

Faculty of Economic, Social and Political Sciences



SOC2460 Sociology research seminar I

[60h] 8 credits

Teacher(s): Daniel Bodson, Luc Van Campenhoudt
Language: French
Level: Second cycle

Aims

Students will acquire three skills:

- an understanding of the conceptual tools used in sociology;
- the implementation of an explicit method;
- the processing of collected data, with a view to learning how to conduct operations of empirical research independently.

Main themes

The seminar will develop a research topic (this will vary from year to year depending on what the students choose, or following a suggestion from the teacher):

- in the form of a conceptual problem to be resolved, or
- in the form of a dilemma set before the actors, or
- in the form of a presentation of empirical data that require a fresh interpretation, or which challenge a theoretical model.

It will require a command of the following operations:

- justification of the choice of field (accessibility of data and information);
- the current state of research on the topic, the field, and the issue;
- justification of the problems, or of the theoretical options;
- delimitation of a method of collecting data.

Content and teaching methods

Content

The following operations will be addressed:

- the field of research with a provisional title;
- the direction being taken by the research (questions, the issue that has been planned, relations between this issue and theoretical options linked to one or more of the sociological currents);
- presentation of the 'field' (to show how it is accessible);
- planned techniques for gathering and processing (a precise presentation; showing how they are adapted to the issue, to accessible information, and to the normal length of the university year;
- non exhaustive bibliographical references (reference books and articles).

Methodology

Collective work mobilising inputs from all students around the chosen topic.

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

Pre requirements: A basic knowledge of sociology; an understanding of descriptive statistics.

Assessment: Attendance at seminar activities is compulsory. Students will produce a paper summarising what they have learned on the seminar (self assessment), and highlighting the inputs that they have made to the seminar.

Supervision: The seminar will be run by a member of the teaching staff, who may or may not, depending on whether research is being carried out, be assisted by a researcher.

