PhD PROGRAMME 2019-2020¹

STUDY GUIDE

Version August 2019

¹ This study guide will be updated throughout the year, please check our website for the latest version of this document.
Content

1. Introduction to the PhD Education Programme .................................................. 3
2. General structure of the programme ................................................................. 3
   2.2 Basic programme for first year PhD candidates ....................................... 4
   2.3 Organizing your training plan ................................................................. 5
3. Course Overview 2019-2020 ............................................................................ 6
4. Course Descriptions .......................................................................................... 10
   4.1 Area 1: Social scientific content and theory ............................................. 10
       4.1.1 Proposal Design & Writing tutorials – revised .................................. 10
       4.1.2 Advanced Theory Construction ......................................................... 11
       4.1.3 Great Thinkers (offered by AISSR) ..................................................... 14
       4.1.4 Self-organized PhD Reading Clubs / Seminar Series - NEW! ............... 15
       4.1.5 Self organized Theoretical Tutorials .................................................. 16
       4.1.6 Conference presentation .................................................................. 16
   4.2 Area 2: Social scientific methodology, methods and techniques ............... 17
       4.2.1 Selected Quantitative Methods ........................................................ 17
       4.2.2 Selected Qualitative Methods - revised ............................................ 18
       4.2.3 Collecting, Analyzing and Writing with Qualitative Data .................... 20
       4.2.4 Doing Biographical Research: interviewing, analyzing, theorizing ......... 21
       4.2.5 Data Analysis in R ......................................................................... 22
       4.2.6 Data Mining & Text Analysis ............................................................ 25
       4.2.7 Qualitative Methods ...................................................................... 26
       4.2.8 Self Organized Methodological tutorials ......................................... 27
   4.3 Area 3: Academic and transferrable skills .................................................... 28
       4.3.1 PhD Bridging Programme ................................................................ 28
       4.3.2 PhD Induction Programme - mandatory ......................................... 29
       4.3.3 Research Integrity and Responsible Scholarship Revised - Mandatory ..... 31
       4.3.4 Writing a Data Management Plan - mandatory - offered twice ............ 33
       4.3.5 Writing Academic English - Intermediate - revised ....................... 34
       4.3.6 Writing Academic English - Advanced - revised .............................. 35
       4.3.7 Attractive Academic Writing (Intensive Course) ................................ 37
       4.3.8 How to Publish and Write Journal Articles ....................................... 38
       4.3.9 Time- and Project Management ....................................................... 39
       4.3.10 University Teaching Programme (UTP) or Basiskwalificatie Onderwijs (BKO) ...................................................................................... 41
4.3.11 Communicating Science ..................................................................................43
4.3.12 Science Blogging ..........................................................................................44
4.3.13 PhD Career Day – with University of Amsterdam (AISSR and ASCoR) .......46
4.3.14 Career Orientation – revised .......................................................................46
4.3.15 Rise and shine! How to present your academic research .......................48
4.3.16 Successful Grant Writing ............................................................................49
4.3.17 Increase your Impact - Data Science: Visualizations in R ....................50
4.3.18 Writing marathons .......................................................................................52
4.3.19 Self Organized Skills Tutorials .................................................................52
4.4 Self Organized Tutorials ..................................................................................53
5. Courses offered outside VU-GSSS .................................................................55
  5.1 Courses offered by HRM VU University .......................................................55
  5.2 Courses offered at Research Schools within the Netherlands ....................56
  5.3 International Summer Schools ......................................................................57
  5.4 Online Training .............................................................................................57
  5.5 VU Research Data Services .........................................................................57
  5.5.1 Available data sources ..............................................................................58
  5.5.2 Company data ..........................................................................................58
  5.5.3 Financial markets ......................................................................................58
  5.5.5 Economic and socio-economic data ..........................................................58
  5.5.6 Example uses for the social sciences ........................................................59
1. Introduction to the PhD Education Programme

The VU-GSSS PhD programme is designed to support PhD candidates linked to the various departments of the VU Faculty of Social Sciences in their project progress and individual development. The content of the PhD programme, the individual courses, as well as the academic teaching staff are carefully chosen. All courses are designed to enhance the academic knowledge and skill development of PhD candidates, not only to enable a successful completion of their PhD project, but also to prepare them for a career as an applied or postdoctoral researcher or Assistant Professor thereafter. The programme is tailored to serve the needs of PhD candidates at different stages of their project, regardless of their topic or methodological approach.

In order to stimulate a careful planning at the start of each PhD trajectory, PhD candidates and their supervisors are required to design and submit a detailed planning within the first 2 months of their project within Hora Finita. An individual training plan for the (usually three or four year) PhD trajectory is part of this plan. A minimum of 30 EC\(^2\) of PhD training is required as specified in the VU Doctorate Regulations. During a meeting with the Graduate School programme director, the PhD candidate and the supervisor(s) to discuss the training plan is advised.

The training plan may vary per individual candidate depending on discipline, prior training, personal interest and the requirements of the candidate’s research project. As a general rule, and aimed at acquiring the final attainment levels for PhD candidates, the training plan should be designed such that PhD candidates develop their knowledge, expertise and skills in the three areas specified below. PhD candidates are advised to concentrate their course work in the first two years of their PhD project and thus limit the course work in the last (two) year(s) and are required to have successfully obtained a of 10 ECs during the first year of their project. For details on the requirements and recommendations for the PhD training plan see the PhD Information document.

2. General structure of the programme

The various courses in the programme center around one of three main fundamental content areas, although there will certainly be overlap and courses may attend to more than one area. These areas are:

- **Area 1: Social scientific content and theory.** These courses aim to support PhD candidates to assess and build theories and obtain relevant social scientific knowledge at a doctoral educational level both within and beyond the boundaries of their own discipline. See paragraph 4.1 for a complete overview of courses in this area organized by VU-GSSS.

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2 According to the European Credit Transfer System \( \Rightarrow 1 \text{ credit} = 28 \text{ hours} \).
Area 2: Social scientific methodology, methods and techniques. These courses focus on research design and methodology, and provide hands-on experience with advanced methods of analysis. See paragraph 4.2 for a complete overview of courses in this area organized by VU-GSSS.

Area 3: Academic and transferrable skills. The main focus in these courses is on the development of academic and transferable skills, aimed at improving the necessary skills for current and future practice as an academically educated researcher. See paragraph 4.3 for a complete overview of courses in this area organized by VU-GSSS.

