

## **OPTION C): students in sustained interaction with an international student**

Students pursuing this option arrange for an international student who is ready to act as interview partner for a series of in-depth conversations (see below). Interview partners may be fellow students from the Anglophone Modernities MA or from any other study programme. If you have difficulty finding a partner you may contact the International Office and register as a buddy for an incoming international student.

For the completion of the module students should meet their interview partners at least 5 times over the course of one semester (preferably semester 3), for at least one hour each. Each meeting should be documented by short minutes of 500 words each ('Verlaufsprotokoll', signed with date and place of the meeting), which are to be attached in an Appendix to the module report.

### **Task 1:**

#### **First Impressions (Media Analysis: 2.500 words)**

"Media Analysis: First Impressions" is a reflective piece of writing in which you discuss and evaluate an aspect of the local culture of your interview partner you have encountered in a preliminary research of the local media coverage of your partner's national or regional context. The key to this Report is to focus on a specific problem or event and your reactions to it rather than provide a general overview. The Report, accordingly, could focus on a cultural text or phenomenon and its mediatisation in Germany, which has encouraged you to reflect on your mentoring partner's home environment and engage in a learning process.

In composing the essay, observe that the media, whatever form it takes, is not an innocent purveyor of facts and stories. Rather, it is a forum or medium in which broader social struggles and forces become visible and reach large audiences. Media analysis is thus not only concerned with the 'what' of the information (content), but the 'how' as well: the 'shaping' and 'filtering' of the information. In any media analysis, a range of key issues need to be considered:

- Are emotive words used in news reports? If so, what messages are such words transmitting about a particular issue? How will you track them?
- Are rival points of view given the same amount of space? How will you measure it?
- How much space or time is given to your particular issue or event compared to others?
- How is the media coverage of the topic you have chosen received by audiences? Why are audiences important? How do you know what audiences think about a TV news broadcast or topical issue?
- What are your own interests and biases in relation to the topic at hand?

### **Task 2:**

#### **"Second Impressions and Reflection" (Interview Analysis, 2.500 words)**

"Interview Analysis: Second Impressions and Reflections" draws on the structured conversations with your interview partner, and shall return to the earlier media analysis to verify its impressions and evaluations. Rather than providing a general summary of your conversations, the key to this Report is to set your first essay into dialogue with a second reading of a related, specific incident or event, or a cultural text, artefact or phenomenon which you have discussed intensely with your interview partner, and which highlights in comparative fashion new insights into your interview partner's home culture, or treats those aspects that have remained opaque. The comparative approach should lucidly document your learning

process.

### **Task 3:**

#### **Approaches to Academic Education (Experience and Research Essay: 2.500 words)**

This essay component shall draw on your personal experiences studying abroad or your discussion with your interview partner, and combine it with research into your interview partner's former university's approach to academic teaching, learning, and knowledge production. The essay should move from the micro-level of academic education to the macro level of systemic organization.

Aspects that should be discussed include:

- How are class sessions (lectures, seminars) typically organized? What is the relationship between teachers and students, what is the relationship among students?
- Which type of knowledge are students encouraged to digest, produce, and share?
- How are study programmes organized, how are they administered?
- What is the status of the humanities in the larger university context?
- How are study programmes funded, who carries which costs?
- How dependent or independent are universities from external bodies (the state, private corporations, etc.)

Compare these and related issues with your knowledge about and impressions of studying in the Anglophone Modernities in Literature and Culture programme at the University of Potsdam. Do not shy away from comparative value judgments, but make sure that you do so in a way that is carefully argued and respectful to your host environments and conversation partners.

### **Task 4:**

#### **Multiple Modernities (Experience and Research Essay: 2.500 words)**

This essay component encourages you to reflect on your interview partner's home country's status of being 'modern'. Your discussion of this question should be critically informed by the different interpretations and evaluations of what being 'modern' may mean that you have encountered in module EAM (Introduction: Anglophone Modernities). On this basis, your essay should combine your structured conversations with your interview partner with a review of academic discourses on local modernity/modernities. You are encouraged to critically read your personal encounters and relevant literature by observing critical categories such as:

- The (aesthetic) standard of literary production
- Artistic and cultural production in other media
- Mobility and migration
- Human rights and questions of postcolonial justice
- Gender politics
- Politics of race and ethnicity
- Politics of class and material culture
- Processes of globalisation
- Etc.

You must follow the rules of good academic practice in all essays and properly document your sources wherever necessary. Note, however, that other than in proper research essays, you are encouraged to much more freely share your personal observations and subjective impressions.