

Course Information for Research Methods 7.5 ECTS Fall 2019 (half time)

The purpose of this course is twofold: First, students expected to acquire a better understanding of the conceptual, methodological and practical issues relevant to their research interests, and second, students are expected to prepare themselves for the actual writing of their Master's thesis (see grading criteria below). The course includes three seminars at the beginning, an assignment with feedback and a workshop at the end. Otherwise, students work independently. At the start of the course, the students are expected to have a research topic and have made first contact with their thesis supervisor, whom they should have seen at least once.

During the course, each student produces a thesis proposal, **six to eight pages**, including a shortlist of key texts. A draft is due midway through the course. The course teachers will provide feedback on this. A developed draft is due towards the end and ventilated at the workshop. The final proposal is then due on the last day of the term. Each student will provide feedback to the drafts of two other students at the workshop and turn in a written version of this. Seminars and workshop are compulsory (see schedule). There may be additional assignments related to the seminars.

The grade is based on the quality of the master's thesis proposal, participation and the feedback on the developed drafts of other students. The main criteria are:

- Clearly defined research question, motivation and feasibility,
- Reviewing of relevant theories and previous research,
- Critical engagement with the literature, including the required readings,
- Convincing and logical argument, which leads to the research question,
- Clearly described and feasible research design,
- Clear description of data and methods as relating to the research question
- Clearly stated awareness of the ethical problems involved
- Constructive and well-argued criticism and evaluation of other student's proposals

Teachers: Prof. Vanessa Barker vanessa.barker@sociology.su.se
Prof. Magnus Bygren magnus.bygren@sociology.su.se
Prof. Árni Sverrisson arni.sverrisson@sociology.su.se

Required readings

Committee on the Conduct of Science, National Academy of Sciences. 1995. On Being a Scientist. Washington, D.C.: National Academy Press. Also downloadable in pieces at <http://books.nap.edu/books/0309051967/html/index.html>

Becker, H.S. 1983. Freshman English for graduate students: A memoir and two theories." Sociological Quarterly 24:575-588.

Becker, H. S. 1986. Terrorized by the literature. Pp. 135-149 in H. S. Becker, Writing for Social Scientists. Chicago: University of Chicago Press (chapter can be downloaded).

Gustafsson, Bengt, Göran Hermerén, and Bo Petersson. Vad är god forskningsssed? Vetenskapsrådets Rapportserie 2005:1.

White, Lynn. 2005. Writes of passage: Writing an empirical journal article. Journal of Marriage and Family 67: 791-798. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.2307/3600238>

Each student is responsible for identifying additional texts and material relevant to their proposal.

Schedule

Date and time	Event	Teacher	Room
Tue 5/11 13-15	Introduction: Topics, Feasibility, Products, Knowing the Field	AS	B800
Thur 7/11 10:30-12:30	Research Ethics: Generating Data, Presenting Results, Sensitive issues	VB	B800
Mon 11/11 13-15	Design: Research Questions: Theory and Previous Research	MB	B800
Thur 28/11 16:00	Mid-course draft due and uploaded to teaching platform	All	Athena
Fri 20/12 16:00	Developed draft for workshop due and uploaded to teaching platform	All	Athena
Fri 10/1 13-17	Draft proposal workshop, presentation and oppositions	All	B800
Fri 17/1 16:00	Final proposal due (for grading) and uploaded to teaching platform	All	Athena