

# RESEARCH STRATEGIES AND DESIGN PROBLEMS IN HEALTH AND WELFARE SCIENCES

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## STUDY GUIDE

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SCHOOL OF  
HEALTH SCIENCES  
JÖNKÖPING UNIVERSITY

## Table of contents

Course Contacts.....	3
Course Aim, Content and Format.....	4
<b>Aim</b> .....	4
<b>Content</b> .....	4
<b>Course format</b> .....	4
<b>Examination</b> .....	4
<b>Lecturers' role</b> .....	5
References/Literature List.....	6
Schedule.....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>

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## Course Aim, Content and Format

### Aim

This course aims to give an overview over some important research strategies and design issues, which one needs to take into consideration when conducting research in the caring sciences and/or on caring-related issues. The course focuses on providing participants with a better understanding of concepts and principles of research design that could facilitate decision-making processes while research projects are being planned.

After completing the course, participants should be able to:

- Make an analysis of the pros and cons associated with different study designs and/or suitable for different research questions
- Critically assess the design of published research studies
- Independently plan the design of own studies

### Content

The course discusses basic issues one needs to take into consideration when designing research projects that are either quantitative or qualitative in their approach and/or that combine these approaches to data collection and analysis.

Criteria for drawing valid conclusions (i.e. internal validity, external validity, construct validity and statistical validity) will be presented and discussed in an attempt to show how 'good science' is done.

The course will also address the issue of validity and reliability as these are addressed when one works qualitatively. Thus, participants are expected to be able to apply and assess validity and reliability irrespective of whether they are primarily schooled in the quantitative and/or qualitative research tradition.

### Course format

The course is based on streamed lectures and seminars, some web-based. Participants are expected to have listened to the lecture and have read the course literature before each seminar in order to be prepared to follow and discuss the various issues that the seminar will bring to fore. The seminars will also analyze and discuss research studies that are already published.

Participants need to submit an abstract of their own research project. The abstract should be no longer than one page. The abstracts will be made available for the lecturers prior to the course.

### Examination

Examination consists of two assignments:

- 1) The first assignment constitutes an individually written paper about basic principles and constructs in the selection of research design. In this paper, participants are expected to present and apply – in relation to two individually chosen published research studies (one quantitative and one qualitative) - the different principles and constructs that have been brought to fore in both the literature and the lectures. The paper's main focus should be on issues related to drawing valid conclusions.

*DEADLINE March 14.*

- 2) The second assignment constitutes an individually written paper in which participants plan the design of one qualitative OR one quantitative study in their own area of research. Preliminary versions of the design related to the participants own area of research will be discussed at the final seminar in April. Following the seminar the participants will have one week to complete assignment 2 before it is graded.

*DEADLINES: A preliminary version is to be handed in by April 15 before the examination seminar on April 24.*

*The final version is to be handed in by May 9, 2014.*

Examiner is Professor Mats Granlund.

Grades given are Fail/revise or Pass.

Both assignments 1 and 2 must be graded as passed for the course to be graded as passed.

### **Instructions for the assignments**

#### *Assignment 1*

Basic design constructs and principles are applied to one qualitative and one quantitative published research study. Focus should be on how theory, research questions, method, results and discussion are logically related based on criteria for drawing valid conclusions.

Length: Times Roman 12 points, 1,5 space, 5 pages (plus references)

#### *Assignment 2*

*Write a project proposal which includes aim, research questions and methods using the headings: Design, Participants, Instruments, Procedure, Data analysis, and Ethical considerations. Research questions must concern the caring sciences, care taking and/or intervention. The design must be realistic and possible to implement within the financial frames of the project in which the participant is working.*

Length: 7 pages, Times Roman, 12 points, 1 1/2 space (plus references). The two last pages out of the 7 should be used for relating the described design to validity aspects of a quantitative design or similar aspects for a qualitative design.

*To receive the grade passed all different forms of validity must be discussed and the advantages and disadvantages of the design (in relation to validity (or similar constructs) must be explicitly analyzed.*

### **Lecturers**

Lecturers are expected to have read the course literature and students' abstracts of their research projects. Lecturers are expected to focus their presentations on issues related to drawing valid conclusions.

## References/Literature List

Kazdin, A.E. (2002). *Research design in clinical psychology (4ed)* Boston: Allyn & Bacon (valda delar 375 sidor).

Creswell, J (2000). *Qualitative inquiry and research design – Choosing among five traditions* (Chap. 1-2; Chap. 4-5 och CHap. 10 i 1998 upplaga). London: Sage Publications

Newman, I., Ridenour, C., Newman, C., & De Marco J., G. (2003) A typology of research purposes and it's relationship to mixed methods. In A. Tashakori, & C. Teddlie (Eds.) *Handbook of Mixed Methods* London: Sage Publications

Moore, J (2003). Principles of mixed methods and multimethod research design. In A. Tashakori, & C. Teddlie (Eds.) *Handbook of Mixed Methods* London: Sage Publications

Silverman, D. (2001) *Interpreting Qualitative Data. Methods for Analysing Talk, Text and Interaction. Second edition.* London: Sage. Chapters 1, 2, 3 & 6. pp. 1-78; 159-190.

Bergman, L. R., Magnusson, D., & El-Khoury, B. M. (2003). *Studying Individual Development in an Interindividual Context: A Person-Oriented Approach.* Lawrence Erlbaum Ass. KAPITEL 1-4

Research papers and literature as recommended by lecturers (ca 300 p)