

MA Programme in English Literature
Department of English Language and Literature
Faculty of Foreign Languages
University of Jordan

Course number: 2201717

Course title: Research Methodology in English Literature

Course Description:

This is a practical study of research techniques in preparation for thesis writing. Students are trained in essential concepts of research: problem identification, review of literature, constructing a research design and formulation of hypotheses/objectives; research methods and their application to research (library, internet, and other information resources, observational, experimental): preparation of a research proposal, data collection, data analysis (sorting, displaying and description), the research report format, principles of scholarly writing of reports of findings, making recommendations, and documentation.

Learning outcomes: Students are expected to

- identify research problems, questions and hypotheses,
- be able to collect, sort and analyse data,
- construct a research design,
- deduct results and formulate conclusions, and
- write a scholarly research paper.

Methods: The teaching and learning will be conducted through

- discussion, analysis and feedback;
- students' presentations on assigned topics;
- students' application of learned research principles to certain works;
- writing research papers, and
- Videos, guest speakers (including researchg students).

Course content:

Week 1: Introduction and orientation.

Assignment 1: Examine research topics of some English literature MA theses at JU in the last five years; observe and analyse; report.

Week 2: Discussion of students' reports; aims of academic research.

Week 3: Practice in textual analysis, sifting for data.

Assignment 2: Group work: Students research specific aspects of a chosen text (Ian McEwan's *Black Dogs*).

Week 4: Types of research: theory focused research: psychoanalytical, archetypal/mythical, feminist, postcolonial, Marxist, formalistic, etc. Assignment 3: Student presents a description of a theoretical framework used in one specific piece of research.

Week 5: Genre focused research: novels (sci-fi, fantasy, bildungsroman, etc.), poetry, plays, children's literature, etc. Assignment 4: Student presents a description of one specific piece of research on a certain genre.

Week 6: Area focused research: textual and thematic analysis, comparative literature, interdisciplinary studies, film and literature, translations, advertisement, etc.

Assignment 5: Group work: Students analyse a video taped lecture.

Week 7: Schools of comparative studies.

Week 8: **Mid-Term Exam**

Week 9: Research topic selection. Defining the research project and identifying the theoretical approach. Research ethics. Formulating questions, hypotheses, writing an abstract.

Week 10: Research strategies: qualitative (descriptive; textual analysis within a theoretical framework); quantitative (analyzing gathered data in statistical form to decide on a hypothesis), mixed (theory and application), quasi research (combining qualitative and quantitative methods). Assignment 6: Is there quantitative, quasi, and mixed research in literature? Students search the Internet and report.

Week 11: Conducting and organizing a literature review, specify what new aspects you can contribute to the subject. Gathering data from texts, connecting text to theoretical aspects, quotation, documentation, bibliography,

Week 12: Formatting, processing and analysis of collected data. Checking hypotheses. Stating findings.

Weeks 13, 14, 15: Students' presentations of their finished research papers. Feedback.

Week 16: **Final Exam.**

References:

Nicodemus, Brenda, and Swabey, Laurie, *Advances in Interpreting Research : Inquiry in Action*, Amsterdam, John Benjamins Publishing Company, 2011.

Blaxter, Loraine, *How To Research* (4th Edition), Maidenhead, England, Open University Press, 2010.

Hogan, John, Dolan, Paddy, and Donnelly, Paul, *Approaches to Qualitative Research: Theory and Its Practical Application - A Guide for Dissertation Students*, Cork, Ireland, Oak Tree Press, 2011.

Brown, Brian J., and Baker, Sally, *Philosophies of Research into Higher Education*, London, Continuum International Publishing, 2007.

Hesse-Biber, and Sharlene Nagy, *Mixed Methods Research : Merging Theory with Practice*, New York, Guilford Press, 2010.

Grix, Jonathan, *Demystifying Postgraduate Research*, University of Birmingham, Continuum International Publishing, 2010.

Dawson, Catherine, *A Practical Guide to Research Methods*, Oxford, UK, How To Books, 2007.

Course evaluation:

Presentations and participation: 10% of the grade;

Term papers: 20%;

Mid-term test: 30%

Final exam: 40%