

Subject name/code:	PhD Research Methods/BDI-DK-0030A
Subject coordinator:	Head of the Doctoral School
Lecturer(s) of the subject:	Dr. habil. McAteer Michael
Credits:	5
Lesson type:	Practice
Brief subject description:	The objective of this course is to introduce new First Year, Semester 1, PhD English Studies students of the PhD English Studies Programme, to the various elements involved in the research and preparation of their PhD Theses. The teaching approach is interactive, requiring students to complete a number of written exercises and in-class exercises, with the Instructor providing feedback and conducting seminar discussion. Through this process, each student will begin their reflections on and deepen their understanding of a PhD thesis argument and structure, based on their ongoing reading in their field of research and their plans for future reading. The process will involve students working with online research databases and with academic libraries, including Pázmány Péter Catholic University, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences Library, and the Library of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences (MTAK).
Theoretical knowledge to be acquired:	This course is practical rather than theoretical. It introduces students into the concept of a PhD Thesis. The Instructor conducts seminars interactively, in order to clarify and develop the students' understanding of various aspects of the development of their PhD thesis projects.
Practical knowledge to be acquired:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The responsibilities that the student carries in working with their PhD thesis supervisor. 2. Forming timetables for the completion of research tasks: setting and meeting deadlines. 3. Balancing the requirements of PhD thesis project work with the study of PhD lecture and seminar courses during the first two years of PhD studies. 4. Working with University Library Services and with University Library Search Engines and Databases. 5. Identifying the primary texts for the PhD thesis project that the research student envisages. 6. Formulating a preliminary list of primary sources. 7. Developing a preliminary list of secondary reading materials 8. Drawing up the preliminary outline of a possible PhD Thesis chapter structure as a basis for revision and development during the first two years of PhD Thesis studies. <p>Assessment criteria:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Attendance and participation in seminar discussion 2. Submission of preliminary bibliographical lists of primary and secondary materials that each student plans to consult

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Submission of a preliminary thesis structure plan 4. Submission of the preliminary draft of a possible PhD thesis chapter 	
List of the most important required literature (2–4 pieces) with bibliographical details (author, title, edition or specific pages, ISBN)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. El Shaarani, Hani and Zouhour El Abiaad, <i>How to Write a PhD Thesis</i>. New Ed. Journal of Contemporary Research in Business Administration and Economic Sciences (JCR-BAES), 2023 ISBN: 9789390620005 2. Taylor, Ben. <i>A Guide to Writing a PhD Thesis</i>. https://www.findaphd.com/guides/phd-thesis 3. Instructor Seminar Notes 	
List of the most important recommended literature (2–4 pieces) with bibliographical details (author, title, edition or specific pages, ISBN)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Griffin, Gabriel <i>Research Methods for English Studies</i>. 2nd ed. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2013. ISBN: 978-0748683437 2. Hayton, James. <i>How to Enjoy Writing Your PhD Thesis</i>. PhD Academy, 2024. https://phd.academy/blog/how-to-enjoy-writing-your-phd-thesis/ 	
Theory to practice ratio:	Theory lessons: 0 hours (this is a practice-based module)	Practice lessons: 24 hours
Applied teaching methods:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Short Introductory lecture of the set topic for each individual seminar. 2. Sharing ideas in the class group regarding the different PhD thesis topics that students are pursuing. 3. Question-and-answer sessions, where students can raise questions with the Instructor concerning different aspects of their individual thesis projects. 4. Group discussion of practical matters of PhD programme of study, including: working with PhD Thesis supervisors, managing time allotted to thesis work and to coursework, reading, notetaking, writing of draft materials. 5. Class discussion and exercise on Primary Sources. 6. Class discussion and exercise on Secondary Sources. 7. Short lecture on the different types of critical material with which students work in the process of preparing a PhD Thesis. 8. Discussion and in-class exercise on different sources through which students can access digital critical material. 9. Use of MS Teams Online through which students upload their seminar written exercises and receive feedback. 10. Individual consultations with students to provide more extensive advice and guidance. 11. Class visit to the Library of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences to learn about the library facilities and to become members. 	
Method of assessment:	Report (three-level grade)	
Assessment criteria:	Participation	

Attendance at seminars for this course is compulsory. Students may be absent from up to 3 seminars with adequate notification given to the Instructor for the reason for absences.

