

Exam guidelines

First of all: Thank you for your help with grading exams in Textual Analysis (MEVIT 4813)!

This course teaches central approaches to textual and visual analysis within media studies in the humanities. It focuses on establishing a fundamental understanding of theory and method within these, as well as an understanding of the traditions from which textual theory and textual analysis come. The course adds a media studies perspective to these theories by critically reflecting on how different media affect what is communicated by the texts they transmit. Any kind of text can be analysed in this course, be they journalistic, documentary, dramatic, narrative, descriptive, fiction, or factual.

As part of the course students are expected to write a 5-page essay in response to a question. In their exam text, students are expected to display a firm understanding of these traditions, theories and methods, not so much by dedicating long passages to explicating them, but rather by making references to them and, foremost, by *applying them* to the materials at hand.

Hence, students are expected to demonstrate that they:

- know how to understand and use a selection of central approaches to textual analysis within media studies.
- be able to reflect upon how or to what degree a theory of textual analysis is dependent upon, or neutral towards, various types of media.
- be able to perform media-sensitive textual analyses in which 'close analysis' is of central relevance.

Here are some questions that are key to the course:

- Can the exam question be answered by the methods candidates employ? A question about color, for instance, will probably not be answered sufficiently by a method that helps analyse textures...
- Is the method (semiotics, psychoanalysis, etc) adequately and cohesively explained?
- Is the relation between used methods sensible?
- Are methods clearly demarcated and their uses clarified?
- Given that close textual analysis is the basis of this course, how closely does the student analyse their corpus? Do they consider various options and the relationships between them, or jump to conclusions all too hastily? Observation is one thing, but the close analysis and interpretation thereof is what this course is about.
- How is the corpus introduced and contextualized? Does one analyse a single image or a clip/series of clips? What does the choice of corpus mean for the method you choose and/or the argument you make?
- Is the relevance of question/method/conclusion reflected on?
- Is the structure the right one? Is the argument signposted?
- Does argumentation result from either one's own analyses or secondary references; is

the argument not simply based on speculation?

Generally, exams will also be graded with the following criteria in mind:

- spelling/grammar;
 - originality of approach;
 - if needed, engagement with/positioning within ongoing debate;
 - introduction, reflection and application of methodology;
 - structure of argument;
 - clarity and focus of research;
 - conceptualization of material;
 - integration theory and close analysis;
 - integration observation and argumentation;
 - reflection argumentation in light of research question, debate, methodology;
 - functionality of the conclusion;
 - correct referencing system and bibliography;
 - required minimum secondary **scholarly** sources.
-
- One specificity: In the application of Discourse Analysis, students have been invited to also draw on other materials than those given in the exam to show the widespread, intertextual and discursive nature of the materials at hand.