

## **SKOC39, Strategic Communication: Introduction to Research Methods and Academic Writing, 15 credits**

*Strategisk kommunikation: Introduktion till forskningsmetoder och akademiskt  
skrivande, 15 högskolepoäng*  
**First Cycle / Grundnivå**

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### **Details of approval**

The syllabus was approved by the board of the Department of Strategic communication on 2018-03-13. The syllabus comes into effect 2018-03-14 and is valid from the autumn semester 2018.

### **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 study*      *Specialisation*

Strategic Communication	G1F, First cycle, has less than 60 credits in first-cycle course/s as entry requirements
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### **Learning outcomes**

On completion of the course, the students shall demonstrate

#### **Knowledge and understanding**

- understanding of the foundations of theory of science perspectives and research methodology,
- understanding of central research methods for collecting and analyzing data within quantitative and qualitative research method,

## Competence and skills

- ability to argue for different research methods in relation to a defined research aim,
- ability to identify, formulate and solve scientific problems within a given time frame,
- ability to design and write an academic research paper,
- the ability to conduct research-based information searches using the library's databases,

## Judgement and approach

- ability to identify limitations in and differences between different research strategies,
- ability to make judgments with respect to scientific, social and ethical aspects in research.

## Course content

The course is divided into two parts. The first part deals with the foundations of social science research methods. In the second part, the students write an academic paper in strategic communication. The purpose of the course is to enable students to develop the ability to reflect critically on and evaluate research methods. Moreover, the student will write an academic paper on a defined research problem. Students write the paper in groups and plan their work in consultation with a supervisor. During the course, workshops are organized in order to aid students in their writing.

During the course, students will engage with different theory of science perspectives and research methods. The focus is on both on quantitative methods with survey and content analysis, and qualitative methods with analysis of texts and images in mass media and popular culture. 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.

## Course design

Teaching consists of lectures, supervisions, and workshops. Each group will be appointed a supervisor at the start of the course. 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 workshops are compulsory. Students who are not able to complete a compulsory component owing to circumstances beyond their control, e.g. accident, sudden illness or similar, are offered an alternative form or date for compulsory components. This also applies to students who have missed teaching because of

activities as a student representative.

## Assessment

The course is examined through a take-home exam in quantitative research methods (3 credits), a take-home exam in qualitative research methods (4,5 credits), an academic paper (7,5 credits), defense of the paper, and opposition of another paper (0 credits).

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.

## Grades

Grading scale includes the grades: U=Fail, E=Sufficient, D=Satisfactory, C=Good, B=Very Good, A=Excellent

The highest grade is A and the lowest passing grade is E. The grade for a non-passing result is Fail. The student's performance is 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.

The opposition is 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.