

## COURSE SPECIFICATION DOCUMENT

<b>Academic School / Department:</b>	Communications and the Arts
<b>Programme:</b>	Communication and Media Studies
<b>FHEQ Level:</b>	6
<b>Course Title:</b>	Senior Dissertation in Communications and Media Studies
<b>Course Code:</b>	COMM 6110
<b>Total Hours:</b>	320
Timetabled Hours:	22.5
Supervised Learning Hours:	45
Independent Learning Hours:	252.5
<b>Credit</b>	32 UK CATS credits 16 ECTS credits 8 US credits

### **Course Description:**

Senior Dissertation in Communications and Media Studies is the capstone course of the major. Students produce a dissertation of between 6,000 to 8,000 words in length, on a topic relevant to the discipline. Students are guided through the various stages of the dissertation by a supervisor. Students orally present their research according to conference standards and engage in peer-feedback as they produce their final essay.

### **Prerequisites:**

COMM 5301 Research Methods in Media and Arts and at least 70 Credits

**Aims and Objectives:**

- To help students develop research strategies focusing upon the development of critical thinking and reading skills, the clear articulation of a thesis/argument, and the selection of appropriate theoretical and methodological frameworks.
- To help students identify a viable research project, generate a literature review, and write draft chapters, achieve the submission of a final dissertation, and make an oral presentation of their research.
- To help students develop self-directed and more advanced research and writing strategies that reflect a systematic engagement with a key issue related to their specific interests in communications and media studies.
- To provide an advanced media literacy framework for global citizens to think critically about issues that are of increasing importance in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.
- To promote critical engagement with a wide range of literature, and the development of both a succinct writing style, and the ability to present complex arguments orally.

**Programme Outcomes:**

6AI; 6AII; 6AIII; 6BII; 6BIII; 6CII, 6DI; 6DII

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:

- Demonstrate a systematic understanding of different paradigms to communications and media studies.
- Demonstrate the ability to develop critical responses to, and a systematic understanding of methodological approaches used in Communications and Media Studies.
- Demonstrate a systematic understanding of key scholars, texts and debates in the discipline of Communications and Media Studies, and the reflexive relationship between these and empirical practice.
- Demonstrate a systematic understanding of a core problem or issue in Communications and Media Studies.
- Demonstrate a systematic understanding of major debates in Communications and Media Studies, and use sophisticated disciplinary analysis that utilises knowledge from cognate fields as is appropriate.
- Demonstrate the systematic ability to gather, organise and deploy highly complex ideas, evidence and information.
- Demonstrate the ability to act with minimal direction or supervision, to engage in self-reflection, use feedback to analyse own capabilities, appraise alternatives, and plan and implement actions.
- Demonstrate autonomy in taking personal responsibility for ethical and sustainable practices in the discipline and in locating their own normative views and cultural commitments within the practice of research.

### **Indicative Content:**

- Formulating a research proposal with ethical reflection
- Formulating a thesis that binds theoretical and empirical content together
- Producing rough draft chapters for editing and proof-reading
- Engaging with questions of theory and methodology
- Extending research sources
- Oral presentation of research

### **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 Text(s):**

Day, T. (2023) *Success in Academic Writing*. 3<sup>rd</sup> edn. London: Bloomsbury.

Greetham, B. (2019) *How to Write Your Undergraduate Dissertation*. 3<sup>rd</sup> edn. London: Bloomsbury.

Josephson, S., Kelly, J. D. and Smith, K. (eds.) (2020) *Handbook of Visual Communication: Theory, Methods, and Media*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. New York: Routledge.

Rose, G. (2022) *Visual Methodologies*. 5th edn. London: Sage Publications.

Ryan-Flood, R. and Gill, R (eds.) (2010) *Secrecy and Silence in the Research Process: Feminist Reflections*. New York: Routledge.

Seale, C. and Rivas, C. (eds.) (2025) *Researching Society and Culture*. 5<sup>th</sup> edn. London: Sage.

Stokes, J. (2021) *How to Do Media and Cultural Studies*. 3rd edn. London: Routledge.

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 document	Nov 2024	