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| --- |
| **Course Title: Dissertation** |
| **Course Code: 7514 ENG-10** |
| **Program: Doctor of Philosophy in Applied Linguistics** |
| **Department: Department of English** |
| **College: College of Languages and Translation** |
| **Institution: King Khalid University** |
| **Version: 2** |
| **Last Revision Date: 10 March 2025** |

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# **A. General information about the course:**

**1. Course Identification:**

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| 1. Credit hours: ( 10 ) | | | | | | |
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| 2. Course type | | | | | | |
| A. | ☐ University | ☐ College | ☒ Department | | ☐ Track |  |
| B. | ☒ Required | | | ☐ Elective | | |
| 3. Level/year at which this course is offered: (4,5&6/ 2&3) | | | | | | |
| 4. Course General Description: | | | | | | |
| The Dissertation is the culminating academic requirement of the PhD in Applied Linguistics program. This course enables students to conduct independent, original research, demonstrating mastery in linguistic theories, research methodologies, and academic writing. The course follows a structured supervision system that ensures progress through scheduled milestones, guiding students in:   * Selecting a research topic aligned with contemporary issues in applied linguistics. * Conducting a literature review to identify research gaps. * Developing a methodological framework for data collection and analysis. * Writing and defending a high-quality dissertation that contributes to the field. * Adhering to ethical research practices and avoiding academic misconduct. * Preparing for the oral defense before an academic examination panel. | | | | | | |
| 5. Pre-requirements for this course (if any): | | | | | | |
| Comprehensive Exam | | | | | | |
| 6. Pre-requirements for this course (if any): | | | | | | |
| N/A | | | | | | |
| 7. Course Main Objective(s): | | | | | | |
| This course is designed to equip PhD students in Applied Linguistics with the essential skills and knowledge to develop a research proposal, construct a well-structured dissertation, and publish their research in high-impact academic journals. Specifically, the course aims to:   1. Guide students in preparing a comprehensive PhD research proposal, ensuring clarity in research objectives, methodology, and theoretical framework as a foundation for their dissertation. 2. Enhance research writing proficiency by strengthening clarity, coherence, argumentation, and citation practices, enabling students to craft well-structured proposals, dissertations, and journal articles. 3. Provide a clear roadmap for academic publishing, covering journal selection, manuscript preparation, submission strategies, and effective responses to reviewer feedback. 4. Support students in structuring and refining their dissertation research, ensuring alignment with academic standards and facilitating the adaptation of dissertation chapters into publishable articles. 5. Instill ethical research and publishing practices, promoting responsible citation, academic integrity, and adherence to scholarly conventions while avoiding issues such as plagiarism and predatory journals. 6. Develop strategies for sustained research productivity, equipping students with tools to manage revisions efficiently, overcome writing challenges, and build a consistent academic publishing trajectory. | | | | | | |

**2. Academic Supervision**

**2.1 Roles and Responsibilities of the Supervisor**

* Guides students in selecting a dissertation topic and research methodology.
* Ensures regular progress meetings and timely feedback.
* Assists in refining research questions and structuring the dissertation.
* Reviews drafts and provides constructive feedback.
* Ensures ethical research practices and compliance with university regulations.
* Monitors student progress and submits periodic reports to the department.
* Advises on data collection and analysis techniques.
* Supports students in manuscript preparation for academic publication.
* Ensures students follow the approved research plan.

**2.2 Roles and Responsibilities of the Student**

* Chooses a relevant and original research topic in consultation with their supervisor.
* Conducts extensive literature review and data collection.
* Writes the dissertation following KKU guidelines and research ethics.
* Attends scheduled meetings with the supervisor and follows recommendations.
* Submits drafts for review and incorporates feedback.
* Maintains academic integrity by avoiding plagiarism and adhering to ethical research guidelines.
* Adheres to timelines and submission deadlines.
* Attends research seminars and workshops to enhance research skills.
* Follows the dissertation evaluation process as per KKU policies.

