



Faculty of social sciences
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Qualitative Research Methods for the Social Sciences with focus on interviews and observations

Credit points: 7,5 hp

Responsible department: Sociology

Main field of study: Social science

Level: PhD-level

Subject area: Social science

Grading scale: U (fail), G (pass), VG (pass with distinction)

Confirmation

The course syllabus was established by the Dean of the Faculty of Social Sciences on 2016-02-29 and is valid from 2016-03-01.

Contents

The course is directed towards a deeper understanding and application of qualitative methods in the social sciences. The course includes a specialization in qualitative research design, research ethics, and practical application of interviews and observation data collection methods. The course is divided into three modules.

Module One: Qualitative research design

The course covers common issues in qualitative research. Different types of qualitative research design, choice of materials and data collection methods, strategies for selection, the researcher's role and different aspects of ethics are discussed and problematized.

Module Two: Observations

Initially the concept of observation is introduced and problematized, as well as the advantages and disadvantages that come with these methods. Furthermore, students train their skills in using observations through practical exercises and reflections of their own and other students' experiences.

Module Three: Interviews

Interview techniques, including individual interviews and group interviews, are introduced. Initially interview methods are discussed and problematized as a method to collect empirical material, after

which students practice interview methodology and reflect on their own and other students' experiences.

Expected learning outcomes

For passing the course, the student should acquire knowledge and understanding to:

- be able to motivate and develop qualitative studies
- be able to motivate and develop qualitative data collection methods
- be able to motivate and develop samples for qualitative studies
- know current ethical guidelines for social science research

For passing the course, the student should acquire skills and abilities to:

- apply relevant terminology in qualitative research
- independently conduct qualitative surveys based on interviews and observations

For passing the course, the student should also be able to:

- independently assess and critically evaluate qualitative studies
- independently assess and critically evaluate qualitative studies based on interviews and observations
- independently evaluate and independently relate to the ethical dimensions of qualitative studies.

Required knowledge

Admission to a doctoral program at the Faculty of Social Sciences. If there are vacancies, students from other faculties or universities can also be admitted to the course of.

Form of instruction

Instructions consist of lectures, practical assignments and seminars. The practical work is done individually. All seminars are compulsory. Teaching will be in English unless all participants are Swedish speaking.

Examination modes

Examination is performed by active participation in seminars, execution of assigned tasks for the seminars (individual assignment), and a final written assignment. Seminars are graded as pass or fail. If a student fails a seminar or an assignment, it requires the completion of an extra assignment. All assignments and seminars must be passed to pass the course. International students are assessed based on the ECTS scale.

The assignments cover the implementation of interviews and observations. This also includes a compilation of the raw notes from the interview or observation and the transcribed interviews and complete observation notes. These data will form the basis for seminar discussions, which aim to further deepen the understanding of such methods. More detailed instructions are given at the beginning of the course.

Academic credit transfer

Credit transfer is always examined individually.

Course literature

Module 1

Denzin, Norman K. & Lincoln, Yvonna S. (2011) *The Sage Handbbok of Qualitative Research*. Sage.

Guillemin, Marilys & Lynn, Gillam (20014) "Ethics, Reflexivity, and 'Ethically Important Moments'", *Qualitative Inquiry*, Vol. 10, No. 2., pp 261-280.

Lincoln, Yvonna S. (1995) "Emerging Criteria for Quality in Qualitative and Interpretive Research", *Qualitative Inquiry*, Vol. 1, No. 3, pp 275-289.

Marshall, Martin N. (1996) "Sampling for Qualitative Research", *Family Practice*. Vol. 13, no. 6, pp 522-525.

Morse, Janice M. et al (2002) "Verification Strategies for Establishing Reliability and Validity in Qualitative Research", *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*. Vol. 1, No. 2, pp 14-22.

Sandelowski, Margarete (1995) " Sample Size in Qualitative Research", *Research in Nursing & Health*, Vol. 18, No. 2, pp179-183.

Tucket, A. G. (20014) "Part 1: Qualitative Research Sampling – the Very Real Complexities", *Nurse Researcher*, Vol. 12, No. 1, pp 47-61.

Codex – regler och riktlinjer för forskning (diverse dokument). codex.vr.se



Course syllabus

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Articles, ca 50 pages.

Module 2

Spradley, J. P. (1980). *Participant observation* New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.

Articles, ca 100 pages.

Module 3

Chunnu Brayda, Winsome och Boyce, Travis D. 2014. "So You Really Want to Interview Me?: Navigating "Sensitive" Qualitative Research Interviewing", i *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, vol.13.

Herbert J. Rubin och Irene Rubin. 2005. *Qualitative Interviewing. The Art of Hearing Data*. Routledge.

Articles, ca 60 pages.

Reference literature

Wengraf, Tom. 2001. *Qualitative Research. Interviewing: Biographic Narrative and Semi-Structured Methods*. Routledge.