



FACULTY
OF SOCIAL
SCIENCES

COURSE SYLLABUS

Reg. No.
U 2024/260

Date 2024-06-05

**SGR022F, Research ethics in practice:
Social science perspectives, 7.5 credits
(*Forskningsetik i praktiken:
samhällsvetenskapliga perspektiv, 7,5
högskolepoäng*)
Third Cycle / Forskarnivå**

Details of approval

The course was established by the board of the Faculty of Social Sciences at Lund University on 2024-04-25.

The course syllabus was approved by the Research Studies Council on 2024-06-05 to be valid from 2025-01-01, spring semester 2025.

General information

The course is an elective third cycle course offered by the Faculty of Social Sciences.

Language of instruction: English

Learning outcomes

On completion of the course, students shall be able to:

- identify and critically discuss ethical dilemmas that occur in the process of doing social science research.
- make nuanced judgements about risk, confidentiality, and informed consent for different empirical approaches and methodological traditions within the social sciences.

- demonstrate an advanced understanding of ethical dilemmas in relation to the doctoral student's own research project or field.
- critically reflect on ethical considerations with regard to reporting research.

Course content

The focus of this course is research ethics in social science, as it is experienced in *practice*. Research ethics today are, to a great extent, articulated by prospective regulations, where laws, rules and committee-based procedures aim to anticipate ethical problems and secure good principles in a given project in advance. Much research is however characterized by emergent ethics: although some risks can be foreseen, many others evolve during the project, and are closely related to unfolding methodological challenges embedded in interactions in the field.

The course investigates ethical dilemmas emerging in commonly used research designs and methods in social sciences, such as ethnography, interviews, surveys, digital methods, “big data”, participatory research, research with “vulnerable groups” etc, as well as dilemmas – and good practices – in relations to procedures of ensuring confidentiality, and reporting ethically in publications. Key ethical debates in relation to these themes will be discussed, and students will critically examine ethical dilemmas in their own and their fellow students' doctoral projects and fields.

Course design

The course consists of a combination of lectures, seminars, and independent study of the required reading. Active participation in seminars, including required preparations, is compulsory. Students who are absent from seminars due to circumstances such as sudden illness will be offered the opportunity to compensate for compulsory components.

Assessment

The assessment is based on active participation in seminars and an individual paper addressing the themes covered in the course.

Grades

The grades awarded are Pass or Fail. To receive a Pass the doctoral students must fulfil the learning outcomes of the course. At the beginning of the course, students will be informed about the learning outcomes stated in the syllabus as well as the grading scale and how it is applied at the course.

Entry requirements

Applicants must be admitted to a doctoral programme.

Further information

The course is primarily intended for students admitted to a doctoral programme within social sciences. If the number of applicants exceeds the number of available places in the course, doctoral students from the Faculty of Social Sciences, Lund University, will be given priority. Other doctoral students can be admitted subject to a decision by the course director.