In addition to following courses PhD candidates can arrange individual or small group tutorials focusing on a specialized theoretical, methodological or skills based topic (theoretical, methodological and skills tutorials). Science blogging can be performed throughout the PhD trajectory; communicating about scientific activities in online blogs is intended to aid PhD candidates both in developing academic skills (i.e., writing, valorization) as well as in their project- and individual progress (fostering understanding, networking, publishing).

2.2 Basic programme for first year PhD candidates

A number of courses are particularly relevant and instructive in the starting period of a PhD project and thus provide essential education for first year PhD candidates. These courses provide useful knowledge and assignments that help PhD candidates to understand and delimit their research field, to review and evaluate the literature, to formulate a proper research question, to determine the right methodology, and to conduct research in a responsible manner. As such they support PhD candidates to specify the research plan of their PhD project, prepare them for the delivery of the 8 month product, and facilitate a proper start of the project.

In designing a training plan, first year PhD candidates are therefore urged to schedule these courses within the training Portfolio of Hora Finita. This will enhance progress and quality of PhD projects, i.e., the Training and Supervision Plan and go-no go product (former 8-month product). For the cohort of PhD candidates who start their PhD trajectories at the advised starting period in August/September, this results in the following basic course programme:

- Bridging programme (period 1: Sep)
- PhD Induction Programme (period 1: Sep)
- Research Integrity and Responsible Scholarship (period 2: Oct/Nov) – mandatory
- Writing Data Management Plan (period 2: Oct and period April) – mandatory!
- Proposal Design & Writing Tutorial (period 1-4: Oct-March)
- Writing Academic English (period 4-5: March)

The remaining courses offered in the programme are usually advised for the second and third year of the PhD trajectory.

3 Note that our program is subject to change. Please check our website for an up-to-date version of this study guide.
2.3 Organizing your training plan

Individual training plans likely vary between PhD candidates depending on their prior education and methodological differences in their research projects. If relevant, courses offered by other graduate schools or research institutes at other universities in the Netherlands or abroad can be followed as a supplement to parts of the VU-GSSS PhD programme, provided they are at least research master or PhD candidates' level.

For all completed VU-GSSS courses you will receive a certificate, these certificates will be uploaded in Hora Finita. For courses outside VU-GSSS you will need to upload the certificates yourself, including all necessary documentation. This also applies to other activities granted with EC’s. VU-GSSS will then do a final check whether the credits can be granted.

Note that, during the year, new courses, seminars and summer workshops, may be added to the VU-GSSS education programme. You will be informed about this through the mailing list. We will also try to keep you posted about relevant courses offered by other institutions. Please note that courses offered by the VU Amsterdam Business Research Institute and the Graduate School for Religion and Theology, are open to participation from VU-GSSS members (max. 5), free of charge. Their programmes are available online. The same applies to a smaller selection of courses offered by the Amsterdam Institute for Social Science Research (AISSR), information available at the Graduate School. If you find relevant courses in their programmes, you can contact us.

At the end of this Study Guide a variety of courses offered outside the VU-GSSS are listed, such as other Graduate Schools within or outside the VU, Research Institutes in the Netherlands, as well as (International) Summer Schools and Winter Schools. It should be noted that the list of Summer Schools in this Study Guide is not exhaustive, there are many more interesting alternatives, which also depends upon your specific needs, background, project and discipline. Any additional suggestions are very welcome!

VU-HRM for instance, offers courses on PhD planning and career planning, such as PhD Success and Personal Efficacy (3 EC’s). LEARN! Academy offers the University Teaching Programme (UTP) or Basiskwalificatie Onderwijs (BKO) courses

For more information and suggestions on courses/seminars offered by VU-GSSS or elsewhere, or training plan requirements, and to sign up for a course, please send an email to FSW Graduate School graduate.school.fsw@vu.nl.
### 3. Course Overview 2019-2020

