**AKDENIZ UNIVERSITY**

**INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES**

**ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE**

**MA PROGRAMME**

**Course** : **SOE 5909 Research Techniques in Social Sciences**

**Instructor** : Dr. Emine ŞENTÜRK

**Year/Term** : 2022-2023 Fall

1. **Aim of the Course:**

This course is a compulsory course for all the first-year students registered in English Language and Literature MA Programme. The aim of this course is to provide students with critical reading skills, with a high degree of expertise in research so that they attain skills to conduct and evaluate research and formulate the obtained results in an academic written outcome. The course introduces the language of research process with mainly qualitative research methods. Students will use the theoretical underpinnings to critically review literature relevant to their field or interests. Summary and paraphrase will be also one of the focal points of the course to be practised in academic language while using the APA style as the research technique and academic writing format in this course. Formulating an original research question in research proposal format is an integral part of this course to contribute students’ research in their own master theses. Throughout the semester, students are introduced to some of the fundamental aspects of scientific research such as preparing research questions, using data sources (libraries, data bases &c.), producing publication-worthy products based on well-established research questions, writing styles, preparing bibliography, avoiding plagiarism, and research ethics. At length, students are expected to put these inputs into use and submit sample research papers at the end of the semester.

The course covers critical aspects of scientific research such as research ethics, preparing research questions, writing styles (MLA, APA, Chicago, Harvard &c), gathering and processing data, using authentication software, article submission, and pre-submission and editorial processes prior to publication.

1. **Course Outline:**

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| **Week** | **Topic** |
| **Week I (Sep. 19-23)** | Introductory discussion: aim, objectives and content of the course |
| **Week II (Sep. 26-30)** | Introduction to Research and the Research process  Research Ethics and Integrity |
| **Week III (Oct. 3-7)** | Specifying a Purpose  Choosing a Topic  Writing Research Questions  Recognising and formulating thesis statement |
| **Week IV (Oct. 10-14)** | Specifying the Aim, Scope, and Method  Choosing the Research Topic  Literature Review |
| **Week V (Oct. 17-21)** | Gathering Sources, accessing data, using libraries and databases  Evaluating Sources / Reliability of Sources |
| **Week VI (Oct. 24-28)** | Preparing the Outline of a Research Paper  Quoting Sources, Block Quotation  Summarizing and Paraphrasing Sources |
| **Week VII (Oct. 31-Nov. 4)** | Avoiding Plagiarism and ethical concerns in scientific research  Citation Basics  Analysing a sample research paper |
| **Week VIII (Nov. 7-11)** | MLA, APA, and Chicago writing styles |
| **Week IX (Nov. 14-18)** | Feedback to the Outline and Discussion  Preparing the Draft of Research Proposal |
| **Week X (Nov. 21-25)** | Feedback to the Proposal  Revising the Proposal |
| **Week XI (Nov. 28-Dec. 2)** | Presentation of the Proposals |
| **Week XII (Dec. 5-9)** | Presentation of the Proposals |
| **Week XIII (Dec. 12-16)** | Presentation of the Proposals |
| **Week XIV (Dec. 19-23)** | Revision |
| **Week XV (Dec. 26-30)** | Submission of the Final Research Paper |

The students should keep in mind that the weekly plan of this course specified above is a tentative version, and in the upcoming weeks, the professor will share an updated one with specific dates and specific tasks if necessary. Or there can be some revisions in accordance with the class and needs of the students.

1. **Textbook:**

There is no “one” specific sourcebook or textbook for this course. The students are expected to follow the recommended reading list. The ones that are highly suggested are:

Griffin, Gabriele, editor. (2013). *Research methods for English studies*. Second Edition. Edinburgh UP.

Hayot, E. (2014). *The elements of academic style: Writing for the humanities*. Columbia UP.

Neuman, W. L. (2014). *Basics of social research: Qualitative and quantitative approaches*. Third Edition. Pearson.

Pickering, M., editor. (2008). *Research methods for cultural studies*. Edinburgh UP.

Sheppard, Valerie. (2020). *Research methods for the social sciences: an introduction.*

1. **Course Requirements**:

The students are expected to follow the course by using and referring to the sources and parts assigned on the syllabus as they are useful for keeping up with the requirements of the course. **A time schedule** for all the assignments and course requirements will be prepared and announced by the professor and will be shared with the students (also will be hung on the door of the professor if necessary). It is the students’ responsibility to follow the dates of each assignment. The students are kindly requested to ask their questions and consult to the professor in the class hour or via e-mail.

**Attendance:** As a discussion-oriented course, the effectiveness of this class is dependent upon your regular attendance at class meetings, both for the benefit of the class as a whole and for your own personal development. If for one reason or another you are unable to attend one of these functions, please speak to me prior to the date of the class so that we can set up an alternative time.

