# **COURSE SPECIFICATION DOCUMENT**

**NOTE:** ANY CHANGES TO A CSD MUST GO THROUGH ALL OF THE RELEVANT APPROVAL PROCESSES, INCLUDING LTPC.

**Academic School/Department:** Communications, Arts and Social Sciences

**Programme:** MA in International Relations

Level:

Course Title: Research Methodology

Course Code: INR 7100

Course Leader: Dr Michael Keating

Student Engagement Hours:200Seminars:39Tutorials:6Independent / Guided Learning:155

Semester: AUTUMN

**Credits:** 20 UK CATS credits

10 ECTS credits 4 US credits

## **Course Description:**

Introduces students to the process of research, including the ability to work from libraries and institutional archives, and developing skills in academic writing, with a focus on the fields of international history, international theory, current affairs and policy processes. Students are encouraged to develop independence of thought by discovering, evaluating and making appropriate use of a wide range of approaches to research and writing. Complimenting the courses on theory and concepts, this course assists students with the identification of their own interests as they move towards choosing a thesis topic.

Pre-requisites: MA International Relations students only

### Aims and Objectives:

- To introduce students to the process of conducting MA level autonomous research
- To examine the range of research methods and techniques available to scholars in the field
- To engage critically with texts
- To consider the ethical dimension of research
- To develop a familiarity with the policy making process
- To consider the qualities of academic writing including effective arguments supported by evidence
- To examine and apply professional presentation skills

### **Programme Outcomes:**

At the end of this course, the students will have achieved the following programme outcomes.

B; E; F; G

A detailed list of the programme outcomes are found in the Programme Specification. This is located at the Departmental/Schools page of the portal.

# **Learning Outcomes:**

At the end of this course, the students will have achieved the following learning outcomes.

- Engages with and critically reflects upon on the different methodological tools used in International Relations.
- Demonstrates the ability to exercise initiative in organising and pursuing set projects and assignments.
- Demonstrates the ability to utilize research methods in the context of International Relations, and the skills necessary to effectively communicate research methods and findings.
- Demonstrate professional presentation skills, and the ability to pitch material to both specialist and non-specialist audiences.

#### **Indicative Content:**

- methods for conducting primary research including library and archival research
- methods for engaging critically with texts, and evaluating primary, secondary and tertiary sources
- writing skills including logical and structured narratives and arguments supported by relevant primary and secondary evidence
- research design and thesis planning
- presentation of proposed research projects

#### **Assessment:**

This course conforms to the Richmond University Standard Assessment Norms approved at Academic Council on June 28, 2012.

FHEQ	Richmond/UK	Normal	Total assessment
level	Level	Number of	
		Items	
		(including	
		final exam)*	
LEVEL 7	R7000/UK MA	2-3	5000-7000 words

### **Teaching Methodology:**

The course will consist of weekly postgraduate seminars, which will follow the structure set out within the course syllabus and will serve a number of functions: seminars provide a framework for

the course; address critically the relevant literature in specific areas, examine concepts, theories and case studies, and enable students to engage in group discussion and dialogue, and autonomous learning. Seminars rely upon active student participation, mediated by the Course instructor. By examining and discussing issues and problems in a seminar setting, students as junior research colleagues will be able to learn from each other and resolve questions that arise in the course of the lectures and readings. Seminars will only be useful to the extent that they are prepared for and participation in discussions and debates is an essential aspect of this. All students will be required to participate. Tutorial opportunities will also be available for research supervision and other academic support.

## Bibliography:

- Bryman, A. (2012). Social Research Methods, 4th ed. (Oxford University Press, Oxford).
- Bell, J. (2010). Doing Your Own Research Project: A Guide for First Time Researchers in Education and Social Sciences, 5<sup>th</sup> ed. (London, Open University Press).
- Berg, B. (2011). Qualitative Research Methods for Social Sciences, 8th ed. (Pearson, London).
- Burnham, P., Gilland, K. et al. (2008). Research Methods in Politics, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan).
- Landman, Todd (2008). *Issues and Methods in Comparative Politics: An Introduction*, 3rd ed. (New York: Routledge)
- George, Alexander L. and Bennett, Andrew (2005). Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences. (Cambridge: MIT Press).
- Davis, James (2005). Terms of Inquiry: On the Theory and Practice of Political Science. (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press).

# Change Log for this CSD:

Major or	Nature of Change	Date Approved &	Change
Minor		Approval Body (School	Actioned by
Change?		or LTPC)	Academic
		•	Registry