**3. Dissertation Registration and Requirements**

**3.1 Registration Process**

* Students must complete 100% of their coursework and pass the comprehensive exam before registering for the dissertation. A minimum GPA (usually 3.75 or higher) is required to proceed with the thesis registration.
* A dissertation proposal must be submitted for approval by the academic committee.
* Supervisors are assigned based on expertise and student research interests.
* The proposal is reviewed by a panel of experts before approval.
* Registration requires approval from the department head and academic committee.
* Students must submit a request through the university’s academic portal.

**3.2 Dissertation Structure**

A dissertation at KKU must adhere to the following structure:

* Title Page
* Abstract
* Acknowledgments
* Table of Contents
* List of Figures and Tables
* Introduction
* Literature Review
* Research Methodology
* Data Analysis and Findings
* Discussion
* Conclusion and Recommendations
* References
* Appendices (if applicable)
* Ethical Approval (if applicable)

**4. Dissertation Supervision Process**

**4.1 Supervisory Meetings**

* Students must meet with their supervisor at least once per semester.
* Meetings should include discussions on progress, challenges, and next steps.
* Supervisors must document each meeting and provide feedback accordingly.
* Regular follow-ups must be recorded in an official log maintained by the department.
* Additional meetings may be scheduled based on research needs.

**5. Dissertation Defense Process**

**5.1 Examination Panel**

* The dissertation defense panel consists of:
  + The student’s supervisor.
  + An external examiner from another university.
  + A faculty member from the department.
* The panel evaluates the dissertation based on originality, research quality, clarity, and contribution to the field.
* At least one examiner must be a full professor.
* The defense committee must be approved by the graduate studies council.

**5.2 Defense Procedure**

* The student presents their dissertation findings in a 20–30-minute session.
* Panel members ask questions and provide feedback.
* The panel deliberates and provides a final evaluation.
* Students may be required to make revisions before final approval.
* The defense is conducted in an open session, except for deliberation.

**6. Post-Defense Procedures**

* Students must submit the final corrected version of their dissertation within two weeks of defense.
* A final approval letter is issued by the department.
* The dissertation is archived in the university’s research repository.
* A summary report must be submitted to the graduate studies council.
* Final grades are recorded upon dissertation approval.

**7. Ethical Considerations and Plagiarism Policy**

* Students must ensure originality and avoid plagiarism.
* Ethical clearance must be obtained for research involving human subjects.
* Violations of ethical standards result in penalties, including rejection of the dissertation.
* The university utilizes plagiarism detection software before submission.
* Researchers must acknowledge all sources accurately.

**PhD in Applied Linguistics Dissertation Research Evaluation Rubric**

The purpose of this rubric is to support a fair, systematic, and comprehensive evaluation of PhD dissertations in Applied Linguistics. It provides examiners with a common framework to assess critical elements such as the originality of the research problem, the depth and relevance of the literature review, the robustness of the theoretical and methodological approach, the quality of data analysis, and the significance of the research contributions.

Examiners are required to complete the rubric independently prior to the dissertation defense. Each criterion should be evaluated based on the descriptors provided, with both quantitative ratings and qualitative comments where appropriate. In applying this rubric, examiners are encouraged to consider the dissertation in its entirety, noting that different research paradigms (theoretical, applied, empirical) are valued equally when executed at a high scholarly standard.

The completed rubric will contribute to the collective decision of the examination committee regarding the dissertation’s readiness for defense. It may also provide the candidate with detailed feedback for revision, if necessary. All evaluations should be conducted with an emphasis on academic rigor, constructive critique, and respect for scholarly diversity within the field of Applied Linguistics.

