

EN6521: DISCOURSE, IDEOLOGY AND POWER

Effective Term

Semester B 2024/25

Part I Course Overview

Course Title

Discourse, Ideology and Power

Subject Code

EN - English

Course Number

6521

Academic Unit

English (EN)

College/School

College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences (CH)

Course Duration

One Semester

Credit Units

3

Level

P5, P6 - Postgraduate Degree

Medium of Instruction

English

Medium of Assessment

English

Prerequisites

Nil

Precursors

Nil

Equivalent Courses

Nil

Exclusive Courses

Nil

Part II Course Details

Abstract

The focus of this course is on the 'critical' study of discourse, specifically in terms of how the use of language and other semiotic resources is implicated in (re)producing and perpetuating ideological interests and power relations in

contemporary society. Students will be introduced to conceptual and analytic frameworks for the critical investigation of linguistic and visual data in various social domains and institutional settings, such as politics and governance, media and advertising, and corporate branding and communication, and be sensitized to how semiotic features reflect and enact particular ideological underpinnings, authority relations, and social currents.

Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs)

CILOs		Weighting (if app.)	DEC-A1	DEC-A2	DEC-A3
1	Explain the key aims principles and methods of Critical Discourse Studies (CDS) and the key issues and concepts surrounding the practice of CDS, such as ideology, hegemony and power.		x	x	
2	Develop a critical understanding of a variety of social issues and problems (e.g. racism, capitalism, gender) and their relation to discourse.		x	x	
3	Analyse a variety of discourse and text types, involving a variety of social issues or problems using CDS methods.		x	x	x
4	Evaluate the efficacy of techniques and methods of CDS and how their limitations might be ameliorated or overcome.			x	x

A1: Attitude

Develop an attitude of discovery/innovation/creativity, as demonstrated by students possessing a strong sense of curiosity, asking questions actively, challenging assumptions or engaging in inquiry together with teachers.

A2: Ability

Develop the ability/skill needed to discover/innovate/create, as demonstrated by students possessing critical thinking skills to assess ideas, acquiring research skills, synthesizing knowledge across disciplines or applying academic knowledge to real-life problems.

A3: Accomplishments

Demonstrate accomplishment of discovery/innovation/creativity through producing /constructing creative works/new artefacts, effective solutions to real-life problems or new processes.

Learning and Teaching Activities (LTAs)

LTAs		Brief Description	CILO No.	Hours/week (if applicable)
1	Interactive lectures, tutorial discussions	Students will participate in lectures which introduce them to the key concepts and methods relating to the critical study of discourse, and which provide opportunities for students to explore their relevance for investigating social issues and problems.	1, 2, 3	Throughout the semester

2	Case study and text analysis	Students will participate in hands-on activities which help them to consolidate their understanding of critical approaches to the study of discourse, and allow them to develop proficiency in applying the associated analytic tools to real-life texts and issues.	1, 2, 3	Throughout the semester
3	Student-led seminar discussions and presentations	Students will apply and extend what they have learnt by working in groups to research particular social issues or problems using particular discourse-analytic tools, leading their peers in an exploration of the topics they have researched.	1, 2, 3, 4	From week 5

Assessment Tasks / Activities (ATs)

	ATs	CILO No.	Weighting (%)	Remarks (e.g. Parameter for GenAI use)
1	Individual analysis essay	1, 2, 3, 4	45	Individual assessment
2	Seminar presentations	2, 3, 4	40	Group-based assessment
3	Class work and participation	2, 3, 4	15	Individual assessment

Continuous Assessment (%)

100

Assessment Rubrics (AR)**Assessment Task**

Individual analysis essay (for students admitted before Semester A 2022/23 and in Semester A 2024/25 & thereafter)

Criterion

Content language and style

Excellent

(A+, A, A-)

- Demonstrates an excellent grasp of key terms, concepts and/or analytic tools
- Presents a very clear, systematic thorough and insightful analysis
- All relevant information is well covered and amply evaluated
- The discussion or argument is extremely coherent and well developed, with excellent integration between the various parts of the paper
- Excellent quality of written English with highly appropriate style and tone
- Occasional errors in grammar and word choice may occur but do not interfere with understanding.

