

Course Title	: Academic Writing and Research Methodology across Disciplines
Course Code	: RWTS510
Recommended Study Year	: Any Postgraduate Students
No. of Credits/Term	: 2
Mode of Tuition	: Lecture, Seminar, and Tutorial
Class Contact Hours	: 2 hours per week
Category in Major Prog.	: Required
Dates and Time	: <i>Thursday 4:00-6:00pm (7 Sep. – 7 Dec. 2023)</i>
Prerequisite(s)	: N/A
Co-requisite(s)	: N/A
Exclusion(s)	: N/A
Exemption Requirement(s)	: N/A

Brief Course Description

This course consists of weekly workshops followed by seminars / tutorials with focus on writing research proposal / academic papers and introduction to research methodology in business/ humanities / science/ social sciences. The first theme discusses key issues related to research proposal / academic paper writing (common modules), while the discussion of the second theme will be conducted in separated modules for students from different disciplines. For students in arts and humanities, the course discusses key approaches to research methodology in the humanities disciplines. For students in business, science and social sciences, the course gives an introduction to quantitative research methods and provides students with practical experience in performing basic statistical analysis using the statistical software (SPSS).

Proposal Writing / Academic Paper Writing

This part of the course discusses major issues and challenges for writing research proposal and academic papers, with particular reference to research gap identification and research strategies. During the workshops, students will be given opportunity to share their own research, and explore the possibility to develop research clusters for promoting research collaboration among postgraduate students. Making reference to internationally refereed venues, students will be engaged in discussion of major strategies in getting academic papers published internationally.

Research Methodology in Humanities

This part of the course provides an introduction to the basic concepts and tools for framing research questions and undertaking qualitative research in the humanities. In this course, students will be exposed to the theoretical frameworks underlying the emergence of different disciplines in the Humanities, and understand how to use textual, ethnographic, and historical methods, as well as methods from philosophical research.

Quantitative Research Methods Across Disciplines

This part of the course is a nontechnical introduction to the quantitative research methods with a focus on basic ideas of survey design, basic concepts and tools for the quantitative analysis of numerical data. It is an introductory workshop to quantitative research methods, and students will learn basic concepts of statistics, correlation, effectively present and properly interpret the statistical results. Following mini-lectures, tutorial sessions will be held for students to have hands-on exercise using the statistical software SPSS to handle real social data and complete some in-class assignment.

Aims

This course aims to

1. deepen students' understanding of major issues, challenges and practical aspects for research proposal writing and writing for academic papers for international publications;
2. enable students to engage in dialogues to promote collaborative learning and form learning communities for enhancing research and scholarship;
3. equip students with knowledge of basic concepts in the Humanities (Research Methodology in Humanities);
4. develop students' ability to conduct archival work and fieldwork, and effectively interpret and present research results (Research Methodology in Humanities);
5. equip students with knowledge of basic statistical concepts and basic statistical analysis, and basic ideas of survey design (Quantitative Research Methods Across Disciplines);
6. develop students' ability to conduct basic data analysis with the aid of the statistical software, effectively present and properly interpret statistical results (Quantitative Research Methods Across Disciplines).

Learning Outcomes (LOs)

Upon successful completion of the course, students will be able to:

1. understand the strategies and practical aspects of preparing research proposals, academic paper writing for publication;
2. develop learning community through engaging students in collaborative learning throughout the workshops and different kinds of learning activities;
3. demonstrate knowledge of basic concepts and analytical models in the Humanities (Research Methodology in Humanities);
4. interpret and present research findings effectively (Research Methodology in Humanities);
5. demonstrate knowledge of basic statistical concepts, basic statistical analysis and basic ideas of survey design (Quantitative Research Methods Across Disciplines);
6. instil in students the ability to effectively present and properly interpret statistical results (Quantitative Research Methods Across Disciplines);
7. acquire practical experience in performing basic statistical analysis using the statistical software (Quantitative Research Methods Across Disciplines).

Indicative Contents

Research Proposal / Academic Paper Writing

1. Introduction to academic writing
2. Understanding research articles: Reading towards writing
3. Understanding indepth information literacy
4. Engaging in scholarly communication discussion
5. Preparing research proposal: Major issues and strategies
6. Research ethics
7. Major issues and challenges for getting research published
8. Publication experience sharing: some practical aspects
9. Students presentations and discussions of their research

Research Methods Workshops in Humanities

1. How to do research in philosophy
2. How to do research using ethnographic methods
3. How cinema can feature in humanities research
4. How to do research using historiographical methods
5. How to do research using textual analysis

Quantitative Research Methods Across Disciplines

1. Introduction to social statistics and review of basic concepts
2. Descriptive statistics
3. Correlation
4. Survey design
5. Presentation and interpretation of statistical results
6. Tutorial sessions for hands-on exercises using the statistical software SPSS

Teaching Method

Workshops are combined with seminars and tutorials. Students will deliver presentations on their own research, and engage in discussion and in-class tasks. Students, taking the modules of Research Methodology in Humanities, will submit at the end of the semester a substantially reworked research proposal or a thesis chapter. Students, taking the models of Quantitative Research Methods Across Disciplines, will have hands-on exercises using the statistical software to handle real social data and complete some in-class assignments.

