

**American University of Beirut**  
**Faculty of Arts and Sciences**  
**Department of English**

**ENGL 247 – Discourse Analysis – 3 credits**

**Spring 2016**

**Course description**

[D]iscourse analysis is the study of the ways sentences and utterances are put together to make texts and interactions and how those texts and interactions fit into our social world ... [and] a way of looking at language that focuses on how people use it in real life to do things such as joke and argue and persuade and flirt, and to show that they are certain kinds of social identities or belong to certain groups. (Jones, 2012, p. 2)

This course introduces various approaches to discourse analysis that have been taken by researchers with different theoretical perspectives and different reasons to carry out their analyses. One part of discourse analysis considers what makes a text a text rather than a string of words. Another investigates how a newspaper article influences its readers to form a particular view. Another looks at how tiny features of spoken language that are not consciously noticed carry the essential meaning of a conversation. By studying a range of texts – written, spoken, computer-mediated and multimodal – you will understand more about how people say things, do things and be things using language. Such understanding of the relationship between a text and its social and cultural context, and how language is used to present different perspectives and to construct identities, is important in all research into human interaction – indeed, these issues are fundamental to interpreting the human experience.

**Learning outcomes**

By the end of this course, you should be able to:

- identify and describe different approaches to discourse analysis
- use the terminology of theories and methods of discourse analysis appropriately
- determine the analytical approach(es) suited to particular texts, contexts and purposes
- carry out methodical and purposeful analyses of spoken and written texts
- evaluate your own and others' discourse analyses

## Course materials

Textbook (available from the AUB Bookstore):

Jones, R. H. (2012). *Discourse analysis: A resource book for students*. London: Routledge.

Further course materials (readings, weblinks) will be provided during the course via Moodle. A bibliography is available for the course. You are expected to seek out relevant materials for your assignments and other class work using the library services at AUB, on the Internet and from other sources in Beirut and beyond.

Two-and-a-half hours of class-time per week, scheduled Tuesday and Thursday 11.00am–12.15pm

*First scheduled class:* Tuesday, 26 January

*Venue:* Nicely Hall 209

*Instructor:* John Pill, PhD

*Email:* [tp04@aub.edu.lb](mailto:tp04@aub.edu.lb) (expect a reply within 48 hours)

*Office hour:* Tuesday 12.30pm–1.30pm during semester or by appointment (send a request by email)

*Office:* Fisk Hall 335

## Expectations

To provide variety and stimulation, the classes include presentation, discussion, group work and problem-solving. You should be an active participant, willing to share your knowledge, experience and ideas. You should prepare for each class, e.g., by completing all the reading and any other individual or collaborative tasks set beforehand as homework. These tasks will be shared on the course website on Moodle (accessed via the E-Learning link on the AUB Homepage).

Attendance will be taken. You are expected to provide a valid reason for any absence, ideally before the absence occurs. If you miss more than one-fifth of the sessions of the course in the first ten weeks of the semester (that is, four classes), you may be dropped from the course.

To allow students and instructor to focus properly on course content and classroom interaction, you are requested to turn off your mobile phone in class-time.

Your feedback on the course and its content is welcome.

## Provisional schedule

Week	Class dates	Topics	Assessment
1	26 & 28 January	Introduction	
2	2 & 4 February	Written discourse Cohesion and coherence	
3	11 February	Written discourse Social function	
4	16 & 18 February	Written discourse Ideology	
5	23 & 25 February	Spoken discourse Conversation structure	<i>Assignment 1 text agreed with instructor by end of Week 5</i>
6	1 & 3 March	Spoken discourse Identities and activities	
7	8 & 10 March	Spoken discourse Social contexts	
8	15 & 17 March	Review	
9	22 & 24 March	Critical discourse analysis	Assignment 1 due start of Week 9
10	29 & 31 March	Corpus-assisted discourse analysis	<i>Project (Assignment 2/3) topic/text and student partners agreed with instructor by end of Week 10</i>
11	5 & 7 April	Mediated discourse analysis	<i>Timetable for presentations (Assignment 2) agreed by end of Week 11</i>
12	12 & 14 April	Multimodal discourse analysis	<i>Solo/partner work for Assignment 3 agreed by end of Week 12</i>
13	19 & 21 April	Project workshops and presentations	Project presentation (Assignment 2)
14	26 & 28 April	Project workshops and presentations	Project presentation (Assignment 2)
			Written-up project and reflection (Assignment 3) due one week after last class

## Assessment

All the work you do for this course should be your own and done exclusively for the course. Your progress will be assessed in several ways. The distribution of marks is:

Class attendance, participation and homework:	20%
Assignment 1 – analysis of a written text:	25%
Assignment 2 – joint presentation of project:	25%
Assignment 3 – written-up version of project and reflection:	30%

Assignments submitted late and without a valid excuse will be given a maximum of 50% of the marks available. All assignments set must be completed before the final grade for the course is issued at the end of the semester.

