Postgraduate Courses in Comparative and Cross Cultural Research Methods
MSC/ Diploma/ Certificate

PLEASE NOTE: INFORMATION IN THIS HANDBOOK IS SUBJECT TO CHANGES AND IS CONTINUALLY BEING UPDATED. PLEASE CHECK THE WEBSITE REGULARLY FOR AMENDMENTS:

http://www.sussex.ac.uk/soccul/MSc

OR CONTACT THE PROGRAMME ADMINISTRATOR.
Role of Convenors and Contact Details

Academic Programme Convenor
Prof William Outhwaite - Arts D332  ext 8621 or 8890
e-mail: R.W.Oouthwaite@sussex.ac.uk

Responsibilities: Co-ordination of courses contributing to programme, ensuring viability and smooth running of programme, providing support, information and guidance to students and faculty.

Administrative Coordinator James Prescott Arts C329 ext 6546
e-mail: J.M.Prescott@sussex.ac.uk
Office Hours: Monday-Friday 9-1 and 2-4pm

Student queries, registration on courses, distribution of course information to faculty and students, updating MSC notice board, collection of assignments, recording and distribution of marks, assessment feedback.

In addition, your departmental research convenor is responsible for your individual programme of study, including the research elective for those taking the MSc in Social Research, and for assigning dissertation supervisors. Course Convenors are responsible for delivering course documents to students, setting and marking assignments, including finding second markers and reporting marks to the administrative co-ordinator.
General information about the Research Methods Programme (MSc, Diploma and Certificate)

The School of Social Sciences and Cultural Studies coordinates the MSc programme in Comparative and Cross-Cultural Research Methods which can be taken in one of a number of ‘subject variants’. Our MSc is offered in all Departments of the School (except Economics), as well as in the interdisciplinary areas of Development Studies, Migration Studies and Gender Studies.

Tutors on these programmes are drawn from all of the School’s Departments, ensuring that each student is exposed to a wide range of disciplinary and methodological perspectives during the course of the programme. At the same time, each student conducts a ‘research elective’ which runs through the whole year, and involves individual reading, supervision and attendance at research seminars, based within a particular subject or research area.

In addition to the MSc programme and its variants, it is possible to complete a Certificate or Diploma. Students must complete a total of 180 credits to obtain an MSc, 120 credits for the Diploma (including all Autumn and Spring term core courses), or 60 credits for the Certificate (chosen from any part of the programme, except the dissertation).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Programme variants</th>
<th>Recognised by ESRC?</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>MSc in Comparative and Cross-Cultural Research Methods</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Anthropology</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Development Studies</td>
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<tr>
<td>Contemporary European Studies</td>
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<td>Sociology</td>
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<td>Human Geography</td>
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<td>International Relations and Politics</td>
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<tr>
<td>Migration Studies</td>
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<td>Gender Studies</td>
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<td>Media and Cultural Studies</td>
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<tr>
<td>Economic and Social History</td>
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<td>Education</td>
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<td>Social Work and Social Care</td>
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<td>Legal Studies</td>
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<td>Certificate</td>
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Programme Structure

Autumn Term

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<tr>
<th><strong>All students take:</strong></th>
<th>15</th>
<th>Core</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>500X8: Philosophy of Science and Social Scientific Research Practice</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Core</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William Outhwaite (Sociology) and Alana Lentin (Sociology)</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Core</td>
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and

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>MSc in Comparative and Cross Cultural Research Methods take:</strong></th>
<th>15</th>
<th>Core</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>502X8: Research Design in Cross-Cultural Context</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Core</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Simon Coleman (Anthropology) and Ronen Palan (International Relations)</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Core</td>
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Spring Term

<table>
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<tr>
<th><strong>All students take:</strong></th>
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<th>Core</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>526X8: Methods of Quantitative Data Collection and Analysis</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>Core</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Godfrey Yeung (Geography)</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>Core</td>
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</table>

and

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>513X8: Methods of Qualitative Data Collection and Analysis</strong></th>
<th>30</th>
<th>Core</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ann Whitehead (Anthropology) and Paul Yates (Sussex Institute)</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>Core</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Summer Term - Students take 4 from the following