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course name</th>
<th>Hora Finita code</th>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Register before</th>
<th>Date (indication)</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bridging Programme</td>
<td>FSS – Bridging Programme</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10 Augustus 2019</td>
<td>Period 1 (9 September – 1 October 2019)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PhD Induction Conference</td>
<td>FSS - PhD Induction Conference</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Four weeks before the start date of the course</td>
<td>Period 1 (4&amp;5 October 2019)</td>
<td>Mandatory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Integrity &amp; Responsible Scholarship</td>
<td>FSS - Research Integrity and Responsible Scholarship</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Four weeks before the start date of the course</td>
<td>Period 1 (October 2019) &amp; Period 6 (June 2019 Research master)</td>
<td>Mandatory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing a Data Management Plan</td>
<td>FSS - Writing a Data Management Plan</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Four weeks before the start date of the course</td>
<td>Period 1 (October 2019)</td>
<td>Mandatory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career Orientation</td>
<td>FSS - Career Orientation</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Four weeks before the start date of the course</td>
<td>Period 1 (October)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How to Publish and Write Journal Articles</td>
<td>FSS - How to Publish and Write Journal Articles</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Four weeks before the start date of the course</td>
<td>Period 1-2 (October &amp; November 2019)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course</td>
<td>Start Details</td>
<td>Duration</td>
<td>Details</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proposal Design &amp; Writing Tutorials</td>
<td>FSS - Proposal Design and Writing Tutorial</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Four weeks before the start date of the course</td>
<td>Period 1-4 (October 2019 - March 2020)</td>
<td>Part of Basic Programme for PhD candidates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase your Impact: Data Science: Visualizations in R</td>
<td>FSS - Data Science: Visualizations in R</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Four weeks before the start date of the course</td>
<td>Period 2 (Nov-Dec 2019-December)</td>
<td>Bring data/research results</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workshop Successful Grant Writing</td>
<td>FSS – Workshop Successful Grant Writing</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Four weeks before the start date of the course</td>
<td>Period 2 (Nov-Dec 2019-December)</td>
<td>Preferably have a draft grant proposal, or an idea for an application</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing Academic English</td>
<td>FSS - Writing Academic English</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Four weeks before the start date of the course</td>
<td>Period 4 (March 2019)</td>
<td>Requirement module 1: have completed or in the writing stage of the Research Proposal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Requirement Module 2: one draft* article completed</td>
<td>Requirement Module 2: one draft* article completed</td>
<td>Requirement Module 2: one draft* article completed</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Requirement Module 2: one draft* article completed</td>
<td>Requirement Module 2: one draft* article completed</td>
<td>Requirement Module 2: one draft* article completed</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>*To gain most from this course, it is important that the draft article is not reviewed by others.</td>
<td>*To gain most from this course, it is important that the draft article is not reviewed by others.</td>
<td>*To gain most from this course, it is important that the draft article is not reviewed by others.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attractive Academic Writing (intensive course)</td>
<td>FSS - Attractive Academic Writing (intensive course)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Four weeks before the start date of the course</td>
<td>Period 4-5-6 (Spring 2019)</td>
<td>Requirement: Have completed at least two chapters (or articles) of your dissertation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key Thinkers in the Social Sciences</td>
<td>AISSR – Great Thinkers in the Social Sciences</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Four weeks before the start date of the course</td>
<td></td>
<td>Seminars at University of Amsterdam (UvA)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data Analysis in R</td>
<td>FSS - Data Analysis in R</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Four weeks before the start date of the course</td>
<td>Period 4 (March 2019)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course Title</td>
<td>FSS - Course Title</td>
<td>Duration</td>
<td>Time Period</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advanced Theory Construction</td>
<td>FSS - Advanced Theory Construction</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Six weeks before the start date of the course</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rise and Shine: How to present your academic research</td>
<td>FSS - How to present your academic research</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Four weeks before the start date of the course</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time- and Project Management</td>
<td>FSS - Time - and Project Management</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Four weeks before the start date of the course</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doing Biographical Research: interviewing, analyzing, theorizing</td>
<td>FSS - Doing Biographical Research</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Four weeks before the start date of the course</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selected Qualitative Methods</td>
<td>FSS - Selected Qualitative Methods</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Four weeks before the start date of the course</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selected Quantitative Methods</td>
<td>FSS - Selected Quantitative Methods</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Four weeks before the start date of the course</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PhD Career Day</td>
<td>FSS - PhD Career Day</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Four weeks before the start date of the event</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collecting and Analysing Qualitative Data</td>
<td>FSS - Collecting, Analyzing and Writing with Qualitative Data</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Six weeks before the start date of the course</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Periods:*
- Period 4 (13, 16, 18, 20 March) & Period 5 (20, 22 May 2020)
- Period 5 (Feb 2020-March 2020)
- Period 5 (April/May 2020)
- Period 3-4 (January-March)
- Period 4, 5 or 6 (March-July)
- Period 5 or 6 (April-May or June)
- Period 5 6 May or June
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Duration</th>
<th>Period</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Communicating Science</td>
<td>FSS – Communicating Science</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Four weeks before the start date of the course</td>
<td>Period 6 (June)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science Blogging</td>
<td>FSS - Science Blogging</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Throughout the year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theoretical Tutorials</td>
<td>FSS - Self-Organized Tutorial or Seminar</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Self-organised</td>
<td>Throughout the year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methodological Tutorials</td>
<td>FSS - Self-Organized Tutorial or Seminar</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Self-organised</td>
<td>Throughout the year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skills Tutorials</td>
<td>FSS - Self-Organized Tutorial or Seminar</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Self-organised</td>
<td>Throughout the year</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4. Course Descriptions

4.1 Area 1: Social scientific content and theory
These courses aim to support PhD candidates to assess and build theories both within and beyond the boundaries of their own discipline:

1. Proposal Design & Writing tutorials
2. Advanced Theory Construction
3. Great Thinkers
4. Self Organized Theoretical Tutorials
5. Conference presentation
6. Summerschools and specialised courses in other Graduate Schools (see 5.3)

4.1.1 Proposal Design & Writing tutorials – revised
Credits: 3-6 EC
Lecturers: various, organized in tutorials
Target group: first year PhD Candidates
Registration: send an e-mail to the Graduate School

Schedule: to be determined

Note that this course is currently being restructured. The Graduate School will match first year PhD candidates with lecturers within the faculty according to their needs and preferences. Please find below the description of the original format, upon which the tutorials will be based.

Course objectives
This course is aimed to support PhD candidates in formulating and delimiting their research question, to review and evaluate the literature, and to determine appropriate methodology for their research project. The course is particularly relevant and instructive in the starting period of a PhD project, to be followed before the submission date of the Go/no-go Assessment. During the course PhD candidates specify the research plan of their PhD project, and work on their Assessment. The course will teach participants to position their research vis-à-vis an established body of literature, identifying gaps in the literature and innovations in their own research. The course thereby aims to facilitate a proper start of the project, and complements the regular PhD supervision.

By the end of this course, participants (1) have reviewed the existing literature on their research problem; (2) have discussed alternative theoretical approaches; (3) have developed the best research approach for their dissertation research; (4) have identified potential problems and disadvantages of the preferred research approach, and repaired them as much as possible; (5) have written a research plan or research proposal for their PhD project, conforming to quality standards as required by VU-GSSS or relevant (funding) institutions.
Course content
Participants in this course develop a research proposal in three stages:
1. Participants formulate and sharpen their research questions, describing their scientific and societal relevance.
2. Participants review the existing literature, describing the key issues, identifying the gaps and criticizing shortcomings of previous research.
3. Participants develop the research approach and methodology of their project, in particular focusing on how to effectively write this in a proposal format.

Form of tuition
Will depend, but mostly consist of a mixture of lectures and individual tutorials. The lectures will focus on how to develop the problem statement, how to review and discuss previous research, what reviewers want, the advantages and disadvantages of common research designs in the social sciences, and validity and reliability of methods. You will also discuss examples of good and bad research questions and examples of full proposals. In preparation of the tutorials participants complete individual assignments, which are discussed during the meetings. In the individual or small group appointments with the lecturer participants discuss their own research proposal. Taking into account that quantitative vs. qualitative research approaches often come with different requirements, participants will be split up in smaller groups supervised by a lecturer from the relevant background.

Type of assessment
Participants complete assignments in a progressive structure, and present and submit their research proposal in subsequent steps. In weekly assignments to be discussed in the tutorials participants prepare elements of the research proposal: the problem statement, the literature review, and the research approach. Draft versions of the proposal will be peer-reviewed by another participant in the course, and by the lecturer. The final assignment is the full research proposal for the research project which will be presented in the final conference meeting. With this structure participants see the progression in their research design throughout the course, and they will receive ample feedback on their project proposal. To obtain credits for the course participants are required to be present and actively participate in all sessions, and sufficiently fulfill all assignments.

