



DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WORK

SW2373 Research Theories and Methods, 15 credits

Research Theories and Methods, 15 högskolepoäng

Second Cycle

Confirmation

This course syllabus was confirmed by Faculty of Social Sciences on 2008-03-31 and was last revised on 2022-05-31 by Department of Social Work to be valid from 2022-08-29, autumn semester of 2022.

Field of education: Social Sciences 100%

Department: Department of Social Work

Position in the educational system

The course, Research Theories and Methods, 15 higher education credits, is a programme course given within the Master's Programme in Social Work and Human Rights within the Faculty of Social Science. The course is a methodology course.

The course can be part of the following programmes: 1) Master's Programme in Social Work and Human Rights (S2SWH) and 2) Erasmus Mundus Master's Programme in Social Work with specialization in Families and Children (S2SAF)

Main field of studies

Social Work

Specialization

A1N, Second cycle, has only first-cycle course/s as entry requirements

Entry requirements

To be eligible for the course, Research Theories and Methods, 15 higher education credits, a Bachelor's Degree in Social Work, or a Bachelor's Degree in related topics, and proficiency in English is required.

Learning outcomes

After completion of the course the student is expected to:

Knowledge and understanding

- have gained significant knowledge and understanding of scientific perspectives and paradigm shifts from a historical perspective
- have gained insight in the role of science, its possibilities and limitations in an international context

Competence and skills

- be able to discuss, analyze, and apply important theoretical concepts concerning both qualitative and quantitative scientific work in an international context
- be able to formulate and discuss research questions in an independent and creative manner and implement these in research out of a critical perspective
- be able to conduct a critical review of earlier research published in scientific journals or reports
- be able to select, understand, and use complex qualitative and statistical methods in social research

Judgement and approach

- be able to analyze and discuss ethical issues in conducting research
- be able to identify the need for further knowledge that are important to the field of social work

Course content

The course deals with the following topics:

- Scientific perspectives and paradigm shifts from a historical perspective
- Theoretical concepts concerning both qualitative and quantitative scientific work
- Formulation of research questions and implementation in research
- Review of earlier research using digital resources
- Ethics in social research
- Application of a variety of qualitative and quantitative research methods

Form of teaching

The course consists of sessions in the form of lectures, seminars, and computer labs. In terms of activities, the students are to carry out independent studies, group work, oral presentations, and written submissions; all of which are to be conducted through problem- and solution-oriented approaches.

Language of instruction: English

Assessment

The intended course learning outcomes are examined on the basis of six obligatory seminars. These consist of one ethics seminar, one focus group seminar that prepares for the third seminar that involve peer-reviews of research proposals, and three computer labs exercises involving quantitative methods. These six seminars require compulsory attendance and active participation, but are graded separately through either Pass or Fail.

Finally, there is one take-home examination that involves a submission of a research proposal. This is assessed with the grades Pass with Distinction (VG), Pass (G) or Fail (U). If the examination assignment receives the grade Fail (U) but is judged to be close to the limit for the grade Pass (G), supplementation must be allowed.

Replacement assignments must be submitted by the student in the event of absence, or insufficient participation at the seminar, or in the event of a Fail submission. The replacements are to be submitted in agreement with the course coordinators throughout the academic year.

If the student who has failed twice on the same examination element wishes to change examiner for the next examination session, such request should be submitted in writing to the department and must be approved unless there are special reasons on the contrary (HF Chapter 6, 22§).

If the student has received a recommendation from the University of Gothenburg for special pedagogical support, the examiner may, in case it is compatible with the intended course learning outcomes and provided that unreasonable resources are not required, decide to give the student an adapted examination or alternative form of examination.

In the event that a course has been discontinued or undergone major changes, the student must be guaranteed at least three examination sessions (including the regular examination session) for a period of at least one year, however, no longer than two years after the course has ended/changed. With regard to internships and work-based education, the corresponding applies, but with a limitation to only one additional examination session.

Grades

The grading scale comprises: Pass with Distinction (VG), Pass (G) and Fail (U). For the grade Pass (G), it is required that the intended course learning outcomes have been achieved and that the student has actively participated in all compulsory elements. For Pass with Distinction (VG) it is also required that the grade Pass with Distinction has been obtained for the take-home examination.

Course evaluation

The course is evaluated individually through an anonymous written form with questions on course administration, teaching, literature, assessment, student work-load and suggestions for improvements. Verbal evaluations could also be conducted with the

main tutors. The evaluation results will be communicated to the students and function as a guide for developing the course further.