Good

(B+, B, B-)

- Demonstrates a strong grasp of key terms, concepts and/or analytic tools

- Presents a clear and systematic analysis with some interesting insights
- Relevant information is sufficiently covered and evaluated
- The discussion or argument is coherent and reasonably developed, with good integration between the various parts of the paper
- Good command of written English with appropriate style and tone
- Some errors of grammar and word choice are present but do not interfere with understanding.

Fair

(C+, C, C-)

- Demonstrates a basic understanding of key terms, concepts and/or analytic tools
- Partial analysis with some insights
- Coverage of information is somewhat relevant with some evaluation
- The discussion or argument is somewhat coherent and developed, with some integration between the various parts of the paper
- Adequate command of written English with somewhat appropriate style and tone
- Language errors sometimes affect comprehension.

Marginal

(D)

- Shows limited understanding of key terms, concepts and/or analytic tools
- Partial analysis with limited insights
- Coverage of information is often irrelevant and largely descriptive
- The discussion or argument demonstrates little coherence and development, with little integration between the various parts of the paper
- Command of written English is inadequate and ideas are inaccurately expressed
- Language errors impede comprehension.

Failure

(F)

- Shows little or no understanding of key terms, concepts and/or analytic tools
- Analysis is very limited or absent
- Information covered is irrelevant inaccurate and mainly descriptive
- The discussion or argument is incoherent and fragmented and the various parts of the paper are not integrated
- An extremely weak command of written English that makes the essay largely unintelligible
- Language errors seriously impede comprehension.

Assessment Task

Seminar presentation (for students admitted before Semester A 2022/23 and in Semester A 2024/25 & thereafter)

Criterion

Content and delivery

Excellent

(A+, A, A-)

- Shows an excellent grasp of topic and conveys this in a very clear, interesting and interactive manner
- Analysis is highly systematic and coherent, and demonstrates a high level of depth and precision
- Very perceptive observations and thought-provoking insights
- Leads the class on a very effective exploration of the topic with the use of meaningful activities and appropriate materials
- Delivery is very clear and in excellent spoken English.

Good

(B+, B, B-)

- Shows a strong grasp of topic, and conveys this in a clear and interesting manner
- Analysis is systematic and coherent, with appropriate depth and precision

- Perceptive observations are distilled
- Leads the class on an effective exploration of the topic with the use of meaningful activities and appropriate materials
- Delivery is clear and in good spoken English.

Fair

(C+, C, C-)

- Partial grasp of topic
- Analysis is somewhat systematic and coherent, albeit superficial and sometimes inaccurate
- Observations are fair but can be limited
- Demonstrates some attempt to lead the discussion with the use of some activities and materials
- Delivery is clear in places and with an adequate command of spoken English.

Marginal

(D)

- Grasp of topic is highly inconsistent
- Occasionally coherent analysis that is largely superficial
- Observations are limited
- Limited attempt at leading the discussion
- Delivery is largely unclear and a command of spoken English is inadequate.

Failure

(F)

- Grasp of topic is weak or absent
- Analysis is incoherent and inaccurate
- Observations are limited and flawed
- No attempt at leading the class in an exploration of the topic
- Delivery is unclear and the command of spoken English is weak.

Assessment Task

Class work and participation (for students admitted before Semester A 2022/23 and in Semester A 2024/25 & thereafter)

Criterion

Engagement and participation

Excellent

(A+, A, A-)

- Student is highly engaged in class/group activities and discussions, extremely pro-active in offering insightful views on topics covered, and plays a significant role in leading and steering discussions.