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>507X8: Ethnographic Methods of Data Collection</strong></th>
<th>15</th>
<th>Option</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Atreyee Sen (Anthropology)</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Option</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>510X8: Action Research</strong></th>
<th>15</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>John Pryor (Sussex Institute)</td>
<td>15</td>
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<tr>
<th><strong>519X8: Discourse Analysis</strong></th>
<th>15</th>
<th>Option</th>
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<tr>
<td>John Drury (Sussex Institute)</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Option</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Code</td>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Credits</td>
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<tr>
<td>525X8</td>
<td>Comparative Method</td>
<td>15</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Paul Taggart/Dan Hough (Politics/SEI)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>529X8</td>
<td>Evidence for Policy and Practice : A Critical Stance</td>
<td>15</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Stephen Webb (SWSP)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>15 credits</td>
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<tr>
<td>522X8</td>
<td>Participatory Research in Cross-Cultural Contexts</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Peter Taylor and Samuel Musyoki (IDS)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>505X8</td>
<td>Secondary Sources of Cross-National Comparative Data</td>
<td>15</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Godfrey Yeung (Geography)</td>
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<tr>
<td>524X8</td>
<td>Logistic Regression Models</td>
<td>15</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Adriana Castaldo (Economics)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>531X8</td>
<td>Reading Archives in Social Science Research</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Brian Short (Geography)</td>
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<tr>
<td>530X8</td>
<td>Research in Motion: Researching Transnational Social Phenomena</td>
<td>15</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Anastasia Nesvetailova (International Relations)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>528X8</td>
<td>Using On-Line Resources</td>
<td>15</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Marie Dembour (Law)</td>
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<tr>
<td>520X8</td>
<td>Geographic Information Systems</td>
<td>15</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Don Funnell (Development Studies)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Dissertation - 10,000 Words</strong></td>
<td><strong>30</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Students choose dissertation appropriate to their degree variant -</td>
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</table>
This programme is offered through the Graduate School in Social and Cultural Studies (SOCCUL), but it is available to all postgraduate research students regardless of their School or year of study.

The programme of courses has been designed to meet the ESRC arrangements of 1+3 year DPhil studentships (where the first year is devoted to an MSc or equivalent). Essentially, it has been designed around three specific requirements arising from the ESRC 2001 Postgraduate Training Guidelines:

- the requirements of DPhil students on 1+3 funding
- the integration of subject-specific and broadly-based social science research training
- the provision of a package of courses which offers advanced progression and is available to students after their Masters year and to doctoral students who are not taking the 1+3 route.

In addition, ESRC requires training to address three broad areas:

A subject-specific component which is designated at Sussex, the Research Elective. For most subjects this will involve several components: supervised reading on the student's research project leading to the thesis, participation in a staff/student work in progress seminar and 'audit' of relevant courses from other MA programmes, where appropriate. NB The research supervisor allocated from each department has responsibility for this component.

The MSc currently has ESRC recognition for the following programmes:

- **International Relations/ Political Science**  SUX01001
  Benno Teschke (IR)  Paul Taggart (Politics)
- **Sociology**  SUX06001
  William Outhwaite
- **Media and Cultural Studies**  SUX07001
  Sally Munt
- **Human Geography**  SUX10001
  Alan Lester
- **Education**  SUX12001
  Judy Sebba
- **Social Anthropology**  SUX14001
  Simon Coleman
- **Development Studies**  SUX16001/17001
  Jock Stirrat
- **Contemporary European Studies**  SUX18001
  Paul Taggart
Taught Courses

The academic convenor of the MSc has overall responsibility for the organisation of this part of the programme but each individual course has a convenor (please see course structure).

These courses are designed to meet the following required outcomes identified by ESRC:

• Understanding the significance of alternative epistemological positions that provide the context for theory construction, research design and the selection of appropriate analytical techniques

• Comprehension of basic principles of research design and strategy, including an understanding of how to formulate researchable problems and an appreciation of alternative approaches to research

Short Courses in Data Collection and Analysis: This is programme of intermediate and advanced courses across the range of broadly-based social scientific techniques identified by the ESRC Subject Panels. The courses are designed specifically to give students competency in the relevant techniques and to allow for movement from intermediate to advanced levels within the Masters programme and by taking supplementary courses in later years of study.

