St. Joseph's College of Commerce

(Autonomous)

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Department of English

Syllabus Document for the Academic Year 2023-2024

B.Sc Economics

B.Sc Economics General English – Semester I

Media Literacy and Communication Skills

Course Description: The Media Literacy and Communication Course has been designed as a response to the questions—where and what do our students often read and write? Which are the new spaces that significantly shape their experiences? Do our courses address the challenges present in the emerging media spaces?

The term 'media' has an expansive meaning in today's context. It may refer to a piece of paper on which news is printed or to a political advertisement that pops up while browsing for the latest TV show on the internet. Media often acts as a tool to manufacture consent, and at the same time it is also a space where such 'manufacturing' can be resisted. Hence, understanding media is critical to understanding the modern world that is saturated with information.

The Media Literacy and Communication Course also intends to inculcate LSRW skills and thereby enable them to analyse and interpret the information received from different sources. Also, the course aims to support students in developing the much-needed aptitude to assess socio-political, economic, and cultural developments. The syllabus of the course has been conceptualized to make it a foundation for developing informed perspective by engaging in evidence-based discussions. The activities designed aim to facilitate the fostering of skills needed to fact-check, source materials for research, and navigate through the online space.

Course Objectives

The course aims to help the students to:

- navigate through the digital world
- understand the news media ecosystem
- learn how to look for information in digital spaces, organize them, and validate the credibility of the information collected for academic and everyday needs
- analyse and interpret media discourses to understand the society and study how they shape individual experiences
- develop and refine the LSRW skills through discussions and activities

Course Outcomes

Students who successfully complete the course will be able to:

- source and organize information from reliable resources and figure out the credibility of news reports, articles, stories, and other information available on diverse media outlets
- display an understanding of the ways in which media platforms influence perceptions and shape experiences
- display an ability to critique media generated socio-political and cultural discourses
- articulate issues/ideas with greater clarity and communicate effectively

Module 1: News Analysis and Interpretation   12 hours

a) **Evaluating news articles:** Read articles and opinion pieces published in various newspapers, web-portals, and magazines to evaluate their authenticity, bias — if any, and the perspective from which the news is reported or the opinion is stated.

b) **Analysing television news and debates:** Watch television news debates and discuss the authenticity, bias — if any, and the perspective from which the news is presented or reported. Also discuss both common and exclusive aspects of news reported on television and print media. The activities in this module will study the impact created through both television and print media on individuals and the society at large.

The activities will focus on developing and refining the LSRW skills. The course instructor is free to select news article/report/TV shows/documentaries/videos of his/her choice for the activity other than those prescribed in the syllabus.

Readings:

1. The Propaganda Model – Extract from *Manufacturing Consent* by Edward Herman and Noam Chomsky
2. "Why so many people believe fake news – and how to get them to see through conspiracy theories" by Mark Lorch, The Conversation
3. The Indian Tale of Lost Credibility of Journalism: Who to Blame? – Sidhant Dubey
4. Private Interest Journalism – Hartosh Singh Bal
5. Open Letter to the Chief Justice of India – P Sainath

Module 2: Digital Media and the Internet   12 hrs

a) **Information gathering in online spaces:** Select a topic and search online to find in-depth information about the topic. Students may speak about the processes that they underwent while collecting the information, including the websites they visited and how they got to know about the sources.

b) **Video analysis:** Watch well-researched YouTube videos and engage in discussions based on select themes. Give chance to each student to briefly express their experience of selecting and watching the video.

c) **Producing content for the online spaces:** Discuss various ways of producing content for the internet. Encourage students to come up with content for a media platform of their choice, and conduct peer review sessions. Encourage students to go through the content assigned to them and use the skills learnt in the semester to analyse the content and share feedback.

Readings and Viewings

1. Youtube Channels: Ted Talks, Big Think, Kurzgesagt
2. Case Study: People's Archive of Rural India (ruralindiaonline.org)
   a) In Haveri, Ratnavva's Life of Hopes and Seeds – S. Senthalir
   b) I Never Got a Chance to Play for India Again – Riya Behl
   c) The Headmaster of Dabli Chapori – Priti David
   d) Rita Akka's Life is Going to the Dogs – M Palani Kumar

Module 3: Understanding Social Media   12 hrs

This module includes a set of activities related to how experiences are represented in social media. The course instructor may conduct any two activities from the list given below in class.