*No cell phones and other phones use are allowed in class. Use of interactive technology is allowed only when it is required for the assignment, for contacting group members or research (Place devices under your seat during lectures). Photos or video should not be taken in class without prior permission (personal use only allowed in emergency). Apart from watching for educational purposes, any kind of sharing or using the videos or any course material is illegal and therefore will be penalised.*

1. **Evaluation**:

Weekly Assignments : 20%

Research Proposal Presentation : 15%

Research Proposal Submission : 15%

Final Research Paper : 50%

**Weekly Assignments:**

**Choosing a Topic (Week 2)**

Come to the class with three topics that you want to study on. Try to specify and narrow down the topic to write a thesis statement and to raise an argument on.

**Research Question and Analysis of an Article (Week 3)**

* Describe your research interest within a paragraph or two. You can include a general research topic and a research question(s) in your description.
* Find an article relevant to your subject and analyse the organisation of this article in terms of the problem and purpose of the study.

**Bibliography (Week 5)**

Create a bibliography (a list of references) on the research topic that you wrote above. You need to find at least 20 items (scholarly works) that are directly related to your tentative study. You need to use Endnote, Mendeley, Zotero or similar web-based service to prepare your bibliography. You can create an account before you come to class. Use APA style in giving reference. If the material is online available put its link into the doc. Those of you who aim to study primary text they need to include them under a separate title.

**Bibliography II (Week 6)**

In your bibliography, choose the most relevant three studies and write down how the authors focus their research (one paragraph for each in your own words). Show how the authors define their research area, research topic and research questions (both general and specific). Focus on and mention the concepts that they preferred in their formulation of the research question(s). Write also how the study is related with your own study. At the end of this exercise modify and re-write your research question. The studies should be chosen among the secondary literature, i.e., the ones that are published in scholarly venues. Try to bring the most recent studies that are published in scholarly journals or books.

**Methodology and Plan of your Study (Week 7)**

Write what you will do to answer your research question. i.e, What is your method?

Think about a time frame and write your stages of methods in steps, and then discuss your approach and how will you interpret the material that you want to focus.

**Literature Review (Week 8)**

Write a short literature review not exceeding 1000 words. To achieve this, you need to simply modify and organize your third assignment and add few more resources. In your literature review try to show where your study fits in the literature and discuss how you will contribute to that literature.

**Outline (Week 9)**

Prepare an outline for your study as you have already done the research and answered your research question. Here, you are also expected to have prepared your thesis statement and also the general schedule of your paper.

**Week 10** Research Proposal

**Week 11** Research Proposal (Revised Version)

**Week 12-14** Presentation of the Proposals

**Final Exam Week** Final Research Paper

**Note:** All these items including the course outline, evaluation percentages, and mid-term dates are subject to change depending upon the circumstances and the students will be informed about the changes by the professor in advance. The grading scale of the course is as stated by the Institute. Read the Exam Regulations for the Graduate Studies of the University meticulously.

**Additional issues:**

**Academic honesty:** all work you turn in for this class must be your own work, with all outside references sources properly cited and acknowledged. Papers and any studies submitted by the students should reflect a great deal of research and intellectual effort. Any form of academic misconduct, such as plagiarism, fabrication, deception, cheating etc. is unacceptable. These will have severe consequences including termination of your student status. The professor may check the originality status of the papers via Turnitin or any plagiarism checking software provided by the University.

**Submission of Papers to Courses**: The students are required to contact the professors if they think a paper that they are preparing for any of their courses is related to another course since one paper cannot be submitted to two different courses.

**ORCID Number:** Since it will be required from the graduate students to have an ORCID number (a digital identifier for you as a researcher), the students are expected to acquire this number this term for the future uses. You can have your ORCID number via <https://orcid.org/>.

**Instructor Availability:** I am available to speak with students during my office hours, but since there is no actual meetings at that time, the students may e-mail me to set up an online appointment.

**Email Policy:** You are welcome to contact me via email with any questions you may have about the course. Please allow me at least 24-48 hours to respond to your email. I also ask that you treat your emails to me as professional communications and address them in a formal manner.

The e-mail addresses I am currently using are:

[eminesenturk@akdeniz.edu.tr](mailto:eminesenturk@akdeniz.edu.tr) (primary e-mail address for the course)

[emine\_senturk@yahoo.com](mailto:emine_senturk@yahoo.com) (secondary e-mail address if there is no reply from the primary one)

1. **Recommended Reading:**

APA (2011). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association*. APA.

Cargill, M. and P. O'connor. (2013). *Writing scientific research articles: Strategy and steps.* 2nd ed. Wiley and Blackwell.

