

# 733A64: Introduction to Advanced Academic Studies and Social Science, 7,5 ECTS Credits

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*Fall semester 2018*

## Teachers

Per Jansson, Senior Lecturer in Political Science, per.jansson@liu.se, room 3D:831, telephone 013-281841. (Course coordinator)

Charlotte Fridolfsson, Associate Professor in Political Science, charlotte.fridolfsson@liu.se, room 3D:825, telephone 013-286940.

Peter Igelström, Librarian, University Library, peter.igelstrom@liu.se, telephone 013-13 281929.

## Course administrator

Elin Montecinos, adm.statsvet@iei.liu.se, room 3D:837, telephone 013-284699.

## Aim

The aim of the course is to prepare the students for advanced academic studies and also to let the students learn the academic culture in general. A basic ambition is to supply essential tools to the students on the master's level in Sweden. The course covers questions concerning academic writing, quality assessment, review and criticism of scientific work, university rules, organization and ethical rules, rules on citation and reference, library facilities, and academic culture. The course also provides an introduction to

LiU, student-centred learning and policies of anti-discrimination and equal opportunities.

## Teaching

The course offers lectures, which introduce and develop the content of the course. Lectures are complementary to the literature.

Seminars and workshops are important aspects of the learning process and provide opportunities for mutual, critical discussions, which develop attitudes and skills. Students are expected to be well prepared for lectures and to have completed assigned preparations for seminars. Students are expected to read and take in the literature independently and/or in self-organized reading groups.

## Examination and requirements

The course is examined through obligatory attendance at the lectures (1.5 credits), obligatory attendance and active participation at seminars and group work sessions (1.5 credits), an individual paper for the first seminar ("Critically discussing a scientific text") (1.5 credits), and an individual methods paper (3.0 credits).

Failure to attend obligatory lectures, seminars and group work sessions will have to be compensated according to instructions from the course coordinator.

## Examination assignments and seminars

### **1. Critically discussing a scientific text (Per Jansson)**

The seminar on Friday, 31 August, is devoted to discussing an article by Christian Reus-Smit (2012), "International Relations, Irrelevant? Don't Blame Theory", *Millenium*, vol. 40(3), pp. 525-540. You can download the article from the University Library homepage.

In preparation for the seminar you should

1. download and read the article;
2. write a one-page text summarizing your own view of the relevance of International. The papers should be uploaded in Lisam in 'Submissions' **no later than Friday, 31 August, 12:00;**
3. be prepared to discuss the following questions in small groups at the seminar.

Questions for discussion at the seminar:

1. What determines the *practical relevance* of International Relations?
2. Why is an understanding of *politics* (according to the author) essential to International Relations?
3. What is the difference, and connection, between *normative* and *analytical inquiry*?

## **2. International Relations Method Analysis (Charlotte Fridolfsson)**

The second part of the course (Monday, September 3 – Monday, September 10) will be devoted to a group assignment. Each group will focus on a particular method, perspective or research technique as presented in *Social Research Methods* (Bryman 2015). Besides accounting for the assigned topic, each group shall also provide examples of the applied method from current studies within the field of international or European relations, relating to/illustrating the topic.

The assignment will be introduced in detail on Monday, September 3, and will be reported in class by the student groups on Monday, September 10.

Two scheduled group sessions are provided, but all student work is non-supervised.

## **3. Writing a methods paper (Charlotte Fridolfsson)**

The main examination assignment consists in writing a methods paper that will be presented at the final seminar on Friday, September 21. The paper should be 1800-2200 words long (12 pt font, 1.5 spacing), excluding front page, table of contents and list of references.

The papers should be uploaded in Lisam in 'Collaborative workspace' **no later than Wednesday, September 19, 23:59 o'clock**. In Collaborative workspace the students can subsequently access all the other assignments in order to prepare for the examination seminar.

- Formulate a research problem with relevance for international or European relations.
- Choose and motivate a suitable approach and method. In this context, discuss questions of validity and reliability.
- Choose relevant references to previous studies within the area of research by using library resources.
- Support your claims and acknowledge alternative perspectives and counterarguments.
- The report should be in good academic writing style, and with correct referencing and layout.

**Also:**

Prepare a ten-minute presentation of your report, and also be prepared to actively discuss your report at the examination seminar.

**How to do it:**

- use what you can apply from earlier acquired knowledge within your own discipline
- use resources as the library, and the internet for sourcing and selecting information
- use Murray & Hughes' *Writing Up Your University Assignments and Research Projects* and Bryman's *Social Research Methods*

## Literature

Bryman, Alan (2015) *Social Research Methods*, Oxford: Oxford University Press. 5<sup>th</sup> Ed.

Murray, Neil & Geraldine Hughes (2008), *Writing Up Your University Assignments and Research Projects: A Practical Handbook* (Milton Keynes: pen University Press).

Reus-Smit, Christian (2012), "International Relations, Irrelevant? Don't Blame Theory", *Millenium*, Vol. 40(3), pp. 525-540.

## Schedule

*For rooms and time, see TimeEdit!*

### Week 34

Mon 20/8

9.00 am *Information Day* (see program available on <https://liu.se/en/education/admitted/f7mer-admitted>)  
Hall C2, C Building, Campus Valla, Linköping

13-15 *Roll call and introduction to International and European Relations* in A33. (PJ)

Wed 22/8 Lecture: Academic Culture: Social Scientific Practice (PJ)

Thu 23/8 Lecture: Academic Culture: Work forms, examinations, expectations (PJ)

### Week 35

Wed 29/8 Working group session 1 (PJ)

Fri 31/8 Seminar: Text discussion (PJ)

### Week 36

Mon 3/9 Lecture: Introduction Social Science Research Methods (CF)

Tue 4/9 Library Introduction (PI) (Group A 10-12, Group B 13-1) Point of venue: KYPC, Key-building

Wed 5/9 Working group session 2 (CF)

Thu 6/9 Working group session 3 (CF)

### Week 37

Mon 10/9 Seminar: Presentation of group assignment (CF)

Wed 14/9 Lecture: Writing up your University Assignments (CF)

### Week 38

Mon 17/9 Lecture: Epistemology, ontology and Social Science Research (CF)

Wed 19/9 (23:59) Deadline examination assignment

Fri 21/9 Seminar (CF)

PJ = Per Jansson

CF = Charlotte Fridolfsson

PI = Peter Igelström