Expected preparation, classwork, mid-term requirements (if relevant)

Students are expect to participate fully in all the practical activities of this course. These activities includes the following:

1. Noting key points that the Instructor presents in relation to different aspects of PhD Thesis development and preparation
2. Active participation in class discussion and the sharing of ideas
3. Independent consultation of required reading and of reading/research in preparation for written exercises
4. Completion of in-class exercises, including database search exercises.
5. Independent completion and uploading of the written exercises required by the deadlines given within the term.

General rules for checking knowledge

The students taking this course are graded on a three-point scale: excellent (5), pass (3), fail (1).

The grade that each student is awarded is based on the following factors:

1. Attendance
2. Participation in seminar discussion and completion of in-class exercises
3. Quality of written assignments submitted during the academic term
4. List of PhD thesis primary works, preliminary draft
5. List of PhD thesis secondary criticism, preliminary draft
6. Preliminary outline of PhD thesis structure, including a 1-page explanation of the argument that the student plans to develop and 1-2 page explanations of each of the chapter topics (including subsections)
7. Preliminary draft of possible PhD thesis chapter (4-6000 words).

Students achieve a grade of **excellent (5)** based on the following considerations:

1. Attendance
2. Highly attentive in seminar, particularly during the short lecture part at the beginning
3. High quality of oral contributions to group discussion
4. Perspicacity of questions directed to Instructor
5. List of primary works and secondary critical sources that demonstrate a high level of understanding regarding the material that the student plans to examine in the PhD Thesis
6. A preliminary draft of a PhD Thesis Structure that demonstrates an advanced level of understanding regarding the topic that the student plans to address,

including clear understanding of the themes and ideas in the primary works, and the lines of examination that the student plans to undertake.

7. A preliminary draft of a possible PhD thesis chapter, illustrating the student's ability to sustain and develop a coherent analysis of a primary work(s). The writing for this draft is clear and scholarly. It conforms impressively to the protocols of quotation, paraphrase, citation and referencing.

Students achieve a grade of **pass (3)** based on the following considerations:

1. Attendance, but with excused absences from up to 3 seminars
2. Attentive in seminar, particularly during the short lecture part at the beginning
3. Medium quality of oral contributions to group discussion
4. Basic questions directed to Instructor
5. List of primary works and secondary critical sources that demonstrate a basic level of clarity regarding the material that the student plans to examine in the PhD Thesis
6. A preliminary draft of a PhD Thesis Structure that demonstrates a moderate level of understanding of the topic that the student plans to address, including a reasonable understanding of the themes and ideas in the primary works, and the lines of examination that the student plans to undertake.
7. A preliminary draft of a possible PhD thesis chapter, illustrating the student's ability to sustain and develop a coherent analysis of a primary work(s). The writing for this draft may contain significant elements of confusion without being incoherent as a whole. There may also be certain aspects of the exercise that are not scholarly. The preliminary draft conforms adequately to the protocols of quotation, paraphrase, citation and referencing.

Students achieve a grade of **fail (1)** based on the following considerations:

1. Insufficient attendance, with absences of more than 3 seminars, or absences of up to 3 seminars without notification been given to the Instructor
2. Inattentive in seminar, particularly during the short lecture part at the beginning
3. Lack of oral contributions to group discussion
4. No questions or irrelevant questions directed to Instructor
5. No list of primary works and secondary critical sources for the PhD Thesis submitted to the Instructor
6. A preliminary draft of a PhD Thesis Structure that demonstrates no understanding of the topic the student plans to address; neither an understanding of the themes and ideas in the primary works, nor the lines of examination that the student plans to undertake. Or the

