

Faculty of Economic, Social and Political Sciences



POLS1326 Practical Research Seminars in Sociology and Anthropology

[40h+20h exercises] 8 credits

This course is not taught in 2005-2006

Language: French

Level: First cycle

Aims

This text is a general framework document that lays down guidelines that all the practical research Seminars in Sociology and Anthropology have to follow. However, each seminar has its own course description and objectives.

These seminars aim to develop students' capacity to incorporate three types of know-how into their work: understanding and relevant use of the conceptual tools employed in Sociology and Anthropology; knowing how to put research methodology into practice (involving use of production and data analysis tools); being able to conduct field work.

When answering their research questions, students will be free to choose the theoretical framework, methodology, production and data analysis methods and production which they deem most suitable. The seminar will take students through the entire empirical research cycle.

Main themes

Students will be involved in carrying out all (from A to Z), or nearly all the steps involved in conducting a research project. From year to year, depending on who is giving the seminar, the focus will be either on the entire research process, or on a part of it: as such, students will be asked to demonstrate practical skills in what they have learnt.

The research process involves the following steps: definition of an initial research question, formulation of hypotheses and development of a theoretical framework, construction of analytical models, selection and practical application of an information gathering method, selection and implementation of a method of analysing information, interpretation and discussion of the results obtained and the process involved.

To conduct their research, students will be expected to be able to: get an overview of the current state of research on the topic, field, or issue; justify their choice of field (accessibility of data and information); justify their theoretical positions, draw up a method of collecting and analysing data..

Content and teaching methods

The following operations will be approached

- The demarcation / definition of the research domain
- The precision of the research orientations (question, problem, theoretical options)
- The apprehension of the ground (demarcation, presentation, approach)
- The selection and the implemented of techniques of collection and data processing
- The constitution of a relevant bibliography

Besides the active participation in the sessions of the seminar, the students will be brought to realize individual works and in subgroups.

Other information (prerequisite, evaluation (assessment methods), course materials recommended readings, ...)

Prerequisite: This course expands on the Study Skills Seminar, the Statistics and Elements of Probability, Quantitative Data Analysis and Qualitative Data Analysis courses, which are thus prerequisite for this course.

Evaluation:

Certificated evaluation methods:

Attendance of the seminar is compulsory; assessment is continuous and covers students' contribution students to the research project and their production and defence of a summary report.

Developmental evaluation methods:

Throughout the seminar, students will have a variety of tasks to perform which will give them the opportunity to self-assess their progress.

Course materials: Students are provided with a range of course materials, dependent on the topics dealt with during the seminar.

Supervision: the seminar is given by one or more members of the academic teaching staff, with the help of one or more assistants.