

CURE 2157 Intermediate Seminar

LEC C&E&P

Thursdays 02:30PM - 05:15PM

LDS_218

Lecture: Dr. GUO Ting

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1. Course Description

The course is designed to facilitate students to develop academic writing skills in Religious Studies with support from other class members and the instructor. Students are encouraged to pursue their own academic interests, informed by the themes or topics they have encountered in taught components of the Religious Studies Program, and to develop appropriate research strategies to explore the study questions, develop a sustained argument, as well as effective academic writing and presentation skills. Students will be asked to present their papers orally in a seminar setting, where the participants will have an opportunity to respond to the presentations.

2. Learning outcomes

Upon completing the course, students should be able to:

- Identify a research topic;
- Collect and synthesize evidence from a wide range of primary and secondary sources applicable to the study of religion;
- Express ideas and arguments clearly;
- Organize the arguments into an organic and coherent essay;
- Do oral presentation in precise ways.

3. Course Schedule

Class/ week	Date	Topic	Key Concepts
1	11/1	Introduction	
2	18/1	What Good Essay Needs (1): Generating Questions and Thesis <u>Reading:</u> "What is Academic Essay?" <i>A Guide to Writing Academic Essays in Religious Studies</i> , pp.1-3.	Generating Questions and Thesis
3	25/1	What Good Essay Needs (2): Evidence and Arguments <u>Reading:</u> <i>A Guide to Writing Academic Essays in Religious Studies</i> , chapter 1.	Arguments
4	1/2	How to Read an Academic Article <u>Reading:</u> <i>A Guide to Writing Academic Essays in Religious Studies</i> , chapter 2.	Overview of Academic Essay
5	8/2	Different Approaches to Writing in Religious Studies (1): Historical Approach "History," <i>The Routledge Handbook of Research Methods in the Study of Religion</i> .	Historical Approach

6	15/2	No Class – New Year Vocation	
7	22/2	Different Approaches to Writing in Religious Studies (2): Comparative Approach ‘Comparison,’ <i>The Routledge Handbook of Research Methods in the Study of Religion</i> .	Comparative Approach
8	29/2	Different Approaches to Writing in Religious Studies (3): Field Work Study “Field Research,” <i>The Routledge Handbook of Research Methods in the Study of Religion</i> .	Field Work Study
9	7/3	No Class – Reading Week	
10	14/3	Oral Presentation 1: Research Questions and Thesis	
11	21/3	Oral Presentation 2: Research Methods and Methodology	
12	28/3	Oral Presentation 3: Development of Arguments	
13	4/4	No Class – Ching Ming	
14	11/4	Oral Presentation 4: Link up by Conclusion	
15	18/4	Homework: Discussion with the teacher / Writing up the Essay	
16	25/4	Paper Submission	

Required Readings:

Scott G. Brown, *A Guide to Writing Academic Essays in Religious Studies*. London: Continuum, 2008.

Michael Stausberg, Steven Engler, eds., *The Routledge Handbook of Research Methods in the Study of Religion*. London: Routledge, 2011.

*All the above reading materials can be downloaded from the BLACKBORAD.

4. Learning activities

Lecture		Class Discussion		Web-based teaching		Workshop/ Presentation		Course Readings		Final Project	
In class	Out class	In class	Out class	In class	Out class	In class	Out class	In class	Out class	In class	Out class
2 hrs/w		0.5hr/w			0.5hr/w	1 hr/w			2 hrs/w		10 hrs
M		M			O	M			M		M

M: Mandatory activity in the course

5. Assessment scheme

Task	Percentage
Participation and Class/Tutorial Discussions	10% +15 %
Group Presentation	35%
Final Paper	40%

Participation and Class/Tutorial Discussions

- It is expected that you would have no more than 2 absences in the course. It is also strongly encouraged that you participate in the various discussions in the class.

Group Presentation:

- You can formulate your presentation by the following questions:
 - Give an introduction and background information on your topic. What relevant research has been performed previously?
 - State the problem(s) that remain unanswered.
 - Describe the methodology you will use to study the topic. Be sure you fully understand your chosen methods. Give reasons why you chose these methods over other approaches.
 - Present any information/evidence you have collected thus far.
 - Describe what you expect to find.
 - Explain the significance of your findings (or potential future findings), and etc.
- 4 students in a group to develop an academic essay according to the format and the schedule:

Schedule	Tasks: The presentation should include/demonstrate:	Marks
Presentation 1: Research proposal with research questions and thesis	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• the questions or thesis to be examined, along with a basic bibliography of scholarly books, articles and (where appropriate) primary sources	10%
Presentation 2: Research Methods and Methodology	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• appropriate research methods, and the justifications of the methods used	10%
Presentation 3:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• appropriate research skills, including the abilities to collect information, to exercise critical judgment, and to present the arguments in a clear and organized manner	10%
Presentation 4:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• a further appreciation of the paper's argument and its significance: why it works, why it is meaningful, and why it is valuable	5%

- All the groups should prepare a 20-min presentation, and follow up questions and discussion. Presenters are encouraged to utilize visual aids (e.g., hand-outs, PowerPoint©), and to make their presentations understandable to non-specialists.

Final written submission of research paper

- The essays should be about 4000-5000 words (15-20 pages), dealing with a defined scholarly question.
- The paper should demonstrate appropriate research skills, including the abilities to collect information, to exercise critical judgment, and to present the arguments in a clear and organized manner.
- Papers should be handed in via VeriGuide by **5.00pm on 25/4 (Thursday), 2024**. Late submission will be penalized: 10 marks will be deducted for one day of late submission. *Submission after 10 days will be given a zero mark.*

6. Suggested Readings

Michael Stausberg, Steven Engler, eds., *The Routledge Handbook of Research Methods in the Study of Religion*. London: Routledge, 2011.

Scott G. Brown, *A Guide to Writing Academic Essays in Religious Studies*. London: Continuum, 2008.

7. Feedback for evaluation

End-of-term university course evaluation will be conducted in class. Students' comments and feedback on the course through e-mails or personal meeting with the instructor are always welcomed.

8. A Facility for Posting Course Announcements

Related course materials are delivered via the platform “BLACKBOARD”
(<http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/eLearning/>)

9. Academic honesty and plagiarism

Students must submit their papers via VeriGuide. Relevant information on academic honesty and plagiarism can be allocated at: <http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/policy/academichonesty>