



STOCKHOLM UNIVERSITY
Department of Sociology

Syllabus of "Multidisciplinary Master's Thesis in Demography"
(the 2 years programme)", SC, 30 ECTS

(Kursplan för tvärvetenskaplig masteruppsats i demografi, AN, 30 högskolepoäng)

Instructor: Livia Oláh, livia.olah@sociology.su.se

Decision

The syllabus is approved by the Board of the Department of Sociology, Stockholm University as of April 26, 2016.

Educational entry requirements

Course applicants should have completed the five courses of the compulsory demography module of the Multidisciplinary Master's Programme, one advanced methods course and one advanced theory course, and two further demography courses.

Course content

The course is provided at full-time basis over the last semester of the Multidisciplinary Master's Programme. In the course the student will acquire the ability to independently carry out a research project with demographic relevance and report the outcome in a thesis.

Learning outcomes

Upon the completion of the course the student is expected to be able to:

In terms of knowledge and understanding:

- Interpret demographic data and research results and discuss their validity

In terms of accomplishments and competence:

- Formulate relevant demographic research questions and hypotheses
- Link theory and appropriate methods for a specific demographic research question
- Work independently to carry out a scientific study of demographic relevance
- Write and present a scientific text with demographic content
- Write and present a report on demographically relevant questions that can be understood by persons without special knowledge in the area

In terms of attitudes and values:

- Search for, compare and critically review demographic data and literature relevant for a particular research question
- Identify and deal with ethical questions in demographic research

Teaching

Teaching is provided via an introductory seminar, thesis supervision, mid-term seminar and a thesis seminar. Students are entitled to 40 hours supervision, of which amount one third is assigned as contact time.

Under extraordinary circumstances, students can be granted a change of supervisor. A request, specifying the grounds for the request, shall be sent to the instructor in charge of the thesis course. In case a change is granted, the number of hours so far consumed will be deducted from the hours of supervision with the new supervisor.

Assessment and examination

a. The thesis is presented at a public seminar (by the student) and critically reviewed by an assigned discussant and an examiner. The discussant should be a PhD Candidate at least half way to the PhD degree or a researcher with a PhD degree. All students are expected to participate at two or more thesis seminars as well as to provide questions, comments regarding other students' theses.

b. The thesis is graded as Good, Sufficient or Not sufficient on each of the following criteria:

1. Contribution of the research to basic theoretical and empirical debates
2. Comprehensiveness and synthesis of relevant theory and previous research in the scientific literature
3. Critical approach to relevant previous research, identifying strengths and weaknesses and gaps filled by the thesis research
4. Logical organization of theory and previous research leading to the research question
5. Appropriateness of data and methods in a basic research context, and discussion of strengths and weaknesses
6. Clear and comprehensive description of data and research methods
7. Clear and comprehensive presentation of results
8. Interpretation of results in relation to previous theory and research
9. The oral defense (incl. presentation) of the thesis at a thesis seminar.

In the case that a thesis demonstrates exceptional skills with regard to theoretical argument, data management, or application of analytic methods, the total number of criteria evaluated as "good" may be increased by one.

The overall grade for the thesis is then determined as follows:

A - Excellent: Good on at least 8 of the 9 criteria, Sufficient on all others

B – Very good: Good on 7 of the 9 criteria, Sufficient on all others

C - Good: Good on 5 or 6 of the 9 criteria, Sufficient on all others

D - Satisfactory: Good on 3 or 4 of the 9 criteria, Sufficient on all others

E - Sufficient: Good on none or at most two of the 9 criteria, Sufficient on all others

Fx - Not sufficient: Not sufficient on 1-4 criteria

F - Fail: Not sufficient on 5-9 criteria

c. Students with grade Fx are given an opportunity to revise the thesis to achieve a grade of E at least. A student with grade E or higher is not entitled to another examination to raise his/her degree. Students who received grade Fx or F on exams twice from the same examiner can request to be evaluated by another examiner. Such request should be sent to the Director of Studies.

Students can request to have examination according to this syllabus up to three semesters after it has stopped to be valid. Such request should be sent to the Director of Studies.

Other issues

Student who don't complete the thesis within the course period can apply to have remaining hours of supervision transferred to a later semester. This can be granted provided that the supervisor and the Director of Studies give their approval.

Literature and data

Literature and data are chosen as appropriate for the thesis project.

APPENDIX

Recommended readings

J.W. Cresswell (2014). *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed Methods Approaches*. Fourth edition. SAGE.

I. Furseth & E.L. Everett (2013). *Doing Your Master's Dissertation: From Start to Finish*. SAGE.

C. Hart (2005). *Doing Your Masters Dissertation: Realizing your potential as a social scientist*. SAGE.

Onwuegbuzie, A & R. Frels (2016). *7 steps to a comprehensive literature review*. SAGE.

J. Parker; H. Stanworth (2015). *Explaining Social Life: A Guide to Using Social Theory*. Palgrave Macmillan.

R. Pears & G. Shields (2016). *Cite them right: The essential referencing guide*. Tenth revised and expanded edition. Palgrave Macmillan.

P. Ransome (2013). *Ethics and Values in Social Research*. Palgrave Macmillan.

V. Robinson & D. Richardson (2015). *Introducing Gender and Women's Studies*. Palgrave Macmillan.

M. Williams (2016). *Key Concepts in the Philosophy of Social Research*. SAGE.