Measurement of Learning Outcomes

1. In in-class discussions, students will reflect upon their learning experience after attending lectures and seminars (LOs 1-4).
2. In seminars, every student will give an oral presentation on their own research and their research plan (LOs 1, 2).
3. Students' participation in seminar discussions will be assessed. Students are encouraged to think critically and give constructive comments to peers' opinions and presentations (LOs 1-2).
4. Every student will engage in presenting their interim findings using a presentation tool (LOs 3-4).
5. Every student will engage in performing basic statistical analysis using the statistical software SPSS and complete some in-class assignments (LOs 5-7).

Assessment

Grade mode: Pass / Fail

Assessment weightings:

For Students taking Business, Science and Social Sciences programmes:

- Research outline 50%
 - Deadline: 23 November 2023 by 5pm (Hong Kong time)
- Tutorial assignments 50% (Quantitative Research Methods Across Disciplines)

For Students taking Arts programmes:

- Rewritten research proposal or thesis chapter 100%
 - Deadline: 1 December 2023 by 5pm (Hong Kong time)

Required/Essential Readings

- Babbie, E. (2016) *The Practice of Social Research*, Boston, MA: Cengage Learning.
- Denscombe, M. (2017) *The Good Research Guide*, London: Open University Press.
- Silverman, D. (2014) *Interpreting Qualitative Data*, London: SAGE.
- University of Edinburgh, *How to Write a Good Postgraduate RESEARCH PROPOSAL*,
<http://www.ed.ac.uk/files/imports/fileManager/HowToWriteProposal090415.pdf>
- Healey, J. F. (2015) *Statistics: A Tool for Social Research*, Stamford, Connecticut: Cengage Learning.
(The 2005 edition or any subsequent version will be fine.)
- Treiman, D. J. (2009) *Quantitative Data Analysis: Doing Social Research to Test Ideas*, San Francisco, Calif. : Jossey-Bass.
- Norusis, M. J. (2012) *IBM SPSS Statistics 19 Guide to Data Analysis*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall. (The 2012 edition or any subsequent edition will be fine).

Recommended/Supplementary Reading (on reserve at the Library) Lewis-Beck, M. S. (1995) *Data Analysis: An Introduction*, Sage.

Course Schedule
Academic Writing and Research Methodology across Disciplines

1st Term, 2023-2024
 Thursday 4:00-6:00pm

Class	Date	Topic	Lecturer/Speaker	Venue	
Part 1: Academic Writing					
1	7 Sep	Course Introduction How to work with your supervisor & dialogue with experienced researchers	Prof Ka Ho Mok	SEKG09* (4:00 – 6:00pm)	
	14 Sep	No Class			
2	21 Sep	Identify research problems and research objectives formulation	-Prof Ka Ho Mok -Dr Zhen Tian -Prof Shafiquel Huque (McMaster University, Canada)		
3	28 Sep	Literature review, research gap formulation and comparative research	Prof Ka Ho Mok		
4	5 Oct	Research design and choosing research methods	Dr Louisa Lam		
5	12 Oct	Writing research proposal	Prof Ka Ho Mok		
6	19 Oct	The ethics and politics of social research	Prof Ka Ho Mok		
Part 2: Research Methodology across Disciplines					
For RPg students taking Arts programmes (Coordinator: Prof. Roberto Castillo)					
7	26 Oct	Topic: TBC	Prof Rafael De Clercq	MBG10* (4:00 – 6:00pm)	
8	2 Nov	Topic: TBC	Speaker: TBC		
9	23 Nov	Topic: TBC	Prof Mark Hampton		
For RPg students taking Business, Science and Social Sciences programmes [#]					
7	26 Oct	Introduction to social statistics and review of basic concepts	Prof Padmore Amoah	SEKG09* (4:00 – 6:00pm)	
8	2 Nov	Descriptive statistics	Prof Padmore Amoah		
9	9 Nov	Integrating theory and research design: examples from public policy field	Prof Shafiquel Huque (McMaster University, Canada)		
	16 Nov	Class suspended due to Congregation			
10	23 Nov	Correlation	Prof Padmore Amoah		
11	30 Nov	-Survey design -Social listening technique (Pre-recorded)	-Prof Padmore Amoah -Dr Yuyang Kang		
12	7 Dec	Presentation and interpretation of statistical results	Prof Padmore Amoah		

*Abbreviations of venues: MBG10, G/F Patrick Lee Wan Keung Academic Building; SEKG09, G/F Simon and Eleanor Kwok Building, Lingnan University

[#]For RPg students taking Business, Science and Social Sciences programmes, please bring along with your own personal laptop from 26 October 2023 and onwards, and ensure that the SPSS software is installed in your office computer by ITSC before Lesson 7 so that you can remote access the SPSS via your personal laptop during class.