The MSc in Comparative and Cross Cultural Research Methods is assigned to a particular subject area, these include Sociology, International Relations etc) following the Research Elective.

The Research Elective is a compulsory part of the degree worth 30 credits. The courses in Philosophy of Science (15 credits) and Research Design Cross-Cultural Context (15 credits) are run in the autumn term are also compulsory, as are Methods of Quantitative Data Collection and Analysis (30 credits) and Methods of Qualitative Data Collection and Analysis Ann Whitehead and Paul Yates(30 credits) in the spring term. The final 60 credits are made up of courses in data collection and analysis (some variants may also require students to select particular courses). All these courses run in the summer term. Many of the summer courses will be offered as intensive workshop sessions designed to develop specific competencies in a variety of techniques of data collection and analysis. Some courses involving statistics and quantitative methods have pre-requisites and it is important that participants are at the appropriate level of competence to take the course.

REGISTERING FOR COURSES

Students must register in advance using the enrolment forms (see end of document). This is because many of the courses are workshop-based and it is necessary to plan numbers; students who do not register in advance cannot be guaranteed a place on the courses. students are expected to attend and to complete the assessment for each course (in many cases, the courses are of a practical nature and the assessment is integral to how the course is taught). Failure to attend any course for which a student has registered without good reason (or formal withdrawal before the start of the course) will have the consequence of the student being disallowed from enrolling in other courses. (NB departments are required to pay for any courses in which their students are registered
Modes of Assessment

Courses are assessed by written term papers or projects, the length and content of which differs from course to course. Course convenors are responsible for informing students of the format and reminding them of submission deadlines of the assessments for the taught courses.

Submission of assessed work (taught courses)

Work submitted for assessment will be handed in to the SOCCUL PG office (C323) by the specified deadlines. These are as follows:

**Autumn Term Course:** Spring Term Week 2 - Monday 15th January 2007 by 12-noon

**Spring Term Courses:** Summer Term Week 2 – Monday 23rd April 2007 by 12-noon

**Summer Term Courses:** Summer Term Week 10 – Monday 18th June 2007 by 12-noon

The Dissertation

Students completing the MSc are expected to submit a dissertation at the end of the 2006/2007 academic year (the information in this handbook should be read in conjunction with the Assessment Handbook for Postgraduate Candidates in SocCul). The MSc dissertation carries 30 credits and is compulsory for students taking the MSc. The dissertation comprises the examined element of the **Research Elective** component of the degree which begins in the Autumn term and carries on through the spring and summer terms. The **Research Elective** differs slightly depending on what subject variant of the MSc you are taking, but it will include some or all of the following: (a) supervised reading on the student’s dissertation topic; (b) participation in courses from other MA programmes in the discipline; and (c) participation in the staff/postgraduate or departmental seminars.

Dissertation Style/Format

The MSc is designed to be both part of a four-year programme (MSc/DPhil) and as a freestanding one-year Masters degree. As a result, students are at different stages of their research/academic careers, therefore the regulations for the MSc thesis take account of this and allow for the dissertation to take two forms.

The first ‘type’ is a thesis that involves writing up a standalone piece of research (like a conventional Masters programme). This ‘type’ is likely to include some or all of the following: literature review; design and methodology; research results and discussion; and the conclusions of the research. You should discuss the content with your supervisor and follow any subject-specific conventions.

The second ‘type’ is a thesis which takes the form of an extended research outline or plan, and which includes material such as literature review, first formulation of the project, detailed cover of methodological issues & approach, and perhaps, if appropriate, some secondary
analysis of data. Students who decide to do this type of dissertation should discuss with their supervisor what should be included.

The second ‘type’ is offered to students because many are planning to go on to do a DPhil and may not want to complete a standalone piece of research at this time, and their time may be better used to produce an outline of their project and approach. This option might be appealing to anthropologists or development studies students for example, where conducting fieldwork and writing it up is neither ideal nor feasible at this stage. Either ‘type’ is acceptable for any student, and you should discuss what is best for you with your supervisor(s).

The Length of the MSc Dissertation

The prescribed length of the dissertation is 10,000 words, as detailed in the Postgraduate Syllabus, which can be viewed at: //www.sussex.ac.uk/Units/academic/academicoffice/syllabuses/psylabuses

The length of the dissertation should include footnotes and bibliography, but exclude appendices.