Good

(B+, B, B-)

- Student is engaged in class/group activities and discussions, and active in contributing insightful views on topics covered.

Fair

(C+, C, C-)

- Student participates in learning activities, and offers views on topics covered from time to time.

Marginal

(D)

- Student sometimes participates in learning activities, and views on topics covered are offered infrequently.

Failure

(F)

- Minimal participation in class activities.

Assessment Task

Individual analysis essay (for students admitted from Semester A 2022/23 to Summer Term 2024)

Criterion

Content, language and style

Excellent

(A+, A, A-)

- Demonstrates an excellent grasp of key terms, concepts and/or analytic tools
- Presents a very clear, systematic, thorough and insightful analysis
- All relevant information is well covered and amply evaluated
- The discussion or argument is extremely coherent and well developed, with excellent integration between the various parts of the paper
- Excellent quality of written English with highly appropriate style and tone
- Occasional errors in grammar and word choice may occur but do not interfere with understanding.

Good

(B+, B)

- Demonstrates a strong grasp of key terms, concepts and/or analytic tools
- Presents a clear and systematic analysis with some interesting insights
- Relevant information is sufficiently covered and evaluated
- The discussion or argument is coherent and reasonably developed, with good integration between the various parts of the paper
- Good command of written English with appropriate style and tone
- Some errors of grammar and word choice are present but do not interfere with understanding.

Marginal

(B-, C+, C)

- Demonstrates a partial/limited understanding of key terms, concepts and/or analytic tools
- Partial/sketchy analysis with some insights
- Coverage of information is somewhat /barely relevant with some evaluation
- The discussion or argument is not quite coherent and somewhat underdeveloped, with adequate integration between the various parts of the paper
- Adequate command of written English with somewhat appropriate style and tone
- Language errors sometimes affect comprehension.

Failure

(F)

- Shows little or no understanding of key terms, concepts and/or analytic tools
- Analysis is very limited or absent
- Information covered is irrelevant, inaccurate and mainly descriptive
- The discussion or argument is incoherent and fragmented, and the various parts of the paper are not integrated
- An extremely weak command of written English that makes the essay largely unintelligible
- Language errors seriously impede comprehension.

Assessment Task

Seminar presentation (for students admitted from Semester A 2022/23 to Summer Term 2024)

Criterion

Content and delivery

Excellent

(A+, A, A-)

- Shows an excellent grasp of topic, and conveys this in a very clear, interesting and interactive manner
- Analysis is highly systematic and coherent, and demonstrates a high level of depth and precision
- Very perceptive observations and thought-provoking insights
- Leads the class on a very effective exploration of the topic with the use of meaningful activities and appropriate materials
- Delivery is very clear and in excellent spoken English.

Good

(B+, B)

- Shows a strong grasp of topic, and conveys this in a clear and interesting manner
- Analysis is systematic and coherent, with appropriate depth and precision
- Perceptive observations are distilled
- Leads the class on an effective exploration of the topic with the use of meaningful activities and appropriate materials
- Delivery is clear and in good spoken English.

Marginal

(B-, C+, C)

- Partial / adequate grasp of topic
- Analysis is partial/sketchy and not quite coherent, albeit superficial and sometimes inaccurate
- Observations are fair but can be limited
- Demonstrates some limited attempts to lead the discussion with the use of some activities and materials
- Delivery is somewhat unclear at places and with an adequate command of spoken English.

Failure

(F)

- Grasp of topic is weak or absent
- Analysis is incoherent and inaccurate
- Observations are limited and flawed
- No attempt at leading the class in an exploration of the topic
- Delivery is unclear and the command of spoken English is weak.

Assessment Task

Class work and participation (for students admitted from Semester A 2022/23 to Summer Term 2024)

Criterion

Engagement and participation

Excellent

(A+, A, A-)

- Student is highly engaged in class/group activities and discussions, extremely pro-active in offering insightful views on topics covered, and plays a significant role in leading and steering discussions.