Cook, C. K. (1985). *Line by line: How to edit your own writing*. MLA.

Creswell, J. W. (2014). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches*. Fourth Edition. Sage Publications.

Ghosh, B.N. (1992) *Scientific Method and Social Research.* Sterling Publishers Pvt. Ltd.

Griffin, Gabriele, editor. (2013). *Research methods for English studies*. Second Edition. Edinburgh UP.

Griffith, K. (2011). *Writing essays about literature: A guide and style sheet*. Eighth Edition. Wadsworth Cengage.

Hayot, E. (2014). *The elements of academic style: Writing for the humanities*. Columbia UP.

Kershaw, B. and H. Nicholson, editors. (2011). *Research methods in theatre and performance*. Edinburgh UP.

*MLA Handbook.* (2016). 8th ed. Modern Languages Association.

Neuman, W. L. (2014). *Basics of social research: Qualitative and quantitative approaches*. Third Edition. Pearson.

Pecorari, D. (2008). *Academic writing and plagiarism: A linguistic analysis*. Continuum.

Pickering, M., editor. (2008). *Research methods for cultural studies*. Edinburgh UP.

Schilb, J. and J. Clifford. (2017). *A brief guide to arguing about literature*. Second Edition. Macmillan learning.

Sheppard, Valerie. (2020). *Research methods for the social sciences: an introduction.*

*The Chicago Manual of Style.* (2017). 17th ed. Chicago: Chicago UP.

Winkler, A. C. and J. R. McCuen-Metherell. (2008). *Writing the research paper.* Seventh Edition. Wadsworth Cengage Learning.

**The links for webinars and any kind of helpful document:**

* APA Style tutorials and webinars; you can find sample papers and also videos which may help you in writing your papers:

<https://apastyle.apa.org/instructional-aids/tutorials-webinars>

* Mendeley download site which is a citation programme

<https://www.mendeley.com/search/>

* Transitional words and phrases

<https://writing.wisc.edu/handbook/style/transitions/>

<https://www.aje.com/arc/editing-tip-effective-transitions/>

<https://academicguides.waldenu.edu/writingcenter/paragraphs/transitions>

* Sample paper reviews (to have an idea)

<https://academicguides.waldenu.edu/writingcenter/paperreviews/samplereviews>

* For paper format of APA

<https://apastyle.apa.org/style-grammar-guidelines/paper-format>

* Sample papers

<https://apastyle.apa.org/style-grammar-guidelines/paper-format/sample-papers>

* Handouts and Guides

<https://apastyle.apa.org/instructional-aids/handouts-guides>

* APA 6th in Turkish

<http://www.tk.org.tr/APA/apa_2.pdf>

**Note: A few tips for research:**

While doing your research to choose the topic and to write your research question, please follow the steps given below:

* Check other theses, dissertations, etc to see how they were written, organised, formed, etc. YOKSIS is a good opportunity to see the national database, but also PROQUEST should be used for an international database. While checking the thesis databases, choose the keywords meticulously and wisely. Avoid entering general keywords that may cover a very broad subject.
* Check the “table of contents” page of the theses to have an idea about the organisation of these studies.
* Try to recognise the main argument by reading the second half of the Introduction and also the conclusion since these are the places where the main argument should be introduced and then concluded respectively.
* Use different databases to do research on scholarly basis. Some of these databases are EBSCOhost, JSTOR, SAGE, the specific journals of Humanities, Google Scholar, etc.
* Always keep a journal or note page to record your own brainstorming or web of ideas. Do not rely solely on your memory to learn a new thing or to remember a duty or task.
* Do not ask all your friends or colleagues about a task or assignment since the professor of the course is the responsible one for the instructions and the extent of the assigned study.
* Establish a writing schedule, preferably writing at the same time and place each day.
* Begin by free writing. Remember that no one but you have to see the initial draft.
* Keep a small notebook with you throughout the day to write down relevant thoughts.

About the proposal:

* Understand that the proposal will be a negotiated document, so be prepared to draft, redraft, and redraft as many times as required
* Think of the proposal as an introduction to your thesis—not a chapter, not an extensive literature review, not an opportunity to rehearse the major conflicts in your field. You are “bridging the gap” between existing work and your work.
* Remember that the proposal is not a contract that determines what your thesis will demonstrate. You will likely modify and refine your scope, argument, and methods.
* Remember that your proposal is not meant to limit your ideas, but to help you think in practical terms about how you intend to research and write your dissertation.

A general reminder:

* The format of anything you prepare should be neat, organised, and properly and meticulously revised. The font of the whole document, spaces applied, language properties, grammar check, spell check, etc. It is not the advisor’s, the committee’s, or a professor’s responsibility to check and revise the format of anything you have submitted, it is yours.