Format of the Dissertation

Information about assessment procedures for the MSc will be provided in the Assessment Handbook for Postgraduate Candidates 2006/2007 for Masters students. The dissertation must be your own work, written by you in English. Good quality paper of A4 size should be used. and typing should be on one side of the paper only, with double or one-and-a-half line spacing for the main text and single-line spacing for the footnotes. The margin on the left hand side should be one and a half inches (to allow for binding) and on the right hand side should be half an inch. All pages including appendices should be numbered consecutively. Bibliographic referencing must follow a recognised style and must be consistent. If there is a preferred style in your discipline then you should use that. Above all, consistency is the most important point.

Submission of the Dissertation

Students should submit three copies of their dissertation. The deadline for submission is:

12:00 noon on Monday September 3rd 2007

When submitting your dissertation you must submit the ‘Dissertation Declaration’ which must be signed.

Examining of the Dissertation

MSc variants are examined by the department in which you are registered (this corresponds to the variant of the MSc you are registered to take). The Research Selector in each department will allocate a first and second examiner who each mark ‘blind’. The external examiner approved for postgraduate examination in the department is the external examiner for MSc theses. The final examiners meeting for the MSc takes place in November 2007 and the results will be made available after this meeting.
**MARKING SCALE**
Marking scale conversion from alpha to percentage scales

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>General description</th>
<th>MA grading scale</th>
<th>Calibrated to these percentage points</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>Excellent</td>
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<td>F [Fail]</td>
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**Marking Criteria**

**Marks between 80% and 100%**
Submitted work in this range will be distinguished from work in the 70-80% range by degree. The style, complexity and sophistication of arguments and grasp of detail (especially in relation to empirical research) will be of an especially high standard.

**Marks between 70% and 80%**
In addition to those qualities required for work in the 60-70% range, work in this range will contain original insights or arguments relating to recent research. For example, by discussing methodological strengths or weaknesses which affect the interpretation of data, or by presenting a well-developed critical argument.

**Marks between 60% and 69%**
Submitted work in this range will have demonstrated more than a comprehensive knowledge of relevant issues and recent research. It will incorporate up-to-date findings and arguments and present an original synthesis of this material. In most cases this will demonstrate reading beyond that provided in reading lists, or a working of relevant data. It will be well structured, with logical and coherently presented arguments that are well written and properly referenced.

**Marks between 50% and 59%**
Submitted work in this range will have demonstrated a comprehensive knowledge of relevant issues and recent research. It will be reasonably well structured, with logical and coherently
presented arguments. It will also be properly referenced. It will not, however, show an originality of interpretation or synthesis nor will it contain detailed insights into complex data patterns or recent theoretical debates.

**Marks between 40% and 50%**
Submitted work in this range will have failed to demonstrate a comprehensive knowledge of relevant issues and recent research. Significant themes in the topic may have been neglected, and there will be significant weaknesses in the appreciation of complexity and subtlety of arguments or weaknesses in analysis and evidence.

**Marks below 40%**
Submitted work which fails to demonstrate a comprehensive knowledge of relevant issues and recent research and include some misunderstandings. Work which also include multiple misunderstandings of basic concepts or research findings will receive marks below 30%.

**Transition from MSc to DPhil (‘1 + 3’ AND NEW ROUTE STUDENTS ONLY)**

You submit your dissertation at the beginning of September 2007, either a ‘type 1’ or ‘type 2’ (see attached information on MSC dissertations). This will be double marked and examined within your department and the marks will be ratified at the MSc exam board in November 2007. Once this process has taken place, you need to begin to work on your research outline. Assuming you registered in October 2007, you need to complete your research outline approval form, risk assessment form and ethics approval by the end of March 2007 in consultation with your supervisor as to the contents of these documents, which then have to be ratified by the Director of Graduate Studies in SocCul Postgraduate Office. (Students who are funded externally eg ESRC will also have to fulfill the criteria of the funding bodies in order to qualify for DPhil funding).

A minimum grade in the range Good ( from Grade B- upwards ) for the MSc dissertation is required.

Please note you cannot commence fieldwork before January 2008 at the earliest as all this needs to be in place. In any case, you will effectively be going on fieldwork at a relatively early stage, given that ‘+3 ‘ students do not usually begin fieldwork until year 2.