Target group
The tutorials are for PhD candidates linked to the VU Faculty of Social Sciences. This course is part of the basic programme for first year PhD candidates, participation is regarded as an essential part of the training plan of all PhD candidates. The tutorials aim to optimally support those PhD candidates in the process of writing their Go-No Go product.

4.1.2 Advanced Theory Construction

Period: 13, 16, 18, 20 March & 20, 22 May 2020
Course Credits: 6 EC (Module 1) 4 EC (Module 2)
Lecturer: Prof. dr. Marshall Scott Poole (University of Illinois, USA)
Hora Finita code: FSS - Advanced Theory Construction
Registration: send an e-mail to the Graduate School six weeks before the start of the course

Fee for non VU-GSSS members: € 900,-

Schedule:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Friday 13 March</td>
<td>9.30-12.30</td>
<td>13.30-15.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monday 16 March</td>
<td>9.30-12.30</td>
<td>13.30-15.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday 18 March</td>
<td>9.30-12.30</td>
<td>13.30-15.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friday 20 March</td>
<td>9.30-12.30</td>
<td>13.30-15.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monday 20 May</td>
<td>9.30-12.30</td>
<td>13.30-15.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday 22 May</td>
<td>9.30-12.30</td>
<td>13.30-15.30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Course objectives
1. This course will introduce you to the nature of theory and theory construction in the social sciences. The topics it will explore include the following: the nature of explanation; theoretical types; strategies for theory construction; the relationship between theory and inquiry in social science research; evaluating and critiquing theories.
2. This course will also introduce you to a range of theories in the social sciences, particularly organizational science and organizational communication studies. There are so many theories in such a wide range of contexts that we cannot pretend to be comprehensive. Instead we will focus on exemplars of good theory.

Course content
Most courses on theory in the social sciences concentrate on the content of theories. In contrast, this class focuses on the canonical formats of various types of theories and what constitutes an adequate theory of a given type. The course will consider a number of types of theories, including causal theory, contingency theory, systems theory, network theory, several types of process theories and interpretive theory. It details the characteristics of each type of theory, how to build an effective theory of each type, and criteria that a good theory of each type must fulfill. Along with general discussion of each theory type, we consider specific examples drawn from several social science disciplines. We discuss the strengths and weaknesses of each example and how they can be reconstructed to better fulfill the criteria for an effective theory of their type. We will also cover issues of construct explication and philosophy of social science that are relevant to theory construction.

Methods
The class meets four times over a period of one and a half week in January to cover the basic course material; this will be a rather intensive period requiring concentrated reading and writing. You will then have two months to develop your seminar paper in consultation with the instructor (see below). In March we will have two final meetings where you will present your paper and get feedback from the instructor and your fellow PhDs.

At the end of each regular course day in the January sessions, there will be a lecture that lays out the basics of a particular type of theory. Then the next class period begins with discussion of examples of the type led by seminar participants (you are given the intervening period to read and analyze the examples). You will hand in a short summary of your critique of the example before each period in Compass and students will be assigned to lead discussion on specific examples.

The main assignment for the course is to develop a theory in your own area of interest. You should bring an idea or problem that you want to theorize about and over the course you will develop a theory and some ideas about how it might be tested or evaluated. This paper will be developed in stages. First you will write a 1-2 page proposal outlining the basic theory you want to develop and what its contribution will be. The instructor will give you feedback on this and you will discuss it in individual meetings to negotiate a reasonable and useful topic. Second (about a week later), you will turn in an outline of the paper and the instructor will again give you individual feedback; you will meet to discuss this as needed. Third, you will submit a first draft of the paper a week after the class concludes and you will receive detailed feedback on it; we will discuss this via skype (The instructor will have returned to the U.S. at this point). You will then work toward a final draft of the paper and you and will be able to discuss it when required. This will be an iterative process in which the instructor will consult with you and comment on up to two more drafts of the paper. In March, when the instructor returns to the Netherlands, there will be two more classes and you will have a final paper ready to present. During these classes you will give a presentation of your theory (1/2 hour) and your colleagues will comment on it and give you suggestions.

**Type of assessment**

Module 1: To obtain 6 EC’s for the course participants are required to (1) be present in all sessions, (2) actively participate during the lectures, (3) fulfill partial and in-class assignments, (4) fulfill a final assignment.

Module 2: To obtain 4 EC’s for the course participants are required to (1) be present in all sessions, (2) actively participate during the lectures, (3) fulfill partial and in-class assignments.

**Target group**

Ph.D. candidates linked to the various departments of the VU Faculty of Social Sciences. The course is, providing space open for candidates from other faculties and from other universities. These external participants are charged a fee (see above).
4.1.3 Great Thinkers (offered by AISSR)

**Period:** whole academic year  
**Course Credits:** up to 12 EC  
**Lecturer:** various AISSR lecturers  
**Hora finita:** AISSR - Great Thinkers  
**Registration:** send an email to: aissr@uva.nl

*Note: this course is organized by AISSR and takes place at UvA campus. Participation is free of charge and only if space allows.*

**Schedule:**  
[Check updated programme here.](https://aissr.uva.nl/events/great-thinkers-seminar-series/aissr-great-thinkers.html)

**Course description**

During this series AISSR faculty members present the work of a great thinker in the field of social sciences immersing us in key features of the social science canon and 'Great Thinkers' and to explore contributions across disciplinary lines. The seminar consists for each thinker of a public lecture, followed by a PhD seminar on the same thinker.

**Participation and EC's**

The Great Thinkers Seminar Series are additional interdisciplinary theory training next to the AISSR Advanced Social Science Theory Course. The purpose of the series is to introduce PhD students within specific fields to key features of the social science canon and 'Great Thinkers' and to explore contributions across disciplinary lines.

The Great Thinkers Seminars are equal to 12 EC's, when following 6 Great Thinkers. This can be done in the timespan of two years. Points might also be credited when you follow less than 6 Great Thinkers, but you should always have followed both the public lecture and PhD seminar on the same thinker, read the key readings and made the assignments.

