Course description

Course code:	PH02A1
Course name:	Research methodology
Course credits:	7.5
Valid from:	2023

Course content

The course aims to provide the student with knowledge and experience of research methodology in public health sciences. The course includes: basic overview of ontology and epistemology relevant to the public health sciences; the use of explanatory models and theories in public health science; the use of the concept of causality in the public health sciences; ethical issues in public health sciences and in public health research; and an overview of some common study designs in public health science and how these relate to different types of research questions. The course also includes practical computer exercises with appropriate software.

Learning outcomes

In order to receive a passing grade on the course, students are expected to be able to:

Knowledge and understanding

1. Demonstrate basic understanding of the relationship between ontology and epistemology.

2. Demonstrate basic knowledge of the role of explanatory models in public health research.

3. Describe some of the most common types of research designs in public health research.

4. Demonstrate an understanding of the relationships between research designs and the research questions they address.

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5. Demonstrate a general understanding of the use of the concept of causality in public health.

6. Demonstrate a general understanding of the use of the concept of risk in public health science.

7. Demonstrate an overall understanding of data collection in terms of conceptualization, operationalization, bias and measurement error.

8. Demonstrate a basic understanding of how different aspects of time are important in public health.

Skills and abilities

9. Interpret simple relationships between exposure and outcome using appropriate software.

Evaluation and approach

10. Describe some significant ethical challenges in public health science and in public health research.

Teaching (optional header)

The teaching will be based on lectures, seminars, and computer exercises. For a schedule please see TimeEdit.

Active participation in 2/3 of the seminars is mandatory. In case of absence from, or insufficient participation, in a seminar, the student will be given a compensatory assignment.

The course will be taught in English.

Forms of examination

Examination I. Individually written take-home exam

Learning objectives 1-8, and 10 are examined through a take-home exam. Grading is based on an objective-related seven-point scale (A-F).

Other grading elements

Learning outcome 9 is examined with an assignment. Grading is based on a two-grade scale (U=Fail, G=Pass).

Course requirements

The course includes an oral presentation at a seminar. Absence or inadequate participation at the seminar is compensated by a replacement assignment.

Language

The examination will be in English.

Certificate of special pedagogical support

For students who have a certificate from Stockholm University with a recommendation for special educational support, the examiner can decide to customize the teaching, give a customized test or let the student complete the test in an alternative way.

Learning platform Athena

We use the learning platform Athena (itslearning) for sharing information and course material. You log into Athena by using your university account via: https://athena.itslearning.com/

Schedule

You can find the course schedule in TimeEdit via the course web page or via the course page in Athena.

Course literature

The literature list for this course is available through the course web page and the course page in Athena before the course starts.

Referencing

You can find a reference guide to APA on this page: https://kib.ki.se/en/write-cite/writing-references-apa-vancouver/reference-guides/reference-guide-apa-7

By using a reference managing software you can collect and organize your references and insert them into your document in a desired format. Via the library's web page you can watch a film with information on how to handle your references. There you will also find information on the most used programs: https://www.su.se/cmlink/portaler-nod/webb-2021-nod/svensk-webb-2021/centrala-gamla/library/tutorials/tutorials/reference-management-software-1.264569

Plagiarism

Plagiarism, cheating, or self-plagiarism is prohibited in all parts of the course.

You may not copy text from the course literature or other sources, or present other people's ideas or work as your own – this is plagiarism. Summaries or other use of original texts must always be written in your own words and followed by a correct reference. Short quotations (with citation marks) are accepted if necessary, but should be used sparsely and always be accompanied by your own interpretation of the text and a correct reference with page number.

Self-plagiarism is to use your own text once again, without reference to your original text. This could be text from published articles, or text from other assignments you have written before, such as home exams or a thesis.

All examinations are controlled through a software for detecting plagiarism. Suspicion of cheating, plagiarism or self-plagiarism is reported to the Disciplinary Board at Stockholm University.

For more information, please see: https://www.su.se/staff/organisation-governance/governing-documents-rules-and-regulations/education/guidelines-for-disciplinary-matters-at-stockholm-university-1.181

Use of AI chatbots

Use of ChatGPT or other generative AI systems to generate text for the take home exam is not permitted. It is also not permitted to use such services to make extensive changes to the structure or content of your text.

Use of ChatGPT or other generative AI systems to proofread text for the home exam is permitted (for example, prompts such as: "Can you proofread this text?" or "Can you check this text for grammar?").

Suspicion of illicit use of generative AI systems will be tested in tracking tools for AI-generated text and suspected cases will be reported to the Disciplinary Committee at Stockholm University

For students who have been granted special pedagogical support

You need to inform the study counsellor in the very beginning of the term (studievagledare.publichealth@su.se) that you require pedagogical support. You then also need to present the certificate which you have received from the coordinator for special pedagogical support at Stockholm University.

Please also contact the study counsellor before the start of each new course, to plan for an alternative/accommodated form of examination, if possible.

Grading criteria (optional header, this information can be shared with the students on the course introduction at the latest)

Will be communicated at course start.

About the grade Fx
It is possible to supplement the grade Fx up to a passing grade if the student is close to the limit for passing.

In case of approved completion of minor formal errors, or of a single part of the examination, the grade A-E is used.

In the case of approved completion of general deficiencies of a comprehension nature, the grade E is used.

If the completion of the grade Fx is assessed as failed, the grade F is used.

Contact information

Course managers

Anders Ledberg, anders.ledberg@su.se

Please contact the course manager primarily via the message function in Athena.

Course administrator

kursadmin.publichealth@su.se

Study counsellor

studievagledare.publichealth@su.se

Director of studies, basic and advanced level

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