For clarification 1+3  students are registered for MSc in the first year and change to DPhil on successful completion. All ‘new route’ DPhil students should be registered as both MSc and DPhil but will drop the MSc on completion of the award.
Autumn Term Courses

CORE COURSE

500X8 Philosophy of science and social scientific research practice (credit=15)
Convenor: William Outhwaite and Alana Lentin

The aim of the course is to introduce students to some of the standard methodological problems posed by social inquiry. These mostly branch out from one central question: are the methods of the social sciences essentially the same or essentially different from those of the natural sciences? Among the topics to be addressed are: developments in the philosophy of science from positivism to post-positivism and their relevance to social inquiry; explanation versus interpretation and the interpretive critique of social science; problems of validity and values and the role of ideal types. Students will be expected to understand the epistemological underpinnings of different approaches to social inquiry. They will be expected to be able to apply this understanding critically in their consideration of different research methodologies in social inquiry.

A.F. Chalmers Science and its Fabrication (Open UP, 1990)
R. Klee Introduction to the Philosophy of Science: Cutting Nature at its Seams (OUP, 1997)
B. Fay Contemporary Philosophy of Social Science: A Multicultural Approach (Blackwell, 1996)
J. Bohman New Philosophy of Social Science: Problems of Indeterminacy (Polity, 1991)
P. Baert Philosophy of the Social Sciences (Polity, 2005)

Assessment: Term Paper - 4000 words
Submission deadline: Spring Term Week 2

502X8 Research design in cross-cultural context (credit=15)
Convenors: Simon Coleman and Ronen Palan

The course will provide a comprehension of basic principles of research design and strategy, with particular focus on issues of research design in cross-cultural settings. It will consider how to formulate researchable problems and the range of different approaches to research. It will encourage an appreciation of the problems of cross-cultural research and address issues such as access, norms and conventions of interviewing in particular cultural contexts, the processual nature of fieldwork, ethical concerns, personal and emotional commitment, and the discursive context in which research questions are formulated. Among the topics addressed are:

- designing and formulating research problems and questions including the development of hypotheses
- the rationale for alternative qualitative and quantitative research methods
• the considerations involved in selecting appropriate strategies for research in different cultural contexts
• the potential for biases in the development and interpretation of research
• central concepts in research methods, including generalisability, validity and reliability
• issues of ethics in social research in different cultural contexts


**Assessment:** Term Paper - 4000 words

**Submission deadline:** Spring Term Week 2
Spring Term Courses

513X8 Methods of Qualitative Data Collection and Analysis (credits=30)
Convenor: Ann Whitehead and Paul Yates

This course is designed for all postgraduate students in social science and related professional disciplines. The course aims first, to introduce students to the nature and characteristics of qualitative social research and its applications in a range of contexts. Secondly, the course aims to equip students with some key personal and practical skills relevant to successful qualitative research. The course is in four sections. Section one will introduce the variety of methodological positions and research practices associated with qualitative research strategies. Section two focuses on the nature of ethnographic fieldwork and provides critical contexts for its exploration. Section three uses the key data collection method of interviewing to take participants through the research process and especially issues in the analysis of qualitative data. Section four deals with the key dimensions of ethics and politics in qualitative settings and critically assesses the feminist contribution to qualitative methodology. The course will also include a workshop on NVivo.

Assessment:
Term Paper - Please see course documentation

Submission deadline:
Summer Term Week 1

Methods of Quantitative Data Collection and Analysis (credits=30)
Convenor: Godfrey Yeung

This 30-credit MSc course is designed for students with a minimal background in statistics. The objectives of this course are to equip students with (1) basic concepts in quantitative analysis in social sciences research, and (2) practical skills to interpret and conduct commonly used statistics. In addition to some basic concepts, such as when can we conduct statistical test(s), it introduces some of the most commonly used quantitative research methods, e.g., t-test, ANOVA, correlation, regression, etc. The course lectures are supplemented with practical workshops in SPSS, a computer programme for conducting statistical tests.


Assessment:
Term Paper - Please see course documentation

Submission deadline:
Summer Term Week 1
Summer Term Courses
(all courses will be scheduled to take place in the first five weeks of term)

505X8 Secondary Sources of Cross-National Comparative Data (credit=15)
Convenor: Godfrey Yeung.