**Key readings and assignments**

A short list of key readings will be announced shortly before each PhD seminar. You will be asked to make one assignment:

First assignment after the lecture and before the seminar: summarize in max half a page how you think the work of the Great Thinker relates to your work (or not).

**Youtube links to previous lectures**

4.1.4 Self-organized PhD Reading Clubs / Seminar Series - **NEW!**

**Period:** throughout the year  
**Credits:** max. 2 EC  
**Coordination:** Naná de Graaff

**Course objectives and content**

PhD candidates can (collaboratively) organize (reading) group seminars coordinated by a Faculty member or another PhD candidate. In order to stimulate the exchange and discussion of research, ideas, and common challenges, the Graduate School introduces the possibility to receive credits for participation in a PhD reading group. This reading group can be organised either at departmental or inter-departmental level, perhaps even in collaboration with - or outside of - VU/Faculty of Social Sciences.

Requirements are active participation, including preparation, discussion and presentation of your own work and that of others. It also requires that the reading group meets at a certain frequency and has a coordinator or at least administrator.

**Organization**

To receive credits for a (reading) group seminar series PhD candidates have to provide a programme of the seminar series (afterwards) to the VU-GSSS program director with relevant accompanying documents. These should include at least: 1) Name and details of PhD participants and department(s); 2) schedule of the meetings; 3) activities of the participant (i.e. readings / discussions / presentations); 4) attendance. Also add 5) a detailed validation of assigned credits in which it is specified how the content of the tutorial fits to the proposed number of European Credits (EC's). Please use [this template](#) for the EC calculation.

One EC stands for 28 hours of work. The study load is based on different parts of the readings (number of pages to read), the number and size of assignments completed outside the meetings, and the number and duration of meetings. Use the following standards to compute the study load for each part:
- **Meetings:** 1,5 hour meeting = 2 hours study load (preparation included)  
- **Readings:** reading 6 pages of scientific literature = 1 hour study load  
- **Assignments:** Writing a paper = 2 hours study load per page (line spacing 1.5).  

Please find below a schedule of how the hours and credits can be distributed in a PhD reading club format.

Please note that a PhD candidate can receive a **maximum of 2 ECs** for participation in a PhD reading club seminar during her or his PhD trajectory.
Overview calculation hours PhD reading club format

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Attending meeting</th>
<th>Reading text</th>
<th>Prepare feedback</th>
<th>Prepare presentation text</th>
<th>Prepare powerpoint presentation</th>
<th>Prepare meeting</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Speaker presenting article/chapter</td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speaker presenting powerpoint</td>
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<td></td>
<td>8,0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Discussant (if applicable)</td>
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<td>4,0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Member</td>
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<tr>
<td>Coördinator</td>
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<td>2,0</td>
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<td>1,0</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### 4.1.5 Self organized Theoretical Tutorials

**Period:** throughout the year  
**Credits:** max. 3 EC per tutorial / seminar  
**Coordinator:** Naná de Graaff

*Open for VU-GSSS members only*

**Course objectives and content**

PhD candidates can (collaboratively) organize small group tutorials and seminars supervised by a faculty member. Please find more information under 4.4.

### 4.1.6 Conference presentation

**Credits:** 1 EC for attendance, 2 EC for attendance and presenting (max. 2 EC in total)  
**Hora Finita Code:** Conference Attendance

PhD candidates are required to attend at least one large (2 days or more) scientific conference. PhD candidates can obtain 1 EC for attendance only, 2 EC for an oral or poster presentation. 1 EC is required for conference presentations (i.e. oral or poster presentations). Note that conference attendance to at least one scientific conference is expected from all PhD candidates.
4.2 Area 2: Social scientific methodology, methods and techniques.

1. Selected Quantitative Methods
2. Selected Qualitative Methods
3. Collecting, Analysing and Writing Qualitative Data
4. Doing Biographical Research
5. Data Analysis in R
6. Self Organized Methodological Tutorials

4.2.1 Selected Quantitative Methods

**Period:** 4, 5 or 6 (March-July)

**Credits:** 3 EC

**Lecturer:** Dr. Marcello Galluci (University of Milano-Bicocca, Italy); marcello.gallucci@unimib.it

**Hora Finita code:** FSS - Selected Quantitative Methods

**Registration:** send an e-mail to the Graduate School six weeks before the start of the course

*Fee for non-VU-GSSS members: € 450,-*

**Schedule:**

tba

**Course objectives**

This course trains PhD candidates in analytical skills pertaining to specific quantitative research methods. Participants will receive intensive training in specified advanced methods of analysis which are as much as possible tailored to participants’ interests and needs.

**Course content**

Participants will be trained in some of the most commonly used quantitative analytical methods in the social sciences. The content of the course will be tailored to the needs of participants and their individual research projects, and the level of training will depend on students’ existing knowledge. Prior to the course (in advance of and during the pre-course meeting) participants are required to indicate in which specific method of analysis they want to receive further training. A focus on a variety of quantitative methods is possible upon request (ranging from general linear models to mixed models and generalized linear models, Multilevel analysis and Structural Equation Modeling). The exact content and setup of the course is then specified after the number and interests of participating students is known.

**Form of tuition**

The instructor will tailor the contents of the module and may create optional contents if desired. The meetings will cover both theory (presentations by the lecturer) and time to work hands-on with real data (either provided or from participants’ own project). If possible, the seminar will be dismantled into smaller groups, in which students go through specified literature and exercises.
Type of assessment
To obtain credits for the course participants are required to be present and actively participate in all meetings and sufficiently fulfill readings and assignments, which are specified prior to the course. The amount of credit points awarded is dependent upon set-up.

Target group
PhD candidates linked to the VU Faculty of Social Sciences. Advised for 2nd or 3rd years working with their own data, but if relevant also open to candidates in first year.

