

## **Course Information for Research Methods 7.5 ECTS Fall 2020 (half time)**

The purpose of this course is twofold: First, students are expected to acquire a better understanding of the conceptual, methodological and practical issues relevant to their research interests, and second, students are expected to plan their Master's thesis project (see grading criteria below). The course includes three seminars at the beginning, an assignment with feedback during the course and a final plan presented at a teacher-led 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.

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 in seminars 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. Magnus Bygren [magnus.bygren@sociology.su.se](mailto:magnus.bygren@sociology.su.se)

Prof. Árni Sverrisson [arni.sverrisson@sociology.su.se](mailto:arni.sverrisson@sociology.su.se)

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## Suggested 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 (downloadable).

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 other material relevant to their proposal, eventually with support from the supervisor(s).

## Schedule

Tue 3/11 13-15	Introduction: Topics, Feasibility, Products, Knowing the Field	AS	Zoom
Thur 5/11 13-15	Research Ethics: Generating Data, Presenting Results, Sensitive issues	MH	Zoom
Tue 10/11 13-15	Design: Research Questions: Theory and Previous Research	MB	Zoom
Thur 26/11 16:00	Mid-course draft due and uploaded to teaching platform	All	Athena
Mon 21/12 16:00	Developed draft for workshop due and uploaded to teaching platform	All	Athena
Mon 11/1 13-17	Draft proposal workshop, presentation and oppositions	All	Zoom
Friday 15/1 24:00	Final proposal due (for grading) and uploaded to teaching platform	All	Athena