The object of this course is to introduce students the ways in which official and other statistical data is produced, stored and disseminated. It provides students with hands-on experience of accessing and interpreting quantitative data locally and remotely:

- Understanding the ways in which official data is produced including the definition of variables, the debate on the theory-dependence of facts, criteria for sample selection, data entry, analysis and dissemination
- Acquiring practical experience of downloading data sets from international and national public and private organisations, such as The International Bank of Reconstruction and Development (IBRD data bank) the United Nation (data banks from different UN organisations), the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD statistics), the European Union (EUROSTAT), the United State Census Bureau (US Census Bureau's International Database), the United Kingdom (National Online Manpower Information System, DETR), etc.
- Acquiring practical experience of moving data sets between different applications, deriving variables and carrying out analysis of quantitative data


**Assessment:**
Term Paper - Please see course documentation

**Submission deadline:**
Summer Term Week 10

507X8 Ethnographic methods of data collection (credit=15)
Convenor: to be confirmed

The aim of this course is to develop understanding of, and competence in, ethnographic research methods. Students will acquire knowledge of ethnographic research through both reading secondary accounts and by conducting their own projects. They will be required to reflect on participant observation as a research method, assessing the possibilities and limits of the method. Discussion will focus on access to ethnographic settings, comportment in the field, and the interpretation of observations. The course will also concentrate on the process of recording ethnographic data through fieldnotes and encourage students to reflect on the process of turning fieldwork into a narrative account of fieldwork. Specific topics addressed will include:

- Accessing settings
- Overt and covert observations in natural settings
• Participant observation
• Field research in unfamiliar cultures
• Recording observational data: field notes and diaries

M. Hammersley and P. Atkin 1995 *Ethnography: Principles in Practice*
P. Willis 2000 *The Ethnographic Imagination*

Assessment: Term Paper - Please see course documentation
Submission deadline: Summer Term Week 10

519X8 *Discourse analysis (credit=15)*
Convenor: John Drury

This course offers an introduction to and hands-on experience of carrying out discourse analysis. Whereas most methodological approaches treat linguistic and other textual material as an unproblematic representation (of social relations, cognitions etc.), discourse analysis suggests that texts may have performative or rhetorical functions: mitigating blame, justifying power relations, creating consensus, and so on. The task of discourse analysis is to unravel the form and functions of particular discursive constructions in themselves, and to indicate how they arise from particular social contexts. Social and health psychology provide the disciplinary framework for this course. However, students will find the principles and techniques presented in the course relevant to all social sciences.

Students will develop understanding of, and competence in:
• Differences between discursive and traditional perspectives, particularly in relation to social psychology
• The methodological steps involved in discourse analysis
• The strengths and weaknesses of discourse analysis as a research method and the types of research questions for which this method is best suited
• The approach of critical discourse analysis in particular
• The relative (de)merits of ethnography, interviews and use of existing texts from the point of view of critical discourse analysis
• The limits of discourse analysis from a critical perspective
• The format and conventions in which discourse analysis methods and findings are presented


**Assessment:** Term Paper - Please see course documentation  
**Submission deadline:** Summer Term Week 10

**510X8 Action research (credit=15)**  
**Convenor:** John Pryor

The course will start with definitions of action research and introduce some of the theoretical perspectives to be picked up later in the course. The practicalities of planning and structuring a project using both cyclical and linear approaches will be considered. It will explore the tension between the practitioner and researcher and how this impacts on the micropolitics of the research setting. A review of the methodological implications of different theoretical stances will focus especially on critical theory and post-modernism. Review of frameworks for evaluating action research will lead to discussion of the extent to which claims made by AR enthusiasts can be justified. The course will be student-focused and participatory and will offer opportunities for student presentations. Readings may also be differentiated according to the background and interests of participants. As action research is not a method as such it will adopt a reflective approach rather than provide tips for new researchers. Throughout the course, students will be asked to keep a reflective journal, which will form the basis for assessment and will feed into discussion. Students will:

- Develop understanding of practical and political issues posed by action-orientated research in a variety of settings.
- Develop a theoretical stance towards action-oriented and participatory research.
- Gain competence in planning and evaluating action research projects.