4.2.2 Selected Qualitative Methods - revised
Period: 3-4 January - March
Credits: 4 EC
Lecturers: various
Coordination: Dr. Kees Boersma, Dr. Giulia Sinatti
Hora Finita Code: FSS - Selected Qualitative Methods
Registration: register four weeks before the start of the course by sending an e-mail to the Graduate School

Fee for non-FSS participants: € 600,-

Schedule:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Room</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week 4 -</td>
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<tr>
<td>Topic 1: The nature of qualitative research</td>
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<td>Week 5 -</td>
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<td>Topic 2: Interpretive analysis</td>
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<td>Week 6 -</td>
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<tr>
<td>Topic 3: Ethnographic fieldwork</td>
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<td>Week 7 -</td>
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<tr>
<td>Topic 4: Qualitative interviews</td>
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<td>tba</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 8 -</td>
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<tr>
<td>Topic 5: Qualitative research and coding (hands on analysis)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 9 -</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topic 6: I have too much! Writing up your research</td>
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</table>
Course objectives
The goal of this course is to provide PhD candidates with high-quality support and supervision on conducting qualitative research allowing them to profit from the extensive expertise about qualitative methods present in the FSS. At the end of the course, students
1) have gained knowledge and understanding of different methods of data collection and analysis
2) are able to link different kinds of qualitative data to their PhD research questions
3) have gained hands-on experience in designing different methodological tools and analyzing the relative data
4) are able to critically reflect upon methodological choices and the implications for data analysis

Course content
The course is meant for PhD candidates in different phases of their fieldwork: candidates both designing their methodological tools and who have already collected (some or all) field data will benefit from attending this course. There will be a practical focus on how to design qualitative data collection tools and choice of methods, as well as on how to analyze qualitative data and on the process of writing about results. PhD candidates in a before fieldwork phase will benefit from the course’s relatively broad focus on a variety of qualitative methods, strengths and weaknesses of different methods, possibilities of using mixed methods, and important issues when planning the exact methods for data collection. PhD candidates in an after fieldwork phase will benefit from the course’s practical focus on how to analyze qualitative data, and on the process of writing about results. Whenever possible, participants will be invited to work with their own collected material to increase the effectiveness of the course.

Form of tuition
Interactive lectures, practical workgroups, readings and assignments.

Target group
PhD candidates linked to the VU Faculty of Social Sciences. The course is relevant for PhDs both in a phase before their data collection / fieldwork and for PhDs who have already conducted (part of) their data collection/fieldwork.

Registration
Please register for this course by sending an email with your name and details (e.g. department, etc.) to FSW Graduate School (graduate.school.fsw@vu.nl). Participants must also submit a short description of their PhD project and a draft research question to the course instructors as soon as possible, but at least one month before the start of the course.
4.2.3 Collecting, Analyzing and Writing with Qualitative Data

Period: 5-6 (May-June 2020)
Credits: 3 EC
Lecturer: Prof. Dr. Barbara J. Risman
Hora Finita code: FSS - Collecting, Analyzing and Writing with Qualitative Data
Registration: Send an e-mail to the Graduate School four weeks before the start of the course

Fee for non-FSS participants: € 450,-

Schedule: tba

Course objectives
The first goal of this course is to introduce graduate students to the diversity of qualitative data collection methodologies. The second goal of this course is to provide students with a critical understanding of qualitative data analysis, and to provide them with individualized consultation for an on-going project. The third goal is to introduce students to strategies for writing empirical research articles in English with qualitative data as evidence.

Course content
This course is an introduction to qualitative methods in the social sciences. The class will have five themes. The first will be a discussion on the relationship between method, methodology and epistemology and how the researcher’s choices on all three issues necessarily influences the research. This will be a theoretical conversation. The next two themes will be practicing very practical skills of data collection and data analysis. The class will both learn about data collection and do a series of exercises where they experience field work and interview techniques. There will be time required outside of class time for these homework assignments. We will then discuss the analysis of data conceptually. Following this, the students will practice coding with two exercises. The fourth theme will be more theoretical, focusing on how to conceptualize patterns in qualitative data, to go from coding to analytic summaries to developing an argument. Finally, the last theme will be about effective skills for writing and publishing qualitative data in English language journals. The class will meet on three days, with two hour sessions in the morning and afternoon. The active learning assignments will begin during class time but may need time to be finished between classes. Each of the students will also receive individual consultation on their research projects.

Form of tuition
Interactive lectures, active learning exercises, readings and assignments.

Target group
PhD candidates linked to the VU Faculty of Social Sciences. Advised for students near the beginning of their studies but who have some on-going research to use for the coding and writing course exercises.
4.2.4 Doing Biographical Research: interviewing, analyzing, theorizing

Period: 5-6 (April-May 2020)
Lecturers: prof. Kathy Davis
Credits: 3 or 4 EC
Hora Finita code: FSS - Doing Biographical Research: interviewing, analyzing, theorizing
Registration: send an e-mail to the Graduate School four weeks before the start of the course

Fee for non-FSS participants: € 450 or € 600,-

Schedule*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lecture</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>22 April</td>
<td>13:00-16:00</td>
<td>tba</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>29 April</td>
<td>13:00-16:00</td>
<td>tba</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>4 May</td>
<td>13:00-16:00</td>
<td>tba</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>6 May</td>
<td>13:00-16:00</td>
<td>tba</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>11 May</td>
<td>13:00-16:00</td>
<td>tba</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>13 May</td>
<td>13:00-16:00</td>
<td>tba</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presentations</td>
<td>18 May</td>
<td>10:00-16:00</td>
<td>tba</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*may be subject to change

Course objectives
This course will teach and train participants in doing biographical research. Biographical research uses individual life histories as material for answering social science questions. There are many different sources of biographies (life stories, accounts of personal experiences, oral histories, (auto)biographies, diaries) as well as different perspectives (realist, constructivist, psychoanalytic) and methods for analyzing them. Drawing upon texts on biographical analysis, we will discuss what is at stake in doing biographical research, when and where it makes sense to do it, and how to do it. We will take a closer look at some (good) examples of sociologists who have used biographical analysis as research method. Through in-class assignments participants we will work with the (examples) of data from biographical interviews conducted by the participants themselves in order to put the theory into practice. The course will conclude with a session in which the participants present to each other how they have incorporated the knowledge obtained in the course in their research.

Course Content
A description of the course content will follow soon. Please find below a couple of examples of readings and assignments to get an impression of what can be expected.
Examples of readings:

Articles:


Wendy Hollway and Tony Jefferson (1997) Eliciting Narrative Through the In-Depth Interview, Qualitative Inquiry 3(1):53-70. (17 pages)

Example of an assignment:
For the second lecture of the workshop participants need to provide one biographical interview (approx. 2h for preparation and interview). They do not need to make a transcript of the interview beforehand, but they should write 1-3 pages in which they describe the person in the interview and provide an account of the interview itself, including information on how they felt doing the interview and some of the most memorable moments. We will be using the interviews to talk about the challenges (but also the joys!) of doing biographical research.

