



Faculty of Social Sciences

SKOB39, Strategic Communication: Introduction to Research Methods and Academic Writing, 15 credits

Strategisk kommunikation: Introduktion till forskningsmetoder och akademiskt skrivande, 15 högskolepoäng

First Cycle / Grundnivå

Details of approval

The syllabus was approved by the board of the Department of Strategic communication on 2017-06-08 to be valid from 2017-06-12, autumn semester 2017.

General Information

The course is a compulsory component of the third semester of the BSc programme in Strategic Communication, 180 credits, and the BSc programme in Strategic Communication and Digital Media, 180 credits. The course is offered at Campus Helsingborg.

Language of instruction: English

All teaching, supervision and examinations is held in English.

Main field of studies

Strategic Communication

Depth of study relative to the degree requirements

G1F, First cycle, has less than 60 credits in first-cycle course/s as entry requirements

Learning outcomes

On completion of the course, the students shall demonstrate

Knowledge and understanding

Module 1

- understanding of the important dividing line between theory of science perspectives and research methods

Module 2

- understanding of the research area of strategic communication and digital media that underpins the investigation

- knowledge of the relationship between different types empirical data and choice of research method

Competence and skills

Module 1

- the ability to critically review research findings in strategic communication
- the ability to apply and critically reflect on analytical methods in strategic communication
- the ability to apply text and image analysis as well as observation as methods
- the ability to propose and argue for different methods on the basis of a stated aim and issues
- the ability to design a research project and produce academic texts

Module 2

- the ability to write an academic research paper with a methodological or thematic connection to strategic communication and digital media
- the ability to identify, formulate and solve scientific problems in a given time frame
- the ability to conduct research-based information searches using the library's databases
- the ability to orally and in writing to describe and argue for the chosen research method, problems and solutions

Judgement and approach

Module 1

- the ability to identify limitations in different research strategies and draw conclusions about differences between strategies

Module 2

- the ability to make judgments with respect to scientific, social and ethical aspects of strategic communications.

Course content

The course consists of two modules: Philosophy of science and research methods (module 1) and Academic paper in Strategic Communication (module 2).

Module 1: Philosophy of science and research methods

The course aims to introduce students to the theory of science and research methods in the social sciences specialising in strategic communication. The purpose is to enable students to develop the ability to reflect critically on and review scholarly texts. A further aim is for students to familiarise themselves with and develop an understanding of research strategies and methods as a preparation for the impending degree project.

During the course, students will engage with different theory of science perspectives and research methods. The focus is on qualitative analyses of texts and images in mass media and popular culture but quantitative analysis will also be introduced. Furthermore, the course deals with observation as a method in both physical and digital environments. Students will actively apply different methods and reflect on

their advantages and shortcomings in group exercises to be reported at seminars. The course also includes a component in which students have the opportunity to test different analytical methods on a set of empirical data.

Module 2: Academic paper in Strategic Communication

The purpose of the course is that the student will complete a paper on a defined research problems in strategic communication and digital media. The work will be based on scientific principles and fulfill fundamental theoretical and methodological knowledge. The work is done in groups of students that plan their work in consultation with the a supervisor. During the course seminars are organized in order to deepen the student's knowledge of scientific problems, research methods and scientific writing. The final paper is examined by an examiner at a public seminar with other students.

Course design

Teaching consists of lectures, supervisions, workshops and seminars. At least one supervisor will be appointed to each student group before the course starts. The period of supervision is limited to the semester in which the student is first registered on the course. Exceptions can be made on special grounds. The number of supervision sessions is limited.

Attendance at seminars and workshops are compulsory unless there are special grounds. An alternative form or date for compulsory components is offered to students who are not able to complete a compulsory component owing to circumstances beyond their control, e.g. accident, sudden illness or similar. This also applies to students who have missed teaching because of activities as a student representative.

Assessment

Module 1 is examined through three seminar assignments and an exam.

Module 2 is examined through the academic paper, and defense of the paper, and opposition of another paper.

Three opportunities for examination are offered in conjunction with the course: a first examination and two re-examinations. Within a year of the end of the course, two further re-examinations on the same course content are offered. After this, further reexamination opportunities are offered but in accordance with the current course syllabus. An alternative form or date for compulsory components is offered to students who are not able to complete a compulsory component owing to circumstances beyond their control, e.g. accident, sudden illness or similar. This also applies to students who have missed teaching because of activities as a student representative.

The examiner, in consultation with Disability Support Services, may deviate from the regular form of examination in order to provide a permanently disabled student with a form of examination equivalent to that of a student without a disability.

Subcourses that are part of this course can be found in an appendix at the end of this document.

Grades

Marking scale: Fail, E, D, C, B, A.

The student's performance assessed with reference to the learning outcomes of the course. For the grade of E the student must show acceptable results. For the grade of D the student must show satisfactory results. For the grade of C the student must show good results. For the grade of B the student must show very good results. For the grade of A the student must show excellent results. For the grade of Fail the student must have shown unacceptable results.

Course components such as seminars and workshops are exempted from the grading scale above. Where applicable the grades awarded for these components are Pass or Fail. For the grade of Pass the student must show acceptable results. For the grade of Fail the student must have shown unacceptable results.

The course grade is determined by calculating the mean of the weighted grades of marked exams. Weighted grades are calculated by transforming the grade to numbers (A = 5, B = 4, C = 3, D = 2, E = 1), then multiplying the number with the credits assigned to the respective element of the exam. To pass the course, the student must have received at least the grade E on all components of the course marked with the grading scale E – A, F, and pass all other components marked with the grading scale Pass – Fail, and participated in all compulsory components.

At the start of the course students are informed about the learning outcomes stated in the syllabus and about the grading scale and how it is applied in the course.

Entry requirements

To be admitted to the course, the student must have passed 45 credits of the BSc programme in Strategic Communication, 180 credits, or the BSc programme in Strategic Communication and Digital Media, 180 credits, of which at least 15 credits must be from the first semester of the programme.

Further information

The course cannot be included in a degree together with SKOB35 Introduction to research methods, 7,5 credits, SKOB36, Academic Paper in Digital Media, 7,5 credits or SKOB38, Academic Paper in Strategic Communication.

Subcourses in SKOB39, Strategic Communication: Introduction to Research Methods and Academic Writing

Applies from H17

- 1705 Seminar on Collecting Qualitative Data, 1,0 hp
Grading scale: Fail, Pass
- 1706 Seminar on Analyzing Qualitative Data, 1,0 hp
Grading scale: Fail, Pass
- 1707 Seminar on Using Quantitative Research Methods, 1,0 hp
Grading scale: Fail, Pass
- 1708 Exam in Philosophy of Science and Research Methods, 4,5 hp
Grading scale: Fail, E, D, C, B, A
- 1709 Seminar on Academic Paper, 0,0 hp
Grading scale: Fail, Pass
- 1710 Paper in Strategic Communication, 7,5 hp
Grading scale: Fail, E, D, C, B, A