**Assessment:** Term Paper - Please see course documentation  
**Submission deadline:** Summer Term Week 10
The object of this course is to introduce students to the possibilities and problems associated with the use of Geographical Information Systems and remote sensing in the design and monitoring of development planning and individual projects. Some 'Hands On' time will be possible along with illustrations of the various capabilities of these techniques. Students will:

- develop understanding of, and competence in the use of geo informational skills, especially Geographical Information Systems and the use and interpretation of remotely sensed data, and specifically:
- be able to use software packages (e.g. Arcview, Imagine) that are the industry standard and widely used in development agencies.
- be able to critically appraise and evaluate claims about the capabilities of geo informational techniques in development.

Cassettari, S. 1993. Introduction to Integrated Geoinformation Management
Dury, S (199) A guide to remote sensing interpreting images of the earth. OUP.

Assessment: a) Practical set tasks, and, b) 2k paper review
Submission deadline: a) week 5 of Summer Term and, b) Week 10 of Summer Term
522X8 Participatory Research in Cross-Cultural Contexts (credit=15)
Convenor: Peter Taylor and Samuel Musyoki

This course responds to the perception that there are many opportunities for those based in an academic environment to get involved in research relating to different aspects of organisational and community development, but in practice many communities are dissatisfied with “research as usual”, often because of raised and unmet expectations, and complexities emanating from widely different cultural contexts. This motivates researchers to come up with something different; research that is purposeful and empowering of the communities they work with within a specific context. The realisation of the limitations of traditional research in community development has resulted in increasing interest in participatory research (PR). But many researchers enter the practice of PR with little or no training, even if they are guided by a personal belief and set of values in participation for development and social change. This course will explore the basic principles that underpin PR, and examines the pitfalls that researchers may come across when using PR approaches, particularly in terms of their relationship and accountabilities to the communities they work with in a wide range of cultural contexts. The course will explore the different responsibilities and expectations that arise amongst different stakeholders in the research process and outcomes, and also a range of strategies, approaches and methods which may be appropriate in different contexts. It will include some hands-on practice of specific participatory research methods, and highlight some possibilities for synergies between PR approaches and other forms of research.

IDS (1997) Participatory research: ideas on the use of participatory approaches by post graduate students and other in formal learning and research institutes. IDS PRA Topic Pack. February 1997
Oxfam (2003) Have you been PA’d? Using Participatory Appraisal to shape local services. Glasgow: Oxfam GB

Assessment: 2000 word Term Paper
Submission deadline: Summer Term Week 10
Comparative method (credit=15)
Convenor: Paul Taggart and Dan Hough

This course will seek to cover the rationale of comparative method, its variety, development and problems. More specifically students will consider the logic of comparative inquiry, the number of cases involved, and the issues of measurement and bias, before completing exercises in which they are required to design comparative research proposals and to critique published research. By the end of the course students will have developed a critical understanding of and competence in:

- The purpose and value of comparison
- The range and variety of comparison
- The logic of comparative inquiry
- The key problems associated with comparison
- Designing comparative research projects

Ragin, Charles *Constructing Social Research* Pine Forge Press, 1994
A. Stepan *Arguing Comparative Politics* OUP 2001.
J. Blondel *Comparative Government* 1995, ch.23

Assessment: Term Paper - Please see course documentation
Submission deadline: Summer Term week 10
524X8 Logistic regression models (credit=15)
Convenor: Adriana Castaldo
(The Spring Term course in Social Statistics, or equivalent, is a prerequisite)

To develop understanding of, and competence in, advanced methods for modelling categorical data. Students will learn how to interpret and produce logistic regression and loglinear models, and will evaluate the use of such techniques in recent research.
- Calculating odds ratios
- Logistic regression for dichotomous dependent variables
- Loglinear models for categorical data

S. Menard Applied Logistic Regression Analysis
N. Gilbert, Analyzing Tabular Data

Assessment: Coursework
Submission deadline: Summer Term Week 10

531X8: Placing Archives
Convenor: Brian Short

This skills course trains students in the use and application of archive resources. It does so through a practical exercise focused upon a particular environment. Guided by a specific set of questions related to a field site, students will be trained in the use of various archive sources based locally. The course incorporates archive and field visits.