Each category is rated on a five-point scale:

**5** = **Exceptional Scholarship.**

**4** = **Acceptable Scholarship; all vital elements are satisfactory**.

**3** = **Approvable Scholarship; however, revisions would be needed in one or more important areas**.

**2** = **Not Acceptable Scholarship; one or two important areas are not sufficiently presented**.

**1** **= Not Acceptable Scholarship; more than two important areas are not sufficiently presented.**

**Ratings of 3 or above are satisfactory**, **while ratings 2 and below do not meet minimal standards to pass.**

**Cover Page & Abstract**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Cover Page & Abstract Criteria** | **Specific Comments and Feedback** | **Rating** |
| Cover page formatted correctly with complete and appropriate content. |  |  |
| Abstract concisely describes the problem, purpose, questions, methodology, and findings. |  |  |

**Section I: Introduction**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Section I: Introduction Criteria** | **Specific Comments and Feedback** | **Rating** |
| Research problem is clearly articulated and supported by literature. |  |  |
| Purpose, research questions, and objectives are logically derived and well presented. |  |  |
| Theoretical or conceptual framework is clearly described and justified. |  |  |
| Definitions, assumptions, scope, and delimitations are appropriately outlined. |  |  |
| Study’s significance and implications are addressed meaningfully. |  |  |
| Includes a logical transition to subsequent sections. |  |  |

**Section II: Literature Review**

|  |  |  |
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| **Section II: Literature Review Criteria** | **Specific Comments and Feedback** | **Rating** |
| Literature review introduces content, organization, and search strategy. |  |  |
| Literature is critically analyzed and clearly supports the study. |  |  |
| Relevant themes, gaps, and methodologies are integrated and synthesized. |  |  |
| Conceptual and theoretical aspects are grounded in the literature. |  |  |
| The review is structured, comprehensive, and aligned with research questions. |  |  |

**Section III: Section III: Methodology (Qualitative, Quantitative, or Mixed Methods)**

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| **Section III: Methodology (Qualitative, Quantitative, or Mixed Methods) Criteria** | **Specific Comments and Feedback** | **Rating** |
| Design is logically connected to the problem and justified clearly. |  |  |
| Participants, context, and sampling strategy are appropriate and justified. |  |  |
| Instrumentation and data collection procedures are described in detail and justified. |  |  |
| Role of the researcher, ethical procedures, and reflexivity (if applicable) are addressed. |  |  |
| Data analysis process is rigorous, systematic, and clearly articulated. |  |  |
| Appropriate measures for validity/trustworthiness are employed. |  |  |
| Mixed methods: integration strategy and rationale are clearly presented. |  |  |

**Section IV: Findings**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Section IV: Findings Criteria** | **Specific Comments and Feedback** | **Rating** |
| Findings are logically organized and answer research questions. |  |  |
| Use of figures/tables enhances clarity and is properly formatted. |  |  |
| Themes, patterns, or statistical results are well supported by data. |  |  |
| Discrepant cases and multiple interpretations are discussed. |  |  |
| Evidence of analytical quality (e.g., audit trails, triangulation) is present. |  |  |

**Section V: Discussion & Conclusion**

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| **Section V: Discussion & Conclusion Criteria** | **Specific Comments and Feedback** | **Rating** |
| The summary of research questions, methods, and findings is clear. |  |  |
| Findings are interpreted in context of theory and literature. |  |  |
| Practical implications and contributions to knowledge are articulated. |  |  |
| Recommendations for action and future research are clear and logical. |  |  |
| For qualitative work, researcher’s reflection on the process is present. |  |  |
| Concluding remarks synthesize and emphasize study impact. |  |  |

**Overall Manuscript Quality**

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Overall Manuscript Quality Criteria** | **Specific Comments and Feedback** | **Rating** |
| Writing is scholarly, clear, and logically structured. |  |  |
| Grammar, punctuation, and formatting are correct. |  |  |
| All citations and references are properly formatted and complete. |  |  |

**9. Conclusion**

This guide serves as a framework to ensure the smooth completion of dissertations at KKU. Students and supervisors must work collaboratively to uphold the highest academic standards and contribute to knowledge in their respective fields.

* Continuous training and development sessions will be provided for students and supervisors.
* The university encourages publication of dissertation findings in peer-reviewed journals.
* Feedback on the dissertation process is welcomed for continuous improvement

# **G. Specification Approval Data:**

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| --- | --- |
| **COUNCIL /COMMITTEE** | **ENGLISH DEPARTMENT COUNCIL** |
| **8-17-46** | **8-17-46** |
| **DATE** | **16 MARCH 2025** |