

## Workshop & Masterclass

### **Piracy as a Method: A Relational Approach to Academic Argument**

#### **Organizational details**

Instructor: Professor James Arvanitakis, Dr Sonja Schillings, and Dr Martin Fredriksson  
Date: 02 – 03 June 2015, each from 09:00 to 16:00  
Location: GCSC Building, Multifunktionsraum (MFR)  
ECTS: 3 ECTS-points

#### **Objective**

Does your research involve complex phenomena (complex terms, concepts, or situations), and do you encounter the problem that one-dimensional terminologies and approaches may limit rather than enhance the depth of your research?

In the context of this workshop / masterclass, you are being introduced to an innovative method which strives at developing clear terminology without unnecessary complexity reduction: the relational approach, also called piracy. Piracy as a method, as it is understood in this workshop, does not approach phenomena one-dimensionally but relationally. Instead of defining central terms and deriving all implications from the stable and neutral “natures” of predefined assumptions, piracy foregrounds recurring “constellations” between actors, terms, phenomena etc. which can be analyzed one by one, and in their full overlapping, contradictory complexity. Therefore, piracy as an approach is primarily understood as an analytical focus on the strategic exploration of (formal, interpersonal, and institutional) grey zones.

#### **Program**

The workshop is scheduled for two days, plus a brief preparatory session for doctoral presenters ahead of the event. The first day will include a general methodological introduction to the approach, and a master class on the academic classroom as an interdisciplinarily accessible example of a complex situation. The masterclass is led by Prof. James Arvanitakis, renowned academic teaching expert. The example of the academic

classroom as an analytical problem will be one of two central occasions for workshop participants to experiment with the piracy approach.

The focus of the second workshop day will be on the participants' own research projects, and the ways in which their specific research may benefit from the relational approach. In this vein, the workshop moves from a concretely interactive example towards the question how the participants could apply the method on their current research projects. Doctoral candidates and postdoctoral researchers of all disciplines are explicitly invited to give a 5-minute-presentation on the topic of their research project in relation to the piracy approach, and to offer problems and questions from within their research project for to be discussed from a relational point of view. The second workshop day will be moderated by Martin Fredriksson and Sonja Schillings, who invented the method. There is room for 5-7 presentations. These presentations will be prepared with the help of the workshop organizers approx. a week before the workshop date.

### ***Workshop Day 1 (2 June 2015, MFR)***

09:00 – 11:00 General Introduction to the Relational Approach

12:00 – 16:00 Master Class “Applying the Relational Approach: The Academic Classroom”  
with Prof. James Arvanitakis

### ***Workshop Day 2 (3 June 2015, MFR)***

09:00 – 16:00 The Relational Approach in Practice: Dealing with Complex Phenomena in  
Research Projects

**Please note:** All presenters on the second workshop day are asked to meet with the workshop organizers a week prior to the workshop in order to prepare their short presentations. The specific date for this meeting will be scheduled once all presentation slots are filled.

### **Target group**

Doctoral candidates and postdoctoral researchers at the GCSC and the GGS

### **Course language**

English

### **Registration**

#### ***For GGS-members:***

If you are interested in participating in the workshop as a participant, please register via e-mail at [info@ggs.uni-giessen.de](mailto:info@ggs.uni-giessen.de). If you are interested in contributing a presentation, please write an e-mail at Sonja Schillings and Paul Vickers ([sonja.schillings@gcsc.uni-giessen.de](mailto:sonja.schillings@gcsc.uni-giessen.de), [paul.vickers@gcsc.uni-giessen.de](mailto:paul.vickers@gcsc.uni-giessen.de)).

#### ***For GCSC-members:***

If you are interested in participating in the workshop as a participant, please register online on the GCSC website. If you are interested in contributing a presentation, please contact the workshop organizers, Sonja Schillings and Paul Vickers ([sonja.schillings@gcsc.uni-giessen.de](mailto:sonja.schillings@gcsc.uni-giessen.de), [paul.vickers@gcsc.uni-giessen.de](mailto:paul.vickers@gcsc.uni-giessen.de)).