

COURSE SPECIFICATION DOCUMENT

Academic School/Department:	Communications and The Arts
Programme:	Communications: Advertising & PR Communications: Media Studies Digital Communication & Social Media
Level:	6
Course Title:	Senior Seminar in Communications 1
Course Code:	COM 6296
Total Hours:	120
Timetabled Hours:	0
Guided Learning Hours:	25
Independent Learning Hours:	95
Credits:	12 UK CATS credits 6 ECTS credits 3 US credits

Course Description:

This research-intensive course for the major is the first part of a two-semester sequence taken in the Senior year. Students produce a research proposal, a literature review and a substantial draft that feeds directly into Senior Seminar 2 which culminates in a 8,000 - 10,000 word dissertation. Students are guided through the various stages of proposal and dissertation writing, and draft work is supervised regularly in a process of continuous feedback.

Prerequisites:

SCL 5200 Social Research

Aims and Objectives:

The course aims to help students develop research strategies focusing upon the development of critical thinking and reading skills, the identification of a viable research project, the generation of a literature review, the clear articulation of a thesis/argument, and the selection of appropriate theoretical and methodological frameworks.

Programme Outcomes:

Communications: Advertising and PR: A6iv, B6iii-iv, C6i-iii, D6i-ii, D6iv

Communications: Media Studies: A6iv, B6iii-iv, C6i-iii, D6i-ii, D6iv

Digital Communications and Social Media: A6i, A6iv, B6i, B6iv, B6v, C6i-iv, D6i

A detailed list of the programme outcomes is found in the Programme Specification. This is maintained by Registry and located at:

<https://www.richmond.ac.uk/programme-and-course-specifications/>

Learning Outcomes:

- Students should demonstrate the ability to design a research question, describe the aims of the research and conduct research using evidence, data and information from a range of primary and secondary sources.
- Students should demonstrate the ability to write a proposal and a draft section/chapter of their paper that sets out an argument and integrates a systematic understanding of specific theoretical and methodological frameworks relevant to their topic.
- Students should demonstrate the ability to critically appraisal several sources in a literature review.
- Students should complete a draft section/chapter which critically engages with the sources discussed, and demonstrates an understanding of the key debates, and the relationship between theoretical perspectives and empirical evidence, as they are relevant to the topic.
- Students should take responsibility for their own learning, demonstrating an ability to work independently, meet strict deadlines and use feedback effectively.
- Students should complete assigned work with a degree of clarity, contextualisation, critical thinking, and reflexive normative understanding appropriate for a 6000-level course.

Indicative Content:

- Designing a research proposal
- Conducting a Literature Review
- Drawing up an Outline
- Formulating a thesis
- Producing a Rough Draft

Assessment:

This course conforms to the University Assessment Norms approved at Academic Board and located at: <https://www.richmond.ac.uk/university-policies/>

Teaching Methodology:

Course meetings consist of a few interactive group discussions, but weekly meetings primarily revolve around individual tutorial supervision. The course is student-centered, and students are responsible for time and research self-management as well as for their own engagement with their project. Student work is assessed through a variety of ways using both formative and summative approaches. Feedback is intended to help improve student approach to learning and achieve better results.

Indicative Texts:

Ball, S. (2012) *The Complete Guide to Writing your Dissertation: Advice, Techniques and Insights to help you enhance your grades*. Oxford: How To Books.

Greetham, Bryan. *How to Write Your Undergraduate Dissertation*, 3rd ed. (London: Palgrave, 2019)

Oliver, P. (2012) *Succeeding with your Literature Review: A Handbook for Students*. Maidenhead: Open University Press.

Stokes, Jane. *How to do Media and Cultural Studies*. LA: Sage, 2013 Edition: 2nd ed.

Please Note: The core and the reference texts will be reviewed at the time of designing the semester syllabus

Change Log for this CSD:

Nature of Change	Date Approved & Approval Body (School or LTPC)	Change Actioned by Academic Registry
Various updates as part of the UG programme review	AB Jan 2022	
Revision – annual update	May 2023	
Total Hours Updated	April 2024	