

61650 - Research methods and academic communication

Información del Plan Docente

Academic Year	2016/17
Academic center	103 - Facultad de Filosofía y Letras
Degree	552 - Master's in Advanced Studies in English-language Literature and Cinema
ECTS	7.5
Course	1
Period	First semester
Subject Type	Compulsory
Module	---

1.Basic info

1.1.Recommendations to take this course

In this course the students will learn how to apply the most relevant analytical and critical methodologies in the field of the Humanities. The students will also analyze and put into practice several strategies for successful academic written and spoken communication at a graduate level. It is advisable that the students are confident in the use of analytical and communication strategies in academic English at a basic (undergraduate) level.

1.2.Activities and key dates for the course

Presentation of short critical essays

Presentation of a 3,000-word essay

Deadline: as per exam schedule of the Faculty.

2.Initiation

2.1.Learning outcomes that define the subject

The student, in order to pass the course, will have to show her/his competence in the following skills:

The student can produce an original academic text based on the analysis and critical interpretation of a primary text using one or several theoretical frameworks

The student is able to recognize and use the basic analytical methodologies to understand, analyze and interpret literary, filmic and cultural texts in English

The student can recognize and use computer tools and bibliographical resources with a view to developing a research study

61650 - Research methods and academic communication

The student can use a range of computer tools and technologies for developing research in the field of English studies (literature and film)

The student knows how to search, analyze, synthesize and communicate information at an advanced level in order to carry out research in the field of English Studies

The student can develop a critical perspective using a variety of academic texts and bibliographic resources in the field of literature, cinema and culture in English

The student is able to assess the quality of an academic essay according to the established lexico-grammatical, discursal, rhetorical and stylistic conventions.

2.2.Introduction

Brief presentation of the course

This course deals with the study and application of different analytical and critical methods that can be used to carry out research in the fields of literature and film studies in English. The course also seeks to engage the students in the critical analysis of a range of strategies for good academic written and spoken communication, and help them understand the rationale behind those strategies. The students can apply the course contents in the preparation of the course essays as well as in the preparation and public defense of their Master Dissertation.

3.Context and competences

3.1.Goals

The expected results of the course respond to the following general aims

This course seeks to engage students in the critical analysis and application of the rhetorical, lexico-grammatical and discursal conventions in academic (written and spoken) communication in a scholarly context. It also aims at engaging students in the analysis and application of information search, analysis, synthesis and critical interpretation of both primary sources and secondary bibliographic sources.

3.2.Context and meaning of the subject in the degree

Knowledge and confident use of the basic analytical and critical methods for the interpretation of texts in English, as well as knowledge and confident use of academic communication skills at an advanced level are essential for successfully engaging the students in research-related activities in the field of English Studies.

3.3.Competences

After completing the course, the student will be competent in the following skills:

CT1: Advanced spoken and written academic communication skills

CT2: Competent use of methodologies

CT3: Advanced use of bibliographical resources

CT4: Advanced use of computer tools

61650 - Research methods and academic communication

CT5: Advanced skills in information search, analysis, synthesis and information exchange

CT6: Advanced critical reasoning skills

CT7: Problem-solving and decision-taking skills for developing a high-quality academic essay

3.4. Importance of learning outcomes

It is the aim of this course to provide students with applied knowledge for conducting research in the field of English Studies (literature and film) at an advanced level. The expected learning outcomes involve the capacity to handle and interrelate concepts and frameworks, the ability to handle complex information, the ability to apply key methods and frameworks and the ability to develop a critical perspective and draw relevant conclusions. It is also expected that the students acquire successful academic communication skills and, concurrently, that they develop awareness of sets of communicative purpose and intended audience(s) in different academic situations. Developing autonomous learning skills and self-directed learning skills is also a key learning goal of this course.

4. Evaluation

The student will prove that he/she has achieved the expected learning results by means of the following assessment tasks:

I. First Official Announcement

- a) Ongoing assessment (if applicable)
- b) Global examination (to be determined in the academic calendar)

Assessment Task 1: Prepare and write brief critical essays on the required readings and films that have been set during the course. Students will be assessed on their capacity to understand theoretical concepts and to apply them to the texts to be analysed, as well as on their correct use of academic English (at a C1 level). These activities are directed towards achieving learning objectives 1, 2, and 3 = 10%.

Deadline for the submission of the brief written essays: as per exams schedule of the Faculty.

Assessment Task 2: Write an essay in English. Students are required to write a 3000 word essay on an aspect related to the contents of the course using correct English (at a C1 level). The topic of the essay will be previously agreed on with the teacher. This essay is expected to demonstrate that the students have achieved the course's global objectives (1, 2, 3, and 4). The essay will be graded 0-10, and will account for 90% of the student's final mark.

Deadline for the submission of the essay: as per exam schedule of the Faculty.

Assessment criteria

- Definition of key concepts. Initial hypothesis. Use of a theoretical framework and methodology. Use of primary sources. Literature review. Well-argued discourse and relevant conclusions = 40%.