Turnitin software (via Moodle) will be used to check your work for possible plagiarism.

### ❖ **Assignment 1 – analysis of a written text (25%)**

Deadline: 11.00am, 22 March (first class of Week 9) – analysis as Word document via Moodle

You will submit an original discourse analysis of a **written text**. Your analysis will be about 1000 words long; you will also submit a copy of the text. The text used must be accepted as suitable by the instructor by 26 February (end of Week 5). The types of text appropriate for the assignment will be discussed in class during the first weeks of the course.

You will be encouraged to share your work with other students and provide feedback on their work during class in Week 8.

Assessment: The instructor will assess the analysis using a rubric.

### ❖ **Assignment 2 – joint presentation of project (25%)**

Deadline: Given in class in Weeks 13 and 14 (exact date to be confirmed by the end of Week 11)

The text analysed for the joint presentation (Assignment 2) is the same as for the written-up version of the project (Assignment 3).

You will make an oral presentation (10-15 minutes long) with another student. The presentation will demonstrate analysis of a written or spoken text using an appropriate method. The text, the method of analysis and the student pairings for the presentation must be accepted as suitable by the instructor by 1 April (end of Week 10). You should share the presentation equally with your partner and make it relevant to the audience (i.e., other course participants). You should prepare and use appropriate visual aids and/or other supporting materials.

Assessment: The instructor will provide feedback on the presentation based on a performance checklist; a grade will be given to each student in the pair separately. You will be asked to provide feedback to other students after their presentations and should expect to receive such feedback after your own.

❖ **Assignment 3 – written-up version of project and reflection (30%)**

Deadline: 12.00 noon, 5 May (one week after final class) – main text as Word document via Moodle

You will submit (i) a written-up analysis, along with the spoken or written text it deals with in a suitable format, and (ii) a text reflecting on what you have learnt during the course.

The written-up analysis will be based on the same text used for the presentation in Assignment 2; writing up the project will allow you to give more detail and perhaps incorporate some of the feedback provided after the presentation by other students and/or the instructor. The written-up analysis may be

**EITHER** your work only (solo), drawing on the content of the joint presentation but written up independently from your partner,

**OR** a collaborative analysis carried out and written up by you and your partner together.

You and your presentation partner must inform the instructor of your intentions for Assignment 3 by 15 April (end of Week 12).

The reflective text will be your own (i.e., not written with another student).

A solo analysis will be about 1500 words long. A collaborative analysis will be about 2500 words long; you must indicate clearly the sections written by each student. The separate reflective text will be at least 200 words long.

Assessment: The instructor will assess the analysis and the reflection using a rubric. For collaborative submissions, a grade will be given to each student in the pair separately, based on their contribution to the analysis as a whole.

### **Academic integrity**

Knowing how to refer appropriately to the ideas and work of others is an important aspect of academic studies. If you fail to credit properly ideas or materials taken from another, you commit plagiarism. Putting your name on a piece of work any part of which is not yours constitutes plagiarism, unless that part is clearly marked and the work from which you have borrowed is fully identified. Plagiarism is a violation of the University's academic regulations and is subject to disciplinary action.

## **Accessible education**

If you have documented special needs and anticipate difficulties with the content or format of the course due to a physical or learning disability, please contact your instructor and/or your academic advisor, as well as the Counseling Center (see below), as soon as possible to discuss options for accommodations. Those seeking accommodations must submit the Special Needs Support Request Form along with the required documentation.

### **Resources and Support for Students**

**The Writing Center** – [http://www.aub.edu.lb/units/writing\\_center/](http://www.aub.edu.lb/units/writing_center/)

The Writing Center provides free support for student writers at AUB. You can arrange a one-hour, one-to-one consultation with a tutor. Appointments can be made online or by phone.

**Library Information Services** – <http://www.aub.edu.lb/ulibraries/>

The library has subject specialists to help you find the information you are looking for. You can approach the Information Services Desk at Jafet Library or enquire by email or phone.

**Counseling Center** – <http://www.aub.edu.lb/sao/counseling/>

If you would like confidential professional help, the Counseling Center (ex. 3196) run by the Office of Student Affairs provides a free service to all AUB students. It is on the second floor of West Hall.

*20 January 2016*