Department of Strategic and Regional Studies

Ph.D. Coursework Syllabus

Research Methodology

Course Code: RMDSRS03   **Credits: 06**

Time: 3 Hours   **Total Marks: 100**
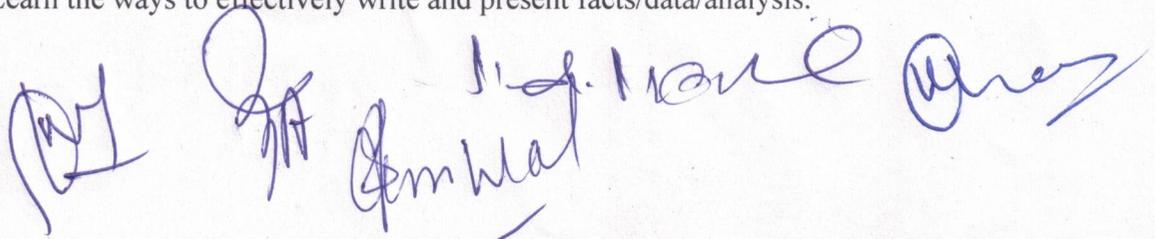

Course Objectives:

The aim of this course is to help students to address research problems effectively, accurately and holistically. It is aimed to provide students with methodological knowledge and research design skills that can help them in understanding, analyzing, writing and presenting research in an efficient manner. The following are the key objectives:

- To introduce students to the research methods used while doing research in their respective area studies/world politics
- To introduce students to the relevant key concepts required for their PhD research including literature review, collecting data, fact-finding, effective analysis, and research writing
- To familiarize students with various theories of international relations that need to be applied during research for building appropriate conceptual framework
- To evaluate the application of different research methodologies to the analysis of discourses of world politics

Learning Outcomes

- Evaluate their own position on these key debates, with regards to their PhD research in terms of the information already available (literature review), and the research gap (scope of research).
- Understand the basics of the critical analysis in their respective research.
- Know the theories of international relations and their significance while analyzing a research problem.
- Grasp the key methods of research and use the appropriate ones for research.
- Learn the ways to effectively write and present facts/data/analysis.

Course Contents:

Unit I – Foundations of Research in Strategic and Regional Studies
1.1   Nature, scope and significance of research in Strategic and International Studies
1.2   Interdisciplinary approaches in strategic and international studies research
1.3   Research problem identification, Identifying variables: Independent, Dependent, Intervening, Condition variables
1.4   Forming research questions, hypotheses and theories

Unit II – Research Design and Methods
2.1   Review of literature: sources, techniques and critical analysis, Qualitative vs quantitative research traditions
2.2   Research design: exploratory, descriptive, analytical and experimental designs, Case study method in strategic and regional analysis
2.3   Historical and archival research
2.4   Interview Schedule: Survey research, fieldwork and interview techniques, sampling techniques and field challenges in conflict and border regions

Unit III – Data Collection, Analysis and Interpretation
3.1   Sources of data: primary, secondary, classified and open-source intelligence (OSINT).
3.2   Tools of data collection: questionnaires, interviews, observation and document analysis,
3.3   Content analysis, discourse analysis and geopolitical mapping
3.4   Quantitative techniques: descriptive statistics and basic inferential tools. Data interpretation, triangulation, validation, analytical narratives and evidence-based argumentation

Unit IV – Academic Writing, Policy Research and Thesis Preparation
4.1   Structure of research proposals and thesis writing,
4.2   Academic writing styles and referencing formats (APA/Chicago/MLA),
4.3   Bibliography, footnotes, citations
4.4   Research presentation, seminar papers, publication, and viva-voce preparation

Suggested Readings / Reference Books

Kothari, C.R. – Research Methodology: Methods and Techniques

Creswell, John W. – Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed Methods Approaches

Booth, Wayne C., Colomb, Gregory G., & Williams, Joseph M. – The Craft of Research

Yin, Robert K. – Case Study Research and Applications

Bryman, Alan – Social Research Methods

Baylis, John; Wirtz, James J.; & Gray, Colin S. – Strategic Studies: A Reader

Williams, Paul D. – Security Studies: An Introduction

Cooper, Andrew F.; Heine, Jorge; & Thakur, Ramesh – The Oxford Handbook of Modern Diplomacy

Alexander L. George and Andrew Bennett, 'Case-Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences', (Massachusetts: MIT Press, 2005)

Blaikie, Norman, 'Analyzing Quantitative Data', (London: Sage, 2013)

Charles William Kegley& Shannon Lindsey Blanton, 'World Politics: Trend and Transformation', (Cengage Learning, 2010-11)

Christopher Lamont, 'Research Methods in International Relations', (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2021)

D. R. Howarth, 'Poststructuralism and After: Structure, Subjectivity and Power', (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013) http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&site=eds live&db=edsebk&AN=659241

King, Gary C., Robert Keohane and Sidney Verba, 'Designing Social Inquiry:

Koselleck, Laclau, Luhmann, (Bristol: Policy Press, 2003)

'Microsoft Manual of Technical Publication', https://docs.microsoft.com/en-us/style guide/welcome/

Norman Fairclough, 'Analysing Discourse', (London: Routledge, 2003)

Norman Fairclough, 'Discourse and Social Change' (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1992)

Norman K. Denzin, 'The Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research', (London: Sage, 2018)

P.T. Jackson, 'The Conduct of Inquiry in International Relations: Philosophy of Science and Its Implications for the Study of World Politics', (Hoboken: Routledge, 2010), http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&site=eds live&db=edsebk&AN=1214790

Patricia Leavy, 'Research Design', (London: Guilford Press, 2017)

R.A. Rhodes, &M. Bevir, 'Routledge Handbook of Interpretive Political Science', (London: Routledge, 2015), http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&site=eds live&db=edsebk&AN=1021249

Rhodes, R. A. W., &Bevir, M., 'Routledge Handbook of Interpretive Political Science', (London: Routledge, 2015), http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&site=eds

live&db=edsebk&AN=1021249 Scientific Inference in Qualitative Research', (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994)

'The Chicago Manual of Style', https://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/home.html

Van Evera, *Guide to Methods for Students of Political Science* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1997)