- Independence, originality and critical examination = 10%.

61650 - Research methods and academic communication

- Information structure and organization of the essay. Text layout. Correct use of English language and style appropriateness = 20%.

- Reasoning capacity to exemplify, illustrate, propose textual evidence and defend the student's own point of view critically = 30%.

II. Second Official Announcement

Assessment Task 1: Prepare and write brief critical essays on the required readings and films that have been set during the course. Students will be assessed on their capacity to understand theoretical concepts and to apply them to the texts to be analysed, as well as on their correct use of academic English (at a C1 level). These activities are directed towards achieving learning objectives 1, 2, and 3 = 10%.

Deadline for the submission of the brief written essays: as per exams schedule of the Faculty.

Assessment Task 2: Write an essay in English. Students are required to write a 3000 word essay on an aspect related to the contents of the course using correct English (at a C1 level). The topic of the essay will be previously agreed on with the teacher. This essay is expected to demonstrate that the students have achieved the course's global objectives (1, 2, 3, and 4). The essay will be graded 0-10, and will account for 90% of the student's final mark.

Deadline for the submission of the essay: as per exam schedule of the Faculty.

Assessment criteria

- Definition of key concepts. Initial hypothesis. Use of a theoretical framework and methodology. Use of primary sources. Literature review. Well-argued discourse and relevant conclusions = 40%.

- Independence, originality and critical examination = 10%.

- Information structure and organization of the essay. Text layout. Correct use of English language and style appropriateness = 20%.

- Reasoning capacity to exemplify, illustrate, propose textual evidence and defend the student's own point of view critically = 30%.

5. Activities and resources

5.1. General methodological presentation

The learning process that has been designed for this course is based on the following activities:

The learning process is oriented towards the development and acquisition of basic and instrumental skills with a view to showing students how to conduct research in the field of English Studies. A task-based approach will be used to engage the students in the analysis of textual models, the application of analytical tools, and the use of critical methods. Tasks will also involve extensive academic writing and speaking practice.

61650 - Research methods and academic communication

The course is divided into two parts: 1) learning how to apply the most relevant analytical and critical methods for interpreting a source text from a theoretical perspective, 2) learning how to put into practice strategies for successful academic written and spoken communication in a scholarly context.

5.2.Learning activities

The programme offered to the students to help them achieve the learning results includes the following activities :

a) Class activities:

-Lectures (30 hours/ 1.2 credits). The teachers will introduce the basic analytical and critical methods for conducting research in the field of English literature and film. The teachers will also provide key theoretical insights into strategies for successful academic written and spoken communication in English in scholarly contexts.

-Case studies and problem-solving activities: (30 hours/ 1.2 credits). These activities will be carried out in seminar format. In these seminars the teacher will engage the students in practical tasks so that the students can learn how to conduct critical analysis of English texts. In addition to teacher-led seminars, these activities will also engage students in group work and group discussion. Seminars also aim at training students in oral presentation skills and in class debate. It is therefore expected that the students should read the source texts before attending the seminars.

b) Guided activities:

Short essays and course essay: 45 hours/ 1.8 credits

c) Autonomous activities:

Study: 82.5 hours/ 3.3 credits

5.3.Program

Syllabus

1. The role of English in today's academic and research settings.
2. Advanced computer tools and resources for conducting research in the field of the humanities. Advanced bibliographic and documentary resources for conducting basic research-oriented activities
3. Application of analytical and critical methods for analyzing and interpreting literary/filmic texts in English
4. Writing processes for academic knowledge exchange and dissemination
5. Strategies for academic written and spoken communication in a scholarly context

5.4.Planning and scheduling

61650 - Research methods and academic communication

Calendar of actual sessions and presentation of works

In a typical ten-week-course, two weeks, i.e. four two-hour sessions, will be allotted to each of the five topics in the programme. Deadline for the submission of the essays: as per exam schedule of the Faculty.

5.5. Bibliography and recommended resources

- Feak, Christine B. *Telling a research story: writing a literature review* . Vol. 2, English in today's research world / Christine B. Feak, Swales, John Ann Arbor, Michigan : The University of Michigan Press, 2009.
- Feak, Christine B. *Creating contexts: writing introductions across genres* / Christine B. Feak, John M. Swales Ann Arbor, Mich. : University of Michigan Press, 2011.
- Swales, John M. *Research genres: explorations and applications* / John M. Swales . - 1st publ. New York [etc.] : Cambridge University Press, 2004.
- Swales, John M. *Abstracts and the writing of abstracts* / John M. Swales, Christine B. Feak [Ann Arbor] : University of Michigan Press, cop. 2009.
- Belcher, D. "Seeking acceptance in and English-only research world" in *Journal of Second Language Writing* . Vol.16 (2007), n. 1, pp. 1-22.
- Swales, John M. *Academic writing for graduate students: essential tasks and skills* / John M. Swales and Christine B. Feak . - 2nd ed. Michigan : University of Michigan Press, 2004.