Form of tuition
The course will consist of six interactive lectures (approx. 3 hours) with a mix of readings, discussions and assignments, and one concluding day with presentation.

Target group
The course is appropriate for all PhD candidates working with qualitative data that has a biographical component. This includes life stories, accounts of personal experiences, oral histories, (auto)biographies, and diaries. The course is therefore also of relevance for PhD candidates that work with interview data. Maximum number of participants is 10.

4.2.5 Data Analysis in R
Period: March 2020
Lecturers: dr. Wouter van Atteveldt and dr. Kasper Welbers (Department of Communication Science)
Credits: 3 EC (Module 1) or 2 EC (Module 2)
Hora Finita code: FSS - Data Analysis in R
Registration: Send an e-mail to the Graduate School four weeks before the start of the course. You will receive a list of topics, the course will be tailored to your needs as much as possible.
Important: Bring your own laptop
Fee for non VU-GSSS members: € 450,- (module 1) or € 300 (module 2)
**Schedule***:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Objectives</th>
<th>Time/place</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monday 23</td>
<td>Introduction to R</td>
<td>• Variables, data, functions, packages</td>
<td>09:00-17:00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Analysing and visualizing social media</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday 24</td>
<td>R for data analysis</td>
<td>• Organizing and cleaning data with tidyverse</td>
<td>09:00-17:00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Aggregating, tabulating, and visualizing data</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>Quantitative text analysis in R</td>
<td>• Simple quantitative text analysis: quanteda and the dtm</td>
<td>09:00-17:00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 March</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Reading, cleaning, and preprocessing text</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday 26</td>
<td>Scraping and cleaning text</td>
<td>• APIs: scraping facebook, twitter, nytimes and friends</td>
<td>09:00-17:00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Scraping web pages with rvest</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friday 27</td>
<td>Advanced text analysis</td>
<td>• LDA and structural topic models</td>
<td>09:00-17:00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Supervised machine learning and scaling</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Start working on your own project</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*This course will be tailored to individual needs as much as possible, please let us know what you would like to learn during this course.*

**Target group**
PhDs from the Faculty of Social Sciences that use quantitative text analysis in their projects. The course is also open to others who would like to learn how to work with R. The maximum number of participants is 12.

**Course objectives**
The explosion of digital communication and increasing efforts to digitize existing material has produced a deluge of material such as digitized historical news archives, policy and legal documents, political debates and millions of social media
messages by politicians, journalists, and citizens. This has the potential of putting
theoretical predictions about the societal roles played by information, and the
development and effects of communication to rigorous quantitative tests that
were impossible before. Besides providing an opportunity, the analysis of such “big
data” sources also poses methodological challenges. Traditional manual content
analysis does not scale to very large data sets due to high cost and complexity. For
this reason, many researchers turn to automatic text analysis using techniques
such as dictionary analysis, automatic clustering and scaling of latent traits, and
machine learning.

To properly use such techniques, however, requires a very specific skill set.
This course aims to give interested PhDs from the Faculty of Social Science an
introduction to text analysis. R will be used as platform and language of
instruction, but the basic principles and methods are easily generalizable to other
languages and tools such as python. Participants will be given handouts with
examples based on pre-existing data to follow along, but are encouraged to work
on their own data and problems using the techniques offered.

Objectives
Upon completion of this course, PhDs should be able to:

- Understand the R programming language and software environment;
- Perform web scraping (e.g., news articles, social media responses) with R;
- Organize, transform and merge data with R;
- Visualize data as graphs and figures with R;
- Conduct simple analyses with R (i.e., descriptive statistics, correlations, chi-
square, (in)dependent t-test, one-way ANOVA, linear regression);
- Use R packages to conduct more complex analyses that are relevant to their
  own project (e.g., factor analysis, multilevel analysis, time series analysis).

Preparation
Before the course starts, please complete this online Datacamp Introduction to R
course. This online course covers basic knowledge of R and its programming
language that you will need to successfully complete this Data Analysis in R course.

Type of Assessment
In order to obtain 3 ECs participants are required (1) to complete the online
Datacamp Introduction to R course and to read the assigned readings prior to the
start of the course, (2) to actively participate in the seminars, and to (3) submit a
final assignment showing that they can independently use R to conduct their own
analyses. It is possible to take this course without submitting the final assignment
(Module 2), you will then receive 2 EC.
2.6 Data Mining & Text Analysis

Period: 3 (January 2020)
Credits: 6 EC
Lecturer: Dr. Wouter van Attenveldt and dr. Kasper Welbers
Schedule: 6-31 January 2020, note that this course offered by our Research Master

Registration: send an e-mail to the Graduate School four weeks before the start of the course

Schedule:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Start</th>
<th>End</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<tr>
<td>Friday, 31 January 2020 11:00</td>
<td>Friday, 31 January 2020 12:45</td>
<td>OZW-6A10 (22/11T)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Description
This course teaches you the basics of data mining and text analysis, two essential techniques for analysing large amounts of unstructured or semi-structured data such as behaviour logs, reviews, and news articles. In this course you will learn different ways of preparing (textual) data for analysis and to analyse the structure and content of textual data (e.g., scaling, topic models, sentiment analysis, network analysis). Additionally, you will learn the basics of data modelling and machine learning techniques to mine information from very large data sets, and will learn about the possibilities and pitfalls of various visualization techniques.

This course provides a strong foundation for text and data-intensive research either in academia or in businesses.