	<p>failure of the student to submit any preliminary draft of a PhD Thesis Structure.</p> <p>7. A preliminary draft of a possible PhD thesis chapter, illustrating the student's inability to sustain and develop a coherent analysis of a primary work(s). The writing for this draft is unclear and unscholarly. It fails to adhere to the protocols of quotation, paraphrase, citation and referencing. Or the failure of the student to submit any preliminary draft of a possible PhD thesis chapter.</p>
<p>How the subject contributes to the achievement of the learning outcomes at level 8 of the MKKR, as identified as learning outcomes in the doctoral school's training programme?</p> <p>Elaborate on the way in which competence elements specified in the Training and Outcome Requirements are/may be achieved <i>(Note: do not simply copy the competence elements from the Training and Outcome Requirements)</i></p>	<p>Knowledge: In studying and completing this 'PhD Research Methods' course, the students acquire an overview of the foundational features of a PhD Thesis in the field of English Studies. The students gain understanding of the nature of a PhD Thesis argument and the various steps required to demonstrate it effectively. The students can distinguish between primary materials and secondary sources when beginning their reading for their PhD Thesis projects. The students can also distinguish between the different types of secondary sources that the students must engage in the development of the PhD thesis: author-text focused criticism, contextual criticism, theoretical framing. The students understand the responsibilities and expectations in working with their PhD Thesis supervisor, especially with regard to online and in-person communication. The students also deepen their familiarity with the use of library resources, online search engines and online databases. The students acquire preliminary knowledge of the style and format of PhD Thesis-level academic writing and structural planning.</p> <p>Skills: The students develop an ability to take notes judiciously during the course of their reading in preparation for a preliminary thesis chapter draft, in such a way that the ideas and information they encounter can be adapted to the development of a thesis argument. This skill will be a vital component in the advancement of their PhD Thesis project over the course of their studies. As part of the process, the students will get into the habit of applying ideas and information garnered from targeted reading to the drafting of writing materials, particularly early-stage thesis chapter drafts. The students perform micro- and macro-tasks, such as searching for sources of academic criticism as well as developing the initial outline of a possible PhD Thesis structure. The latter exercise gets the students into the habit of structuring their ideas within a framework that is subject to development and refinement as the students proceed with reading materials of relevance to their PhD Thesis argument. The students move routinely between micro- and macro-spheres in developing their understanding of their own PhD Thesis project. Part of this process involves the students operating different kinds of search engines and databases in fulfilment of the exercises required. The students develop time-management skills, involving decisions concerning the prioritization of particular tasks, the spread of time and attention between coursework and PhD Thesis research, and the realistic allocation of time to activities outside the PhD programme. With regard to time-management, the students</p>

	<p>develop strategic planning skills, in particular, the ability to direct research-based written pieces towards a variety of different outcomes: a PhD chapter or part-chapter draft, material for a conference presentation and material for an academic publication in a scholarly journal or an edited book volume. The students enhance their oral communication skills, including communication within a peer group and communication with their Instructor.</p> <p>Attitude: The students develop their confidence in working independently on their PhD Theses. The students will recognize that the task of their supervisor is to offer guidance to the student in making decisions regarding works to read and paths of critical understanding to follow. The students learn to recognize that the responsibility for developing their PhD Thesis according to a certain line of inquiry rests with them. At the same time, the students are open and receptive to the advice and suggestions that experienced academics give them, either in the capacity of Course Instructors or Thesis Supervisors. The students recognize that they are entering into the academic community and will show interest in varieties of academic occasions, including conferences and guest lectures, events that allow them to form contacts with fellow research students and other scholars. The students must be open to receiving constructive criticism of their work that aims to assist students in developing their knowledge and understanding. The students can equally object to reactions to their academic work that are unnecessarily and unfairly negative, combative, misinformed or misleading, either from peers or from professional academics. The students of the 'PhD Research Methods' will support one another in the completion of tasks, discussing their thesis ideas and evolving a PhD English Studies community, as part of the wider Doctoral Literature Programme at Pázmány Péter Catholic University.</p> <p>Responsibility and Autonomy: The students are individually responsible for the progress of their own coursework and PhD thesis preparation. The students will recognize the importance of agreeing realistic goals with their supervisors in meeting set tasks, bearing in mind the requirements that students have to fulfil in the taught courses that they are taking. The students will recognize the obligations that they have to fulfil, especially towards the Complex Examination and the fulfilment of Course Credits. However, these obligations should not prove a source of unhelpful worry for individual students. Supervisors and Instructors also have an obligation to help research students fulfil the requirements of the PhD English Studies programme under the auspices of the Doctoral School of Literature at the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Pázmány Péter Catholic University.</p>
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