



DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE

SF2323 Applied Qualitative Research Methods, problems and design, 15 credits

Tillämpade kvalitativa forskningsmetoder, problem och design, 15 högskolepoäng
Second Cycle

Confirmation

This course syllabus was confirmed by Department of Political Science on 2017-12-13 and was last revised on 2021-06-11 to be valid from 2021-08-30, autumn semester of 2021.

Field of education: Social Sciences 100%

Department: Department of Political Science

Position in the educational system

The course is given as either a free-standing course or as part of a Master's Programme within the Faculty of Social Sciences. The course is a method course in the second cycle.

The course can be part of the following programmes: 1) Master's Programme in Political Science (S2PSC), 2) Master's Programme in Political Science: Environmental Governance and Behavior (S2SPE), 3) Master's Programme in European Studies (S2EUS), 4) Master's Programme in International Administration and Global Governance (S2IAG) and 5) Media and Communication Studies Program (S1MKG)

Main field of studies

Political Science

Media and Communication Studies

European Studies

International Administration and Global Governance

Specialization

A1F, Second cycle, has second-cycle course/s as entry requirements

A1F, Second cycle, has second-cycle course/s as entry requirements

A1F, Second cycle, has second-cycle course/s as entry requirements

A1F, Second cycle, has second-cycle course/s as entry requirements

Criminology	A1F, Second cycle, has second-cycle course/s as entry requirements
Sociology	A1F, Second cycle, has second-cycle course/s as entry requirements

Entry requirements

To be eligible for the course the student should have obtained a pass grade on a 15 credits from a second cycle core course in the social sciences, or the equivalent.

Applicants must prove their knowledge of English: English 6/English B from Swedish Upper Secondary School or the equivalent level of an internationally recognized test, for example TOEFL, IELTS.

Learning outcomes

On successful completion of the course the student will be able to:

Knowledge and understanding

- Demonstrate general methodological knowledge and understanding of the various steps of the research process, namely problem formulation, theory, design, data collection and analysis.
- Demonstrate in-depth methodological knowledge in the main areas of qualitative method such as comparative case studies, observations, interviews and various forms of text analysis.
- Demonstrate knowledge of source-critical problems in qualitative research.
- Demonstrate knowledge of basic theoretical positions in science.
- Demonstrate knowledge of research ethics aspects that are relevant to qualitative research.

Competence and skills

- Demonstrate an in-depth ability to distinguish the different steps of the research process – i.e. problem formulation, theory, design, data collection and analysis.
- Be able to account for how the different steps of the research process relate to each other.
- Independently design and plan a qualitatively oriented research project.
- Demonstrate in-depth ability to carry out comparative case studies, observations, interviews and various forms of text analysis in a way that is adequate for the social sciences.
- Demonstrate the ability to apply source criticism in a way relevant to qualitative research.

- Independently produce text in accordance with good academic standards, including correct citation techniques and reference management.
- Express themselves orally and in writing in good and comprehensible English.

Judgement and approach

- Identify and assess ethical issues that are relevant to qualitative research.
- Evaluate how the choice of method and design is affected by problem formulation and theoretical points of departure.
- Critically evaluate how the choices that are made enable or limit the conclusions that can be drawn from a survey.

Course content

Scientific method helps us to generate knowledge in a systematic way. This course presents and provides practical training in the qualitative research process, with a focus on problem formulation, design, data collection and analysis methods. The course also provides an overall overview of various aspects of the research process that are of general relevance to research, such as the importance of the research question, different research designs, scientific theory, and research ethics. Furthermore, the course introduces source-critical aspects of relevance to qualitative research. In addition, the course offers an in-depth knowledge of and practical exercise in various methodological approaches, such as interviews, observations, and various forms of text analysis. During the course, the students also work on independently planning and designing a qualitative study.

Form of teaching

Teaching takes place through lectures, compulsory seminars, and supervision.

Language of instruction: English

Assessment

Students are assessed on the basis of their performance on written and oral assignments, in groups and individually. The course includes five compulsory seminars with oral and written examination. The fifth and final seminar concerns an individual research plan.

Completion of examined student performance is permitted. If the student does not submit a supplement within the set time, the student must be rejected on the examination assignment. A student who has not had the opportunity to attend the compulsory part can do an alternative task. The exact design of the assignment is stated in the course guide.

A student who has taken two exams in a course or part of a course without obtaining a pass grade is entitled to the nomination of another examiner. The student needs to contact the department for a new examiner, preferably in writing, and this should be approved by the department unless there are special reasons to the contrary (Chapter 6 Section 22 of the Higher Education Ordinance).

If a student has received a recommendation from the University of Gothenburg for special educational support, where it is compatible with the learning outcomes of the course and provided that no unreasonable resources are required, the examiner may decide to allow the student to sit an adjusted exam or alternative form of assessment.

At least five occasions shall be offered the students to pass a course or part of a course (Chapter 6, Section 21 of Higher Education Ordinance).

In the event that a course has ceased or undergone major changes, students are to be guaranteed at least three examination sessions (including the ordinary examination session) over a period of at least one year, but no more than two years, after the course has ceased/been changed.

Grades

The grading scale comprises: Pass with Distinction (VG), Pass (G) and Fail (U).

In order to receive the grade Pass (G), on the whole course, the student must have received a Pass (G) on all obligatory assignments. In order to receive a Pass with Distinction (VG) on the whole course, the student must have received a Pass with Distinction (VG) for the final assignment as well as a Pass (G) on all other obligatory assignments.

Course evaluation

The student will be given the opportunity to do a course evaluation. The results of and possible changes to the course will be shared with students who participated in the evaluation and students who are starting the course.