Research Ethics in the Social Sciences

Ph.D. course at the department of Informatics and Media, Autumn 2023
Annika Waern

This course covers topics related to research ethics in the social sciences, with a strong focus on ethics in qualitative empirics. It corresponds to 7.5 HP (Bologna model) at Ph.D. level. The course is open for students at Uppsala University as well as part of the Swedish network for Ph.D. courses in HCI (shci.se).

The course consists of literature seminars and practical exercises. The practical parts include fictive ethical reviews of existing publications, and planning your own data collection / ethical application. Please note that Ph.D. students must get approval from their Ph.D. examiner to get course credits for the course.

To apply for the course, contact the course responsible teacher Annika Waern, Annika.waern@im.uu.se for further instruction.

Goals

The course covers theoretical and practical aspects on ethics in empirical research broadly related to the Social Sciences. After the course, students are expected to
- Be able to reason critically about the legal, philosophical and constitutional grounding of research ethics.
- Be able to make nuanced judgements concerning risk, privacy, and informed consent for a wide range of empirical approaches within the social sciences.
- Be able to plan a research intervention or data collection, making nuanced judgements about research ethics.
- Be able to write a high-quality ethical application.
- Be versed in Uppsala university institutions and Swedish formal procedures ensuring ethical conduct in research.

Examination

To pass the course, students must individually
- Participate in most seminars. Students that miss more than one seminar will be required to do complementary assignments.
- Present some of the literature for each seminar and participate actively in seminar discussions.
- Hand in documentation of a research intervention or data collection which details the ethical considerations made in its planning. This can be (part of) an ethical application, or if ethical approval will not be sought just a research plan.

Schedule

There are no lectures in this course. Participants are expected to read, and make notes for, all literature before the seminars.

Seminars are held over Zoom. The durations below are indicative: some seminars may not need all the time but book all of it in your calendars.

Date and Time	Seminar	Deadlines
September 26th, 13-16	Conventions and Codes of Conduct.	
October 10th, 13-17	Ethnography.	*Deadline:* Bring a paper to discuss at the seminar.
October 24th, 13-16	Participation, positionality and power.	
November 7th, 13-16	Conflict zones and repressive regimes.	
November 14th, 13-16	Online research.	
November 21st, 13-17	Data-driven research.	
December 5th, 13-16	Participation and Intervention.	*Also read ethic applications*
December 11th		*Deadline*: Draft an invitation to study and a consent form/process
December 12th, 13-16	Swedish regulations and institutions.	
December 19th, 13-16		
January 5th		*Deadline*: Ethical review application, or project plan
January 9-10, 13-16	Final seminars	