

CULS 5215 MA Research Paper

Term 2, 2023-24

Course Instructor: Dr. Anissa YU

Date: TBA

Medium of Instruction: English

Course Description:

This is an elective course of the MA in Intercultural Studies program. Students enrolling in this course will have the opportunity to conduct individual research on a selected topic in the field of Cultural Studies. Students are encouraged to extend theories and knowledge they learned from other courses when writing the research paper.

Students are expected to engage in tutorial discussions and comment on each other's writings throughout the term. They will need to meet with the instructor regularly to develop their ideas and frameworks for their paper.

Learning Outcomes:

Upon completion of this course, students should be able to:

- design and execute an academic research project independently,
- demonstrate a critical understanding of the relevant literature,
- analyse cultural texts or phenomena using relevant cultural theories and methods, and
- make original contributions to an area of research in Cultural Studies.

Coursework:

- Students interested in this course will join a Zoom meeting with the course instructor on **4 November 2023 (Saturday)**. During the meeting, students will be informed of course expectations.
- To be considered for this course, students will have to submit a two-page proposal (approx. 1000 words) by **17 November 2023 (Friday, 23:59)** for shortlisting. Notification about enrolment will be sent out on or before 27 November 2023.
- After the Add/Drop period, students will submit an extended, five-page proposal (approx. 2000 words) in **Week 3 (in class)** with a focus on the significance of the study, a review of related literature, detailed research plan, and a bibliography. They will receive written comments from the course instructor before conducting the research.
- The class will be divided into groups for tutorial after the first three seminars. For progress report and final review sessions, students are expected to do short presentations on their writing drafts, and we will open the floor for discussion and consultation.
- The writing drafts **MUST** be provided to the course instructor and fellow classmates before the sessions. Students are expected to read their classmates' drafts and give constructive comments during the tutorials.
- Students are encouraged to arrange individual consultations with the course instructor between January and April of 2023 when needed.
- The completed research paper is due on **30 April (Sunday, 23:59)**. Please submit the paper to both VeriGuide and Blackboard. The maximum word limit of the paper is 12,000 words (in English) and 20,000 words (in Chinese). Tables, diagrams (including associated legends), appendices, references, footnotes and endnotes, and the bibliography are excluded from the word count.

Assessment Scheme:

- 25% Participation (In-class discussion, progress report and final review)
- 15% Research Proposal
- 60% Research Paper

Agenda:

	Date	Course Content
Information Session (ZOOM)	4 November 2023 (Saturday)	Overview of course expectations; Guide to writing proposals
*Interested students must submit a two-page proposal by 17 November (Friday, 23:59). Students can only enrol in the course upon approval. They will receive notification on or before 27 November (Monday).		
1 st Meeting	Week 1	Course Overview Formulate Research Question
2 nd Meeting	Week 2	Discussion on Literature Review and Research Design
3 rd Meeting	Week 3	Submission of a five-page proposal Discussion on paper structure
Independent Research		
4 th Meeting	Week 7-9	Progress Report on data collection, challenges faced, and preliminary findings.
Independent Research		
5 th Meeting	Week 13-15	Final Review on paper outline and arguments
30 April (Sunday, 23:59): Research Paper submitted to VeriGuide and Blackboard *Late submission: 3% will be deducted from the Research Paper per day delay.		

Grading Rubric:

Grade	Description
A	Outstanding performance on all learning outcomes. The paper greatly exceeds the course expectations, and displays exceptional standards of scholarship and originality.
A-	Generally outstanding performance on all (or almost all) learning outcomes. The paper exceeds the course expectations. The student demonstrates evidence of extensive research and reading related to the project. The paper is well-structured and comprehensible.
B	The paper meets the course expectations. The student demonstrates the ability to locate research gaps, formulate research questions, collect data,

	analyse materials critically, and incorporate relevant readings in the paper. The paper is written clearly and comprehensible.
C	The paper generally meets the course expectations with some weaknesses. Student shows a basic ability to conduct research projects. Yet, the paper lacks elaboration or development. The writing is slightly incoherent and incomprehensible.
D	The paper barely meets the course expectations with critical weaknesses. No additional insights are presented in the research paper. There are problematic issues in research design, data collection and analysis. The paper is poorly organised and incomprehensible.
F	Unsatisfactory performance on several learning outcomes, OR failure to meet specified assessment requirements.

Research Ethics:

It is paramount for students to conduct their research ethically and respectfully. Students are strongly suggested to familiarise themselves with the University's guidelines on research ethics and complete the online research training on 'Publication Ethics'. Students conducting research that involves surveys and observation of human behaviour should also complete the online research training on 'Survey and Behavioural Research Ethics'. Details may be found at <https://www.research-ethics.cuhk.edu.hk/orctsResearch/>

Besides the ethical considerations arising from research operations, students should be critically aware of their subject positions when proposing research questions and designs. They should also reflect constantly on the researcher-researched relationships.

Suggested Reading:

The reading list will be based on the specific research topics of the student. Materials below are only general readings about conducting research and disseminating findings.

Booth, W. C., Colomb, G. G., Williams, J. M., Bizup, J. & FitzGerald, W. T. (2016). *The craft of research* (4th edition). The University of Chicago Press.

The craft of research is an accessible guidebook for one to design research projects. We will cover most of the book's content during the first three seminars. Reading this book to deepen your understanding of academic-style research is highly recommended.

Gray, A. (2003). *Research practice for cultural studies: ethnographic methods and lived cultures*. SAGE.

畢恆達. (2020). *教授為什麼沒告訴我: 2020 進化版(再版)*. 小畢空間出版社.

Both books discuss research designs and methodological issues specific to qualitative research and cultural studies (as a broad field). Instead of providing sets of standard procedures to follow, both books help students to reflect on their attitudes to research methods, and offer practical tips on doing interviews and ethnography.

Purdue Online Writing Lab (<https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/index.html>)

The OWL at Purdue University offers free resources and guides for students. You are suggested to go through the following sections on conducting research projects and writing research papers.

- Research and Citation:

https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/index.html

- Thesis and Dissertation:

https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/graduate_writing/thesis_and_dissertation/index.html

Turabian, K. L. (2018). *A manual for writers of research papers, theses, and dissertations: Chicago Style for students and researchers* (W. C. Booth, G. G. Colomb, J. M. Williams, J. Bizup, & W. T. FitzGerald, Eds.; 9th edition.). The University of Chicago Press.

Turabian's book is a very comprehensive guide to writing, publishing, and editing in the academia. You can read specific chapters of the manual when you encounter issues in the process of writing. You can find the table of contents for the book here:

<https://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/turabian/toc.html>

Academic Honesty:

Attention is drawn to University policy and regulations on honesty in academic work, and to the disciplinary guidelines and procedures applicable to breaches of such policy and regulations. Details may be found at <http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/policy/academichonesty/>.

With each assignment, students will be required to submit a signed declaration that they are aware of these policies, regulations, guidelines and procedures. Assignments without the properly signed declaration will not be graded by teachers. Only the final version of the assignment should be submitted via VeriGuide.

The submission of a piece of work, or a part of a piece of work, for more than one purpose (e.g. to satisfy the requirements in two different courses) without declaration to this effect shall be regarded as having committed undeclared multiple submissions. It is common and acceptable to reuse a turn of phrase or a sentence or two from one's own work; but wholesale reuse is problematic. In any case, agreement from the course teacher(s) concerned should be obtained prior to the submission of the piece of work.

Students are expected to complete the assessments independently without any external assistance. As a general principle, students are prohibited from using any AI tools to complete their assessments and any other works that count towards their final grade of the course, unless explicitly permitted.