Bloome, D, Sheridan, D and Street, B (1993) Reading Mass-Observation Writing: theoretical and methodological issues in researching the Mass-Observation Archive (Mass-Observation Archive: University of Sussex)

Other Resources:
Mass Observation Archive (University of Sussex)
East Sussex Record Office (Lewes)
Ashdown Forest Visitors' Centre

Assessment: 4000 word Term Paper
Submission deadline: Summer Term week 10
530X8: Research in Motion: Researching Transnational Social Phenomena
Convenor: Anastasia Nesvetailova

This 15-credit MSc course is designed for students with minimal background in interdisciplinary research in social science and international relations in particular. The objectives of this course are to equip students with (1) basic understanding of the transnational nature of social developments and problems, and (2) analytical skills to distinguish and analyse social phenomena in a transnational context. The course will balance an investigation of key methodological approaches to the study of transnational phenomena with concrete cases/examples of relevance social problems and processes. The course is organised in five seminar sessions.


Gill, Stephen 2000 “Toward a post-modern prince?: the battle of Seattle as a moment in the new politics of globalization” Millennium 29,1: 131-140.


Assessment: 3000 word Term Paper
Submission deadline: Summer Term week 10

528X8: Using Online Resourses
Convenor: Marie Dembour

The course explores how on-line resources can be used in building academic arguments. It is geared at students whose research projects involve empirical data which are collected on-line rather than generated by the researcher through e.g. questionnaires, surveys or fieldwork. The first part of this course introduces the research student to research methods to collect such data. The second part of the course reflects upon various ways in which different kinds of data (e.g case law; NGO reports; media clippings) can be used through reading academic articles selected because they make use of such data. The third part of the course examines what counts as an academic argument by exploring an array of theoretical perspectives which are displayed in academic works which make use of non-academic materials. The last two parts of the course are taught through reflecting on how academic researchers, in the
selected reading, achieve rigour, analysis and insights. While most of the academic work chosen to illustrate uses of various data for various theoretical perspective is expected to be drawn from legal scholarship, all students on the course will be asked directly to relate the observations they derive from their reading to the development of their own research project, which can be in any discipline.

Assessment: 3000 word Term Paper
Submission deadline: Summer Term week 10
529X8: Evidence for Policy and Practice: a critical stance
Convenor: Stephen Webb

Evidence has become a major part of governments’ approaches to policy making, practice intervention and part of the machinery of evaluation, "what works" and best value. The growing interest in, and practice of, evidence-informed policy in a number of environments has provided the rationale for the development of this postgraduate course. There are undoubtedly many competing ideas about evidence led policy and practice, and many models from which we can learn a great deal. The competing ideas are complex and involve not only highly technical problems of logic and scientific fact but also larger philosophical considerations about the nature of meaning and knowledge, as well as questions about the relation between research, policy and practice.

This module will take a critical stance in analysing the relationship between research, knowledge production and policy, practice dissemination and professional decision-making. It will explore research from the perspective of researchers, policy makers, practitioners and professional decision makers, and explore methods of evidence informed practice. It will draw on the extensive emerging literature of a theoretical nature, research synthesis and systematic reviews to provide a critical understanding, and practical models based on real examples.

This module aims to:

1. introduce the key issues and themes relating to evidence informed policy and practice.
2. critically evaluate the research literature and methodologies about the relationship between research, policy, practice and decision-making.
3. consider the research environment of policy makers, front-line practitioners and professional decision-makers.
4. examine the knowledge formation and development of research infrastructure in key evidence informed environments (health, social care and education)
5. explore the mechanisms for supporting evidence informed policy and practice (systematic reviews, research synthesis, meta-analyses)
6. evaluate the effects of evidence informed policy and practice on service users.

Assessment: 3000 word Term Paper
Submission deadline: Summer Term week 10
**MSc/ Diploma/ Certificate in Comparative and Cross Cultural Research Methods**

**AUTUMN TERM ENROLMENT FORM 2006/7**

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Please indicate if you are ESRC funded:

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- +3
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*Please tick*

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(Please return completed form to James Prescott SocCul Arts C329)
PG Diploma/ Certificate in Comparative and Cross Cultural Research Methods  
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