- Discuss the students' relation with social media. Ask students to write how social media spaces influence their everyday experiences
- Imagine a month without social media and write about the possible impacts
- Ask students to identify an important change they discovered within themselves after engaging with social media
- Discuss the impact of social media on society and individuals by discussing an essay

Readings and Viewings:

1. "I type, therefore I am" by Tom Chatfield, Aeon Magazine
2. The Social Dilemma (2020)

Module 4: Communication Skills   **9 hrs**

Reading activity:

a) Read a passage and identify key words
b) Read a passage and identify the purpose of the punctuation marks used
c) Read a passage and identify the relevance of paragraph breaks
d) Read a passage and identify the key points or arguments
e) Read a passage and identify the sentence structure

Listening activity

a) Listen to a radio broadcast of a discussion, talk, or a YouTube video and comment on the content
b) Listen to the ideas/perspectives shared by fellow-students and respond
c) Listen to a conversation/story/narrative and narrate it to the class

Writing activity

a) Write about personal experiences/personal narratives
b) Recollect and write about a conversation that you had with friends or family members
c) Describe an incident that you have witnessed
d) Recollect a memory associated with an object and write about it
e) Describe a photograph or painting
f) Explain a process (e.g., opening an email account, riding a bike, operating a machine)
g) Write about a topic that emerges through a classroom discussion
h) Write about an inspiring topic

Speaking activity

a) Conduct discussions on contemporary issues
b) Presentations by students on select themes or topics
c) Narrate a story or an incident

B.Sc Economics General English – Semester II

Course Description

In this semester students will be introduced to a set of short stories, poems, and a play. The course will help students to appreciate and interpret literary texts using literary devices and approaches. The texts will be discussed in class ensuring participation from every member to facilitate interpretations from diverse perspectives. The course will also explore larger questions related to the relevance of literature in the society and everyday experience.

Course Objectives:
- To help students to appreciate literary texts
- To explore the relationship between human experience and literature
- To critically analyse and respond to literary texts using literary approaches
- To examine the role of literary texts in the society and individual experience

Course Outcomes:

At the end of the course students will be able to:
- Display skills of literary analysis in the context of reading fictional narratives
- Demonstrate an ability to appreciate poetry and explore the relationship between human experience and literature
- Display skills of interpreting dramatic literature

Module 1: Short Story   **20 hours**
1. A Kitchen in the Corner of the House – Ambai/Ponnuthayi – Bama
2. Akku – Vaidehi
3. Reflowering – Sundara Ramaswamy
4. Blue Light – Vaikom Muhammad Basheer
5. The Dog of Tithwal — Saadat Hasan Manto

Module 2: Poetry   **15 hours**
1. Here Comes God – Tenneti Suri
2. My Sister's Bible – S Joseph
3. When It Rains in Dharamshala — Tenzin Tsundue
4. Beggar — Angshuman Kar
5. I wear My Wordlessness – K. Srilata

Module 3: Play   **10 hours**
1. The Boor — Anton Chekov

B.Sc Economics General English – Semester III

Economics, Society and Literature

Course Description: Communicating Economics is mostly considered as a type of 'technical' writing. The discourse is often mathematical with formulas, graphs, and proofs. Economics as a science ends up presenting the pertinent ideas as unreachable to the readers from the non-economics background. Writers and readers of economics are from different walks of life. The theories of demand and supply, understanding the nuances of the annual budget, conversation about the work and workspace are part of the everyday to people in the society who may not be familiar with the statistically loaded writings. This does not discount the need of such writings. However, the questions that needs close enquiry are – Is there one way of communicating Economics? Are there literatures available from other disciplines that has engaged with the concepts of economics? Can one make Economics writings accessible to the readers from diverse backgrounds? With these questions in context, this paper is divided into three modules with select essays, poem, short story, play, visual text, and journalistic articles to introduce the students of Economics to interdisciplinarity. To familiarise them to reading / writing skills to engage with the people and concepts from non-economics background and vice-versa.

