

Research Design and Methods

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7.5 credits

Single subject and programme course

733A48

Valid from: 2026 Spring semester

Determined by	Main field of study	
The Quality Board at the Faculty of Arts and Sciences	Political Science	
Date determined	Course level	Progressive specialisation
2010-12-17	Second cycle	A1N
Revised by	Disciplinary domain	
Chairman of the Course and Programme Syllabus Board at the Faculty of Arts and Sciences	Social sciences	
Revision date	Subject group	
2026-01-22	Political Science	
Offered first time	Offered for the last time	
Autumn semester 2011		
Department	Replaced by	
Institutionen för ekonomisk och industriell utveckling		

Course offered for

- Master's Programme in International and European Relations

Entry requirements

Bachelor's degree, equivalent to a Swedish Kandidatexamen, in political science, international relations, economics, history, geography, philosophy, law, sociology or equivalent

English corresponding to the level of English in Swedish upper secondary education (English 6/B) (Exemption from Swedish 3)

Intended learning outcomes

After completion of the course the student should be able to:

- recognize, understand and discuss contending positions on ontology and epistemology in the social sciences;
- display a deeper understanding of research traditions with relevance for the study of International and European relations;
- identify and understand the various stages of the research process, in relation to actual examples of research in the relevant fields;
- design and present an outline of an independent scientific investigation.

Course content

The central themes of the course are:

- an introduction to the philosophy of science;
- research traditions in the social sciences;
- the design of social and political research;
- conceptual, procedural and ethical considerations in research;
- advanced academic writing.

Teaching and working methods

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. Language of instruction is English. Activities which constitute elements of examination are mandatory.

Examination

The course is examined through a combination of mandatory seminars and writing and presenting a thesis proposal. Detailed information about the examination can be found in the course's study guide.

If special circumstances prevail, and if it is possible with consideration of the nature of the compulsory component, the examiner may decide to replace the compulsory component with another equivalent component.

If the LiU coordinator for students with disabilities has granted a student the right to an adapted examination for a written examination in an examination hall, the student has the right to it.

If the coordinator has recommended for the student an adapted examination or alternative form of examination, the examiner may grant this if the examiner assesses that it is possible, based on consideration of the course objectives.

An examiner may also decide that an adapted examination or alternative form of examination if the examiner assessed that special circumstances prevail, and the examiner assesses that it is possible while maintaining the objectives of the course.

Students failing an exam covering either the entire course or part of the course twice are entitled to have a new examiner appointed for the reexamination.

Students who have passed an examination may not retake it in order to improve their grades.

Grades

ECTS, EC

Other information

Planning and implementation of a course must take its starting point in the wording of the syllabus. The course evaluation included in each course must therefore take up the question how well the course agrees with the syllabus.

The course is conducted in such a way that there are equal opportunities with regard to sex, transgender identity or expression, ethnicity, religion or other belief, disability, sexual orientation and age.

If special circumstances prevail, the vice-chancellor may in a special decision specify the preconditions for temporary deviations from this course syllabus, and delegate the right to take such decisions.

About teaching and examination language

The teaching language is presented in the Overview tab for each course. The examination language relates to the teaching language as follows:

- If teaching language is “Swedish”, the course as a whole could be given in Swedish, or partly, or as a whole, in English. Examination language is Swedish, but parts of the examination can be in English.
- If teaching language is “English”, the course as a whole is taught in English. Examination language is English.
- If teaching language is “Swedish/English”, the course as a whole will be taught in English if students without prior knowledge of the Swedish language participate. Examination language is Swedish or English depending on teaching language.