



Stockholm
University

Department of Education

Argue with research (7,5 ECTS)

Spring semester 2020

Course Content

During the course, topics concerning how to write a text about previous research, as well, as various methods that can be used in conducting extensive reviews of literature are covered. Furthermore, how individual arguments and evidence in scientific texts can be critically analyzed will also be discussed.

Learning outcomes

After the course, the student is expected to be able to:

- write a literature review about a specified research field in Education,
- describe different methods that can be used in literature reviews,
- analyze supporting arguments in original research.

Activities

All teaching is conducted online via video recorded lectures, and interaction via Stockholm University's online learning platform *Athena* and the *Zoom* video conference system. In addition, the course consists of individual and group work. The full-time course is fully online but includes scheduled online activities on Thursdays during the first four weeks of the course. The overall structure is as follows:

The first four weeks of the course (Jan 20 – Feb 14):

Mondays: Recorded lectures and instructions via *Athena*. These will be published in the morning but can be accessed throughout the day.

Wednesdays: Individual assignments are handed in via *Athena*, deadline at 16:00. These assignments are part of the summative assessment of the course.

Thursdays: Group work via *Zoom* and *Athena* at 13.00–16.00. (Students who have submitted their "Wednesday-assignment" will be assigned groups for this activity.)

Last week: (17 - 19 Feb):

Individual work and submission of the final paper, deadline Wednesday, February 19 at 23:59.

Assessment

The assessment of the course consists of four individual assignments and one final paper. Questions about specifics will be answered continuously in the designated discussion forum "Questions & answers" in *Athena* (Argue with research > Resources > Questions & answers). The individual assignments are handed in on Wednesdays and the final paper is submitted on the very last day of the course. During the first four weeks, you will also complete weekly tasks in designated groups. These tasks are not graded as group work. However, each student will submit the group's work and commentary about it as part of next week's individual assignment.

Grading criteria

The four individual assignments and the final paper will be assessed holistically. That means that strengths in one part may counterweigh possible shortcomings in others – and vice versa. In a general sense, all learning outcomes are equally important, but the final paper and the first learning outcome – to be able to write a literature review – encompass a larger part of the course content. The grading criteria can be described in three clusters, where degrees of quality within each level decide the individual grade:

A–B	A highly convincing argument, built on a solid body of relevant literature that is analyzed and used critically. Perfect or close to perfect use of references.
C–E	The argument is convincing, built on a proper amount of relevant literature. Proper use of references, possibly with some minor misunderstandings.
Fx–F	One or more of the following shortcomings: Not all assignments are submitted. The argument is overly descriptive. The literature used is lacking in relevance and/or quantity. Major flaws in the use of references.

The four individual assignments and the final paper are all relatively short pieces of work, but they are all meant to build on a workload that is proper for a full time, 7.5 credits course. Therefore, the quantity of literature searches, reading and analyses is an important quality in itself. However, a high-quality literature review builds on a deliberate choice of relevant sources. Low-quality or less relevant sources lowers the overall assessment. In case of a failing grade, re-examination (*omprov*) is administered on April 1, June 1 and December 1. To participate in the re-examination, you need to contact the administration as well as the course leader three weeks in advance for further instructions.

Ethical issues

According to Stockholm University's rules and regulations, all students have to be informed about academic honesty and plagiarism at the beginning of each course. A reference list and proper citation of literature and other sources is a requirement for all assignments. We use *Urkund* as text comparison software.

Plagiarism can be defined as the act of presenting someone else's work as one's own. Sometimes students plagiarize partly because they do not master the use of references properly. Other times students misunderstand the degree of cooperation that is allowed. In this course, all assignments are to be written individually. However, the group work that is submitted as part of the individual assignments is obviously made in cooperation. Furthermore, all students are expected to help each other to find relevant sources for the various individual tasks. Such cooperation is encouraged in this course.

It is not allowed to use texts that you have written yourself and that have been examined as part of other university courses and present them as assignments for examination in a new course. This is referred to as self-plagiarism and is in the same way as other types of plagiarism taken seriously by Stockholm University.

At Stockholm University, plagiarism is taken seriously and will be reported to the University Disciplinary Board with a possible consequence that the student will be suspended from their studies for up to six months. Please read the following webpages to learn more about Regulations for Disciplinary Matters at Stockholm University:
<https://www.su.se/english/education/2.211/guidelines-for-disciplinary-matters-at-stockholm-university-1.181>

Required reading

Graff, G. & Birkenstein, C. (2018). *"They say / I say": the moves that matter in academic writing*. (Fourth edition.) New York: W. W. Norton & Company.

Hart, C. (2018). *Doing a literature review: releasing the research imagination*. (2nd edition.) Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.

A selection of research articles*

*During the course, each student will search for and analyze a selection of original research in the field of Education.

Contact information

Once the course has started, all questions about the course content, assignments, etc. is handled via the discussion forum "Questions & answers" in *Athena* (Argue with research > Resources > Questions & answers). For practical issues regarding registration etc., please contact the course administrator directly. For personal issues and other matters that do not involve the course content, e-mail the lecturers (the messaging function in *Athena* is not used by the lecturers in this course).

Course administrator:

Emma West (emma.west@edu.su.se)

Lecturers:

Stefan Ekecrantz, course coordinator (stefan.ekecrantz@su.se)

Rebecca Ye (rebecca.ye@edu.su.se)