Course Objectives:

- to introduce economic concepts and ideas through literary texts
- to familiarize the students with the act of writing about economics for the common audience
- to focus on the similarities between economic theories and narrative structures in literature

Course Outcomes:

At the end of the course, the students will be able to,

- engage with economic concepts through literary texts
- express critical viewpoints about economic development and its social ramifications through literary narration
- demonstrate an understanding of interdisciplinary approach in communicating economic concepts

Module 1: Essays

1. Defending the One Percent - N. Gregory Mankiw (2013)
2. Lenders, Losers, Crooks, and Credit – P. Sainath (From Everybody loves a good drought)
3. Economic System, Development and Economic Planning – Sukhadeo Thorat
4. Shakespeare's Twenty-First Century Economics: The Morality of Love and Money
5. On the experience of moral confusion – David Graeber

Module 2: Fiction

6. On buying and selling – Khalil Ghibran (Poem)
7. The Standard of Living – Dorothy Parker (Short Story)
8. Kiki's Delivery Service – Hayao Miyazaki (Animated Fantasy Film)
9. King Lear – Shakespeare (Full Play)

Module 3: Magazine Articles

10. Chindhiwalli Women – Dipti Bapat and Abhishek Joshi (Photo Essay)
11. This is the final chapter of our bishti jobs – S. Senthalir (PARI)
12. Corporate intrigue at the heart of K-pop (The Economist)
13. The pitfalls of loving your job a little too much (The Economist)

CIA Task: Writing Project on an Economic topic for the common audience

Additional Reading

Small Holdings in India and their Remedies – Dr. B. R. Ambedkar

B.Sc Economics General English – Semester IV

Reading Visual Texts

Course objectives:
- To understand the significance of visual texts and apply rhetorical strategies in creating visual texts
- To analyse diverse forms of media texts to understand the intended and unintended messages within these texts.
- To interpret visual content and convey it in writing.
- To examine stories and their adaptation into visual formats

Course outcomes:

Upon completion of this course, students should be able to
- Demonstrate and understanding and appreciation of visual texts
- Display critical thinking skills and the ability to dissect texts to uncover meanings
- Demonstrate interpretive skills with visual content and express it effectively through writing
- Display an ability to analyse the dynamics of adaptations from text to screen

Module 1: Introduction to visual texts   **9 hrs**

This module is designed to introduce students to visual text, helping them understand its significance and how it differs from plain text. The module aims to make students grasp the purpose of text and learn how to choose the appropriate medium for their communication.
- Instructor can use advertisements as case studies to discuss rhetorical strategies.
- Students will be tasked with drafting a message and creating a visual text, applying rhetorical strategies based on a medium determined by the instructor.

Suggested readings:
1. Rhetoric of the Image by Roland Barthes – Extract from *Visual Culture: the reader* by Jessica Evans and Stuart Hall
2. Getting the Picture: A Brief Guide to Understanding and Creating Visual Texts by Karla Kitalong and Marcia Muth

Module 2: Deconstructing texts   12 hrs

This module involves critically analysing various texts such as advertisements, articles, films, or any form of media communication. The aim is to uncover the intended and unintended meanings of the texts and gain a deeper understanding of their impact on society and individuals.

- Students can select texts from various forms of media and then deconstruct them, focusing on both the intended and unintended messages. They can analyse these texts individually or in groups. Following their analysis, students are required to present their findings to the class, fostering discussion.

The analysis should aim to:
  o Explore the disparities between media texts and reality.
  o Examine the representation or misrepresentation of gender, caste, community, and other relevant aspects.

Suggested readings:
1. Plato's Allegory of the Cave
2. *Ways of Seeing* by John Berger (Chapter 1)
3. The Language of Images by W. J. T. Mitchell

Module 3: Writing visual culture   12 hrs

- This module empowers students to interpret visual content and effectively express it in written language. Students will critically analyse visuals or visual text, employ appropriate vocabulary, and convey the visual content accurately through their written descriptions. The primary goal is to create written descriptions that allow others to interpret the visual content. Students will be tasked with composing detailed descriptions of the following:
  o Visual elements in their surroundings
  o Visual text from a media source chosen by the instructor

Suggested reading:

Starbucks case study: Reading Public Space- Extract from *The World is a Text: Writing about Visual and Popular Culture* by Jonathan Silverman and Dean Rader

Module 4: Translating tales to visual texts   12 hrs

This module involves reading stories and exploring their adaptation into visual texts, primarily focusing on films. As a group, students select stories that have been adapted into films, analyse the changes these stories undergo during adaptation, and then present their findings to the class for discussion.

Suggested reading:

To Kill A Mockingbird (1960) by Harper Lee To Kill A Mockingbird (1962), Directed by Robert Mulligan - Extract from *Adaptation: Studying film and literature* by John M. Desmond and Peter Hawkes.