



## Course syllabus

Faculty of Social Sciences  
Department of Social Work

4SA82E Självständigt arbete på masternivå, 30 högskolepoäng  
Master Degree - Dissertation, 30 credits

### **Main field of study**

Social Work

### **Subject Group**

Social Work and Social Welfare

### **Level of classification**

Second Level

### **Progression**

A2E

### **Date of Ratification**

Approved 2009-09-15

Revised 2014-10-27 by Faculty of Social Sciences.

The course syllabus is valid from spring semester 2015

### **Prerequisites**

NO VALUE DEFINED

## Objectives

After completing the course, students shall be able to:

### **Knowledge and understanding**

- independently distinguish and formulate a current research question, and conduct an academic study within the subject field of social work
- independently and with a critical approach search for scientific literature within the area of expertise, and in a qualified manner use this literature
- independently and in a reflective manner account for theories and previous research relevant to the chosen research problem
- independently motivate and challenge the validity claims of different theories

### **Skills and abilities**

- critically assess and independently apply an adequate scientific method for the collection and processing of data
- conduct a qualified and stringent analysis of collected data with the support of social scientific theories, and link the analysis to the current state of the art within the subject field of social work
- produce an academic study that meets the academic established requirements on

- formalities and good linguistic quality
- conduct a scientifically relevant and critical review of their own as well as other students' studies

### **Assessment ability and approach**

- analyse and assess ethical views
- in detail account for and apply research ethical regulations and agreements

### **Content**

The main element of the course is the writing of a scientific degree project/thesis, comprised of 30 credits within the subject field of social work. The degree project may preferably be related to one of the research domains represented at the department of Social Work, at the Linnaeus University.

Through these studies, students are expected to practice their ability to formulate a research question, plan and conduct an academic study, compile and present the results, and report the assignment in writing. Students shall also at a public discussion and examination seminar defend their own degree project as well as discuss and examine another student's degree project.

### **Type of Instruction**

Teaching is mainly conducted in the form of seminars and regular supervision. The period of supervision is limited to the semester in which the student was initially registered. Exceptions may be granted if special reasons apply. Instruction is based on active knowledge acquisition, critical thinking and problem-solving. Lectures, group discussions and seminars may be held. Teaching is mainly carried out in Swedish. However, the degree project may also be written in English.

### **Examination**

The course is assessed with the grades Fail (U), Pass (G) or Pass with Distinction (VG).

To be awarded a grade of Pass, it is required that the degree project and the public discussion and examination seminar are assessed with the grade Pass. In order to receive a grade of Pass with Distinction, the following is required: I) the student must demonstrate advanced and very clear abilities and skills in writing an academic study by formulating, analysing and reflecting on a research problem, as well as answering a research question in a way that is in relation to the state of the art in terms of method, scientific basis, theory and the research status of the main subject field of social work. The research problem should indicate a well developed independence and reflective skills, II) the student must demonstrate a well developed ability to, based on one or several relevant theoretical perspectives, clearly argue for and conduct a well performed and thorough analysis of their own collected empirical data, and adopt a clearly critical and reflective approach based on a good knowledge of the current state of the art in relation to their own conclusions, methodological choices, scientific choices and the chosen theoretical perspectives, III) the student must demonstrate that all the parts included, as well as the study as a whole, are of consistent and high quality (such as the sections of the paper being clearly linked to purpose and research questions, in which research problem, theory, method, scientific basis, analysis and results form a whole that is consistent and logical). The degree project may be presented either as a cohesive document in the form of an essay or as a scientific article. The degree project is performed individually or in pairs.

To be awarded a grade of Pass, active participation in public discussions of papers is required. Examination takes place at a public discussion of papers that is arranged once every semester, and a retake of the seminar is offered close to the scheduled examination date. A seminar is arranged once a year for those who have to retake the

public discussion. Retake of the exam (a new seminar) includes a new public discussion and examination, even though this may have been approved previously. The degree project shall be submitted electronically in accordance with the department's instructions, to be published in the open access data base (DIVA) in a server belonging to the Linnaeus University. Should there be valid reasons for not publishing the paper, exemption may be granted following a written application to the Head of the Department.

### Course Evaluation

A written course evaluation is carried out at the end of the course, compiled in writing and filed by the department. The results are presented to the students who have completed the course, and to the students at the following course date, together with any measures taken.

### Required Reading and Additional Study Material

The required reading in connection with the degree project is chosen in consultation with the examiner and based on the topic of the paper.