

## **COURSE SPECIFICATION DOCUMENT**

**NOTE:** ANY CHANGES TO A CSD MUST GO THROUGH ALL OF THE RELEVANT APPROVAL PROCESSES, INCLUDING LTPC.

**Academic School/Department:** Communications, Arts and Social Sciences

**Programme:** MA in International Development

**Level:** 7

**Course Title:** Research Methodology

**Course Code:** DEV 7100

**Course Leader:** Dr Michael Keating

**Student Engagement Hours:** **200**

Seminars: 39

Tutorials: 6

Independent / Guided Learning : 155

**Semester:** Fall

**Credits:** 20 UK CATS credits

10 ECTS credits

4 US credits

### **Course Description:**

Introduces students to the process of research, including the ability to work from libraries and institutional archives, and developing skills in academic writing, with a focus on the fields of international history, international theory, current affairs and policy processes. Students are encouraged to develop independence of thought by discovering, evaluating and making appropriate use of a wide range of approaches to research and writing. Complementing the courses on theory and concepts, this course assists students with the identification of their own interests as they move towards choosing a thesis topic.

**Pre-requisites:** MA International Development students only

### **Aims and Objectives:**

- To introduce students to the process of conducting MA level autonomous research

- To examine the range of research methods and techniques available to scholars in the field
- To engage critically with texts
- To consider the ethical dimension of research
- To develop a familiarity with the policy making process
- To consider the qualities of academic writing including effective arguments supported by evidence
- To examine and apply professional presentation skills

**Programme Outcomes:**

At the end of this course, the students will have achieved the following programme outcomes.

B; E; F; G

A detailed list of the programme outcomes are found in the Programme Specification.

This is located at the archive maintained by the Academic Registry and found at:  
<http://www.richmond.ac.uk/content/academic-schools/academic-registry/program-and-course-specifications.aspx>

**Learning Outcomes:**

By the end of this course, successful students should be able to:

- Engage with and critically reflect upon on the different methodological tools used in International Development.
- Demonstrate the ability to exercise initiative in organising and pursuing set projects and assignments.
- Demonstrate the ability to utilize research methods in the context of International Development, and the skills necessary to effectively communicate research methods and findings.
- Demonstrate professional presentation skills, and the ability to pitch material to both specialist and non-specialist audiences.

**Indicative Content:**

- methods for conducting primary research including library and archival research
- methods for engaging critically with texts, and evaluating primary, secondary and tertiary sources
- writing skills including logical and structured narratives and arguments supported by relevant primary and secondary evidence
- research design and thesis planning presentation of proposed research projects

**Assessment:**

This course conforms to the Richmond University Standard Assessment Norms approved at Learning and Teaching Policy Committee found at:  
<http://www.richmond.ac.uk/content/academic-affairs/academic-standing.aspx>.

**Teaching Methodology:**

The course will consist of weekly postgraduate seminars, which will follow the structure set out within the course syllabus and will serve a number of functions: seminars provide a framework for the course; address critically the relevant literature in specific areas, examine concepts, theories and case studies, and enable students to engage in group discussion and dialogue, and autonomous learning. Seminars rely upon active student participation, mediated by the Course instructor. By examining and discussing issues and problems in a seminar setting, students as junior research colleagues will be able to learn from each other and resolve questions that arise in the course of the lectures and readings. Seminars will only be useful to the extent that they are prepared for and participation in discussions and debates is an essential aspect of this. All students will be required to participate. Tutorial opportunities will also be available for research supervision and other academic support.

**Bibliography:**

- Bryman, A. (2012). *Social Research Methods*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed. (Oxford University Press, Oxford).
- Bell, J. (2010). *Doing Your Own Research Project: A Guide for First Time Researchers in Education and Social Sciences*, 5<sup>th</sup> ed. (London, Open University Press).
- Berg, B. (2011). *Qualitative Research Methods for Social Sciences*, 8<sup>th</sup> ed. (Pearson, London).
- Burnham, P., Gilland, K. et al. (2008). *Research Methods in Politics*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan).
- Landman, Todd (2008). *Issues and Methods in Comparative Politics: An Introduction*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (New York: Routledge)
- George, Alexander L. and Bennett, Andrew (2005). *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences*. (Cambridge: MIT Press).
- Davis, James (2005). *Terms of Inquiry: On the Theory and Practice of Political Science*. (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press).

Please Note: The core and the reference texts will be reviewed at the time of designing the semester syllabus

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Change Log for this CSD:

Major or Minor Change?	Nature of Change	Date Approved & Approval Body (School or LTPC)	Change Actioned by Academic Registry
Minor	Change in formatting in line with updated CSD template	School (Chair's Action), 26 <sup>th</sup> January 2015	
Minor	Change 'IND' to 'DEV' in course code	School (Chair's Action), 26 <sup>th</sup> January 2015	