

**Module Description & Objectives**

This module offers a hands-on introduction to contemporary research strategies that deal with the phenomenon of discourse and its implications in political life (especially in politics and international relations). It examines how specific researchers have used discourse to analyse the production of meaning, ideology and power in contemporary politics, and to deal with issues related to the ideational/material and structure/agent divides that prevail in political analysis. The approaches examined include content analysis, discourse analytical approaches based on archaeology & genealogy, deconstruction, discursive institutionalism, frames and narratives. The module does not aim to offer an in-depth introduction to the theoretical underpinnings of these approaches, but to familiarise students with their principles and techniques, and help them decide whether, why and how they can use them for the purposes of their own research projects.

**Learning outcomes**

By the end of the module the students should be able to:

- compare and contrast different discursive research strategies and methodologies, and critically evaluate their advantages and limitations;
- examine how different approaches to discourse and discourse methodologies can (or cannot) be combined for the purposes of (their) specific research projects;
- translate specific research ideas, that deal with discursive phenomena, into concrete research projects, with clear research strategies and methodologies;
- use full-text databases to conduct key-term based research, and create and analyse systematically a large body of textual material.

**Teaching and Learning****Teaching Method**

There will be six three-hour seminars during the Spring term (weeks 6-12). Most seminars will focus on and evaluate different applications of discourse analysis and thus different ways of doing discourse analysis. The seminars aim to negotiate discourse analysis at the level of research practice rather than at the level of principles or theory.

**Module Requirements**

All students are expected to read at least the 'required readings' and one 'additional reading' each week before the seminar. The students should feel free to replace one of these readings with another 'applied' reading (from the reading list) that is closer to their own research interests or projects.

**Module Assessment**

This module is assessed by a case-study Project Report (3.500 – 4.000 words). You will carry out an empirical study on a topic of your choice, analysing primary data, by using research strategies, methods and tools discussed during this module.

The project report should be modelled on an empirical journal paper, with an Introduction, Theoretical framework, Method section, Analysis and Conclusion. Issues to discuss in the method section include, what discourse approach is employed and what methodological tools are used and why? As well as, what primary material are used and why?

To discuss your project with the module convenor, please prepare a project outline with the following information: (i) proposed title (ii) brief description of the project and methodology (iii) primary material to be used/analysed (iv) indicative bibliography.

The nature and amount of data you collect will depend on your research question and the discourse analysis approach adopted. For some forms of discourse analysis, a relatively small dataset may be appropriate (e.g. a single speech, an official document, an interview etc). For other forms of discourse analysis, larger datasets may be more appropriate (e.g., collections of newspaper articles, multiple interviews, multiple official documents etc.). You will be able to discuss with the tutor which datasets will be appropriate for your own research question.

Plagiarism. It is a very serious academic offence to submit work in which text has been copied (verbatim or with changes) from somewhere else, whether a book, an article, a website, or another essay, without acknowledging the source. For further information, please see:

<http://www.sussex.ac.uk/adqe/standards/academicmisconduct>

## Books for the Module

There is no textbook for this module. Yet, you may find useful the volumes listed below, from which some required readings are drawn. You may also find useful to read David Howarth's *Discourse*.

*British Journal of Politics and International Relations* (2004) 'Symposium on the Interpretive Approach to Political Science', 6:2.

*European Political Science* (2002) 'Symposium: Discourse Analysis and Political Science,' 2:1.

Foucault, M. (1972) *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, London: Tavistock.

Howarth D., Norval, A., Stavrakakis Y. (eds), *Discourse Theory and Political Analysis: Identities, Hegemonies and Social Change*, Manchester: MUP.

Howarth, D. (2000) *Discourse*, Basingstoke: Open University Press.

Howarth, D. and Torfing, J. (eds.) (2005) *Discourse Theory in European Politics*, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan (eC).

Laclau, E. (1996) *Emancipation(s)*. London: Verso.

*Qualitative Methods* (2004) 'Symposium: Discourse and Content Analysis,' 2:1. Available: [http://files.wcfia.harvard.edu/870\\_symposium.pdf](http://files.wcfia.harvard.edu/870_symposium.pdf).

Schmidt, V. and Radaelli, C. (eds.) (2005) *Policy Change and Discourse in Europe*. London: Routledge.

Krippendorff, Klaus (2004/2012) *Content Analysis: An Introduction to Its Methodology*, 2nd or 3rd edition, Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Krippendorff, K and Bock, M.A. (eds.) (2009), *The Content Analysis Reader*, Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.

Roberts, C.W. (ed.) (1997), *Text Analysis for the Social Sciences: Methods for Drawing Inferences from Texts and Transcripts*, Mahwah: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Schiffrin, D., et al. (eds) (2003) *Handbook of Discourse Analysis*, Oxford: Blackwell.

Wetherell, M., Taylor, S., Yates, S.J. (eds.) (2001) *Discourse as Data: A Guide for Analysis*, London: Sage. 6

## Relevant Journals

Leading discourse analysis research is not only or mainly published in (interdisciplinary) journals that are focusing on Discourse Theory and Discourse Analysis. Therefore, a safe place to find cutting edge research on Discourse is in the 'institutional' or 'well-established' journals of the various academic disciplines.

In the case of politics and international relations for instance, institutional journals would include: *Review of International Studies* (BISA), *Political Studies* (PSA), *British Journal of Politics and IR* (PSA), *International Political Sociology* (ISA), *Journal of Common Market Studies* (UACES); established journals such as: *Millennium*, *Alternatives*, *Review of International Political Economy*, *Global Society*. Journals that are focusing on discourse include: *Critical Discourse Studies*, *Cultural Studies*; *Discourse and Society*; *Discourse Studies*, *Social Semiotics*.

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| Session 1 | Introduction: Discourse as theory, method and object of analysis (AA)   |
| Session 2 | Discourse theory approaches and methods in practice   |
| Session 3 | Discourse theory approaches and methods in practice   |
| Session 4 | Discourse and content analysis: qualitative data management and analysis (hands-on exercise using Nvivo software) |
| Session 5 | (a) Presentation of student Nvivo draft projects<br>(b) Discussion: Stakeholder analysis, Narratives and Frames   |
| Session 6 | Tutorials   |

Content subject to change Oct 2019