COURSE SPECIFICATION DOCUMENT

Academic School / Department: Communications and The Arts

Programme: MA Communication for Social Change

FHEQ **Level:**   7

Course Title: Professional Research Project

Course Code: COM 7505

Total Hours: 400
Timetabled Hours: 0
Guided Learning Hours: 0
Independent Learning Hours: 400

Credits: 40 UK CATS credits
20 ECTS credits
8 US credits

Course Description:

For students working independently on their Master's professional research project. The dissertation encourages students to study intensively a topic agreed with a supervisor, and so develop skills and experience which can be applied in work placements or further graduate work. The course is comprised of independent research and writing, overseen by thesis supervisor, resulting in comprehensive, multi-media campaign and 3-4000 word campaign report. Collaborative and supportive dialogue with the supervisor and fellow 'junior research colleagues' will involve advice on the research and writing process, suggestions for resources and research directions, and comments on draft versions of the campaign.

Prerequisites:
MA Communication for Social Change students only

Aims and Objectives:

- For the student to work with the supervisor, as their mentor, through the research, writing and production of an MA level multi-media campaign and report
- For the student to undertake independent/autonomous research on a topic which makes a valuable contribution to the field

- To develop skills and experience which can be applied in the work placements or further graduate work

Programme Outcomes:
Subject specific knowledge and understanding (A)

A1. Demonstrate critical understanding of the role of communication in social change, and how it is impacted by different historical, social, political, and international contexts.

A3. Demonstrate in-depth knowledge of the components used in persuasive political communication and campaigns, and up to date understanding of issues and debates within the field of practice.

Subject specific skills and attributes (B)

B1. Demonstrate ability to assess and evaluate political communication and campaigns from various perspectives and approaches.

B3. Conduct successful and original research, including the application of appropriate methodologies for locating, assessing, and interpreting primary and secondary sources.

B4. Demonstrate professional written and presentation skills, communicated clearly to specialist and non-specialist audiences.

Transferable intellectual and personal attributes (C)

C2. Critical thinking, being able to be an independent and self-critical learner.

C4. Critical reflection and self-evaluation, with the ability to engage in personal and peer review, including ways to improve practices and how to communicate this effectively.

C5. Demonstrate thorough understanding of ethics as it applies to research contexts, public engagement and communication, and in working with others.

Practical and/or professional skills and attributes (D)

D2. Utilise digital communication strategies and tools to create multi-media campaigns for a variety of purposes and that engage a variety of audiences.

D4. Retrieve, process, manipulate, and present information from a variety of valid sources.

A detailed list of the programme outcomes are found in the Programme Specification.

This is located at the archive maintained by Registry and found at:
https://www.richmond.ac.uk/programme-and-course-specifications/

Learning Outcomes:
By the end of this course, successful students should be able to:

- Deploy sophisticated analysis using relevant conceptual frameworks, demonstrating critical thinking
- Design and conduct successful and original research, including application of appropriate methodologies for locating, assessing and interpreting primary sources
- Show excellent writing skills and use of multi-media to produce an effective persuasive campaign
- Demonstrate critical self-reflection through a sustained research project

Indicative Content:

- Multi-media campaign
- production of a 3-4000 word thesis, suitably illustrated, evidencing:
- intensive autonomous study of a topic agreed with a supervisor
- primary research making a valuable contribution to the field
- a coherent argument
- appropriate, critical use of secondary sources
- footnotes and a bibliography complying with the Chicago Manual Style
- satisfactory presentation and scholarly apparatus

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

Teaching Methodology:

Autonomous research and research supervision.
The course will require independent research overseen by a thesis supervisor, tutorial opportunities including working with specialist faculty for more specific academic guidance, including comments on draft materials, and faculty and peer review feedback.

Indicative Text(s):
- Hanlon, A. and T.L. Tuten, eds. 2022. *The SAGE Handbook of Digital and Social Media Marketing.* London: Sage.
- Lee, N.R. and P. Kotler. 2023. *Social Marketing: Behaviour Change for Social Good*, 7th edition. London: Sage.
- Lipschultz, J.H. 2022. *Social Media and Political Communication*, 1st Edition. London: Routledge.

- Luttrell, R.M. and L.W.Capizzo. 2021. *Public Relations Campaigns: An Integrated Approach.* Second ed. London: Sage.
- Theaker, A., ed. 2020. *The Public Relations Handbook*, 6th edition. New York: Routledge.
- Wilkins, K., T. Tufte, and R. Obregon. 2014. *The Handbook of Development Communication and Social Change*. John Wiley & Sons.

Journals
Click here to enter text.

Web Sites
- Association for Progressive Communications, https://www.apc.org/
- Communication for Social Change (CFSC) Consortium, https://www.cfsc.org/
- The Communication Initiative Network, https://www.comminit.com/global/
- Directory of Social Change: https://www.dsc.org.uk/publications/
- Frameworks, https://www.frameworksinstitute.org/

See syllabus for complete reading list

Change Log for this CSD:

Nature of Change	Date Approved & Approval Body (School or AB)	Change Actioned by Registry Services
First edition	January 2024	