzed and explained;</li> <li>◆ The purpose of the analysis of concepts is completely achieved;</li> <li>◆ Style and tone are highly appropriate</li> </ul>	<p>analysis of concepts is sufficient;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ The topic is sufficiently analyzed and explained;</li> <li>◆ The purpose of the conceptual analysis is achieved;</li> <li>◆ Style and tone are appropriate</li> </ul>	<p>discussion and analysis of concepts;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Only partial analysis is provided;</li> <li>◆ The purpose of the conceptual analysis is partially achieved;</li> <li>◆ Style and tone are somewhat appropriate</li> </ul>	<p>analysis of concepts;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ The analysis is not informative or comprehensive;</li> <li>◆ The purpose of the conceptual analysis is not adequately achieved;</li> <li>◆ Style and tone are inappropriate</li> </ul>	<p>conceptual analysis;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ The analysis is not at all comprehensible ;</li> <li>◆ The purpose of the conceptual analysis is not achieved in any way;</li> <li>◆ Style and tone are completely inappropriate</li> </ul>
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### Part III

#### Keyword Syllabus:

Research Questions, Research Paradigms and Methodologies, Ontological and Epistemological Assumptions, Qualitative and Quantitative Research Methodologies.

#### Recommended Textbook:

Johnson, D. (1992). *Approaches to research in second language learning*. White Plains, New York: Longman.  
 Correa, D. & Owens, W.R. (Eds.) (2010). *The handbook to literary research..* London, New York: Routledge.

#### Recommended Readings (by Topic):

##### Course Topics & Readings:

Sociopolitical contexts and implications of L2 research; relationships among researchers, teachers and inquiry; the important role of the teacher-researcher; overview of different research paradigms and methods; identifying, framing, and formulating the research question.

References: Johnson, D. (1992)—Chapters 1, 2 and 9.

Marshall, C., & Rossman, G. (1995). The substance of study: Framing the research question. In C. Marshall & G. Rossman, *Designing qualitative research* (2nd edition, pp. 15-37). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Correlational approaches and survey studies; how to operationalize measurable/quantifiable variables; common types of descriptive and inferential statistical analyses.

How to design the survey questionnaire; limitations of the questionnaire; caution in interpretations of the questionnaire findings.

References: Johnson, D. (1992)—Chapters 3 and 5.

Experimental studies with randomized control and experimental groups; quasi-experimental studies with naturalistic groups.

Reference: Johnson, D. (1992)—Chapter 7.

Studies of cognitive processing: read-aloud protocols, think-aloud protocols (e.g., in studies of reading and writing processes).

Reference: Bereiter, C. (1985). Use of thinking aloud in identification and teaching of reading comprehension strategies. *Cognition and Instruction*, 2(2), pp. 131-156.

Case study and ethnographic approaches; how to conduct interviews; how to do participant observations; how to deal with the “Observer’s Paradox”?

References: Johnson, D. (1992)—Chapters 4 and 6.

Studies on classroom interactions: (a) quantitative, coding studies; (b) qualitative discourse analysis.

References: Tsui, A (1985). Analysing input and interaction in second language classrooms. *RELC Journal*, 16(1), pp. 8-32.

Lin, A. (1998). Understanding the medium of instruction in Hong Kong schools: What research approaches do we need? *Asia Pacific Journal of Language in Education*, 1, pp. 85-97.

Bibliographic research techniques; how to use online and printed sources for literary research; locating and identifying archives relevant to your research.

Reference: Towheed, S (2010). Tools and techniques for literary research: using online and printed sources. In Correa, D. and Owens, W.R. (Eds.), *The handbook to literary research* (pp. 9-36). London, New York: Routledge.

Textual scholarship; theories of textual editing, history of the book,

References: Eliot, S (2010). History of the book. In Correa, D. and Owens, W.R. (Eds.), *The handbook to literary research* (pp. 49-68). London, New York: Routledge.

Owens, W.R. (2010). Editing literary texts. In Correa, D. and Owens, W.R. (Eds.), *The handbook to literary research* (pp. 69-86). London, New York: Routledge.

Approaches to literary research; literary theories; literary research and interdisciplinarity

References: Gupta, S. (2010). The place of theory in literary disciplines. In Correa, D. and Owens, W.R. (Eds.), *The handbook to literary research* (pp.109-130). London, New York: Routledge.

Johnson, D. (2010). *Literary research and interdisciplinarity*. In Correa, D. and Owens, W.R. (Eds.), *The handbook to literary research* (pp.131-147). London, New York: Routledge.

Garrett-Pretts, W.F. (2013). *Writing about Literature: A Guide for the Student Critic*. (2<sup>nd</sup> Edition, Chapter 1).

**Appendix 1: Assessment Criteria for Critical Analysis Paper:**

**Critical Analysis of Research Article: Assessment/Feedback Form**

**Name:**

**Student**

**No.:**

	<b>Criteria</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>P</b>	<b>Av</b>	<b>Gd</b>	<b>Ex</b>
<b>Content</b>	Evaluate: What is the research topic / Why is this topic interesting / What are the possible contributions / implications?					
	Evaluate: What are the research questions? Are they well-formulated and specific enough to answer?					
	What is the research paradigm? What is the type of research design? Who were the participants? Evaluate the sampling procedure / participants selection criteria. (not applicable to some cultural or literary research)					
	Evaluate: How was data collected? How was data analysed? (not applicable to some cultural or literary research)					
	What are the findings?					
	Evaluate: What conclusions were drawn? What recommendations / implications were made/ drawn? Did they follow logically from the findings?					
	Any other well-justified critical observations / comments made on the research article?					
<b>Organization /presentation</b>	Overall sense of purpose, direction and coherence; systematic presentation of ideas; use of appropriate headings and subheadings and paragraphing					
<b>Language</b>	Language style and accuracy					
<p>Failed (F); Poor (P); Average (Av); Good (Gd); Excellent (Ex)</p> <p><b>Other comments (if applicable):</b></p>						

**Appendix 2 Assessment Criteria for Research Proposal:**

**Research Proposal Assessment/Feedback Form**

**Name:**

**Student**

**No.:**

	<b>Criteria</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>P</b>	<b>Av</b>	<b>Gd</b>	<b>Ex</b>
<b>Content</b>	Research topic / research objectives / research questions: clearly formulated, accurately conceptualized, and well specified					
	Literature Review: 1-2 key studies are reviewed; how the proposed study will contribute to the gap in knowledge is specified; potential implications of study are discussed					
	Research Design/Data Collection Methods: research site, subjects/informants/archives are well identified; selection criteria and sampling procedures are well justified with logical rationales (not applicable to some cultural or literary research)					
	Measurement (for quantitative and survey studies): Key variables are identified and well-defined; methods of measuring them are well-described and justified; how instruments are piloted and developed is well thought-out					
	Data analysis methods: How are data going to be analysed? Appropriate methods of analysis are well described and justified					
	Potential obstacles & solutions are discussed; feasible work schedule, complete references, appendixes are included					
<b>Organization /presentation</b>	Overall sense of purpose, direction and coherence; systematic presentation of ideas; use of appropriate headings and subheadings and paragraphing					
<b>Language</b>	Language style and accuracy					
Failed (F); Poor (P); Average (Av); Good (Gd); Excellent (Ex) <b>Other comments (if applicable):</b>   						