Good

(B+, B)

- Student is engaged in class/group activities and discussions, and active in contributing insightful views on topics covered.

Marginal

(B-, C+, C)

- Student shows limited participation in class activities and offers limited views on topics covered from time to time.

Failure

(F)

- Minimal participation in class activities.

Part III Other Information

Keyword Syllabus

Critical discourse studies; ideology and hegemony; power relations; identity; social actors/action; visual semiotics; multimodality; cognitive metaphor; social cognition; intertextuality; interdiscursivity; neoliberalism

Reading List

Compulsory Readings

Title	
1	Machin, D. & Mayr, A. (2012). <i>How To Do Critical Discourse Analysis</i> . London: Sage.
2	Jewitt, C. & Oyama, R. (2001). Visual meaning: A social semiotic approach. In T. van Leeuwen & C. Jewitt (Eds.), <i>Handbook of Visual Analysis</i> (pp. 134-156). London: Sage.
3	Machin, D. (2004). Building the world's visual language: The increasing global importance of image banks in corporate media. <i>Visual Communication</i> , 3(3), 316-336.
4	Thibodeau, P.H. & Boroditsky, L. (2011). Metaphor we think with: The role of metaphor in reasoning. <i>PLoS ONE</i> , 6(2), e16782. doi:10.1371/journal.pone.0016782.
5	Flowerdew, J. (2004). The discursive construction of a world-class city. <i>Discourse & Society</i> 15(5), 579-605.
6	Fairclough, N. (2000). Language and neo-liberalism. <i>Discourse & Society</i> , 11(2), 147-148.
7	Ng, C.J.W. (2014). Semiotizing capitalism in corporate brand enactment. <i>Critical Discourse Studies</i> , 11(2), 139-157.
8	Koller, V. (2009). Brand Images: Multimodal metaphor in corporate branding messages. In C. Forceville & E. Urios-Aparisi (Eds.), <i>Multimodal Metaphor</i> (pp. 45-71). Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.

Additional Readings

Title	
1	Baker, P., Gabrielatos C., Khosravinik, M., Krzyzanowski, M., McEnery, T. & Wodak, R. (2008). A useful methodological synergy? Combining critical discourse analysis and corpus linguistics to examine discourses of refugees and asylum seekers in the UK press. <i>Discourse & Society</i> , 19(3), 273-305.
2	Fairclough, N. (2010). <i>Critical Discourse Analysis</i> (2nd ed.). London: Longman.
3	Fairclough, N. (2015). <i>Language and Power</i> (3rd ed.). London: Routledge.
4	Flowerdew, J. (2008). Critical discourse analysis and strategies of resistance. In V.K. Bhatia, J. Flowerdew & R.H. Jones (Eds.), <i>Advances in Discourse Studies</i> (pp. 195-210). London: Routledge.
5	Goatly, A. (2007). <i>Washing the Brain: Metaphor and Hidden Ideology</i> . Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
6	Koller, V. (2010). Lesbian nation: A case of multiple interdiscursivity. In R. de Cillia, H. Gruber, M. Krzyzanowski & F. Menz (Eds.), <i>Discourse, Politics, Identity</i> (pp. 369-381). Tübingen: Stauffenburg.
7	Kress, G. & van Leeuwen, T. (2006). <i>Reading Images: The Grammar of Visual Design</i> (2nd ed.). London: Routledge.
8	Thompson, G. (2004). <i>Introducing Functional Grammar</i> (2nd ed.). London: Arnold.
9	Mautner, G. (2005). The entrepreneurial university: A discursive profile of a higher education buzzword. <i>Critical Discourse Studies</i> , 2(2), 95-120.
10	van Leeuwen, T. (1996). The representation of social actors. In C.R. Caldas-Coulthard & M. Coulthard (Eds.), <i>Texts and Practices: Readings in Critical Discourse Analysis</i> (pp. 32-70). London: Routledge.