Preperation
This courses focuses on applying R to analysing text and quantitative data. Before you start, you should make sure that you have knowledge about the basics of R (especially tidyverse) and statistical modeling. It builds directly and specifically on Big Data, Small Data in P1-P2. Students who have not followed that course will be required to master relevant R skills taught in that course before the start ing this course.
2.2.7 Qualitative Methods

**Period:** 3 (January 2020)

**Credits:** 6 EC

**Lecturer:** dr. Sierk Ybema and dr. Christine Moser

**Schedule:** 6-31 January 2020, note that this course offered by our Research Master

**Registration:** send an e-mail to the Graduate School four weeks before the start of the course.

**Minimum number of participants:** 5 Research master students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Start</th>
<th>End</th>
<th>Location(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monday, 6 January 2020 11:00</td>
<td>Monday, 6 January 2020 12:45</td>
<td>Lecture HG-14A40(16/8T)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday, 8 January 2020 13:30</td>
<td>Wednesday, 8 January 2020 15:15</td>
<td>Practical tutorial HG-14A40(16/8T)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday, 9 January 2020 13:30</td>
<td>Thursday, 9 January 2020 15:15</td>
<td>Practical tutorial TBA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday, 9 January 2020 15:30</td>
<td>Thursday, 9 January 2020 17:15</td>
<td>Seminar group HG-14A40(16/8T)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monday, 13 January 2020 11:00</td>
<td>Monday, 13 January 2020 12:45</td>
<td>Lecture HG-14A40(16/8T)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday, 16 January 2020 13:30</td>
<td>Thursday, 16 January 2020 15:15</td>
<td>Practical tutorial TBA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday, 16 January 2020 15:30</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monday, 20 January 2020 11:00</td>
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<td>Lecture HG-14A40(16/8T)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday, 22 January 2020 13:30</td>
<td>Wednesday, 22 January 2020 15:15</td>
<td>Practical tutorial HG-14A40(16/8T)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday, 23 January 2020 13:30</td>
<td>Thursday, 23 January 2020 15:15</td>
<td>Practical tutorial TBA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday, 23 January 2020 15:30</td>
<td>Thursday, 23 January 2020 17:15</td>
<td>Seminar group HG-14A40(16/8T)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monday, 27 January 2020 11:00</td>
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<td>Lecture HG-14A40(16/8T)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday, 30 January 2020 13:30</td>
<td>Thursday, 30 January 2020 17:15</td>
<td>Seminar group HG-14A40(16/8T)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friday, 31 January 2020 17:00</td>
<td>Friday, 31 January 2020 17:15</td>
<td>Written exam</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Description**

Qualitative analyses allow a deep understanding of the changes and challenges of our social world, by unravelling how individuals make sense of their experiences, their actions and beliefs, their identities, their lived experiences and their position in society. Qualitative methods are ideally suited to zoom in on the lived experience of individuals, to follow the knitty-gritty of everyday processes, to draw close to subjects and situations, and thus to penetrate people's local worlds. At the same time, the use of such methods also requires zooming out again to understand what happens within 'small' worlds within larger and long-term contexts and thus
to grasp the bigger picture. Qualitative researchers need to learn ‘to see the world in a grain of sand’.

In the digital age, the methodological toolboxes are renewed to reflect the complexities and dynamic character of online content. For instance, nowadays life stories are not only recorded through face-to-face interviews but also through life stories in the digital domain (e.g. Facebook, blogs). Content analysis provides a powerful tool to capture the building blocks of interactions in the digital space, and is useful for combining with quantitative methods. Digital ethnographies, or netnographies, show ways to capture social media’s complexity in the lives of people.

In this course, you will discuss in detail three qualitative methods that are particularly suited for studying digital data: discourse/narrative analysis, content analysis, and digital ethnography/netnography. You will gain experience in using such methods for research, and they will present results from a small research project to their peers. In addition, we will discuss the potential advantages and disadvantages of using those methods for mixed or multi-method research. In particular, we will map the possibilities to combine qualitative methods with quantitative methods and to describe the inherent risks that come with mixed methods approaches.

Preperitation
This course focuses on qualitative methods. Before you start, you should make sure that you have sufficient knowledge about research design and qualitative methods. To that end, we will provide a diagnostic test at the beginning of the course. We will also provide on Canvas a list of readings and material that we assume you to be familiar with.

Assessment
In order to receive EC for this course, you should fulfill all the requirements. Note that the assignments are useful and you can work with your own data during the course. It is not possible to receive partial EC’s for parts this course.

2.2.8 Self Organized Methodological tutorials

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period:</th>
<th>throughout the year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Credits:</td>
<td>max. 3 EC per tutorial / seminar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coordinator:</td>
<td>Naná de Graaff</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Open for VU-GSSS members only

Course objectives and content
PhD candidates can (collaboratively) organize small group tutorials and seminars supervised by a faculty member. Please find more information under 4.4.
4.3 Area 3: Academic and transferrable skills.

1. Bridging Programme
2. PhD Induction Programme
3. Research Integrity and Responsible Scholarship
4. Writing a Data Management Plan
5. Writing Academic English
6. Intensive Course in Attractive Academic Writing
7. How to Publish and Write Journal Articles
8. Time and Project Management
9. University Teacher Training Program
10. Communicating Science
11. Science Blogging
12. PhD Career Day
13. Career Orientation
14. Self Organized skills Tutorials
15. How to present your academic research
16. Succesfull Grant writing
17. Data Science: Visualizations in R

4.3.1 PhD Bridging Programme

**Period:** 1 (9 September – 1 October 2019)

**Credits:** 1-8,5 EC

**Fee for all participants:** 150 Euro per EC, 950 euro for whole programme

**Coordinator:** Sandra Hasanefendic (International Office)

**Target group:** all new and incoming international and external professional PhD candidates

**Deadline for applications:** August 10, 2019, send an email to: phd@vu.nl

**Course objectives**

Through the Bridging Programme we want to welcome the group of PhD candidates that come from abroad or from working as professionals outside of academia and prepare, accommodate and integrate them into our academic environment, culture and community.

**Content**

The Bridging Programme contains 4 modules, three of which also have training elements in them and thus provide credits. The programme is scheduled in September 2019 and is intended to precede the ‘regular’ PhD education programme of the VU-GSSS. Candidates can opt to follow all modules or choose specific modules. The welcome and orientation module is particularly oriented towards international candidates but also highly welcomes all other candidates.
Schedule:

Module 1. Welcome & Orientation (0.5 EC) 9-11&12 September
Module 2*. Managing your PhD trajectory (2 EC) 10-16 September
Module 3. Developing academic competencies (3 EC) 17 September – 1 October
Module 4**. Academic English Writing (3 EC) 17-27 September

*Please note that for Module 2 there are preparatory exercises involved. Participants in this module must be available to complete an online survey at least one week prior to the start of the module.

** Please note that for Module 4 you need to hand in your existing research proposal beforehand.

For more details about the schedule, please send an e-mail to: phd@vu.nl.

Type of assessment
Differs per module, see below for detailed schedule.

Target group
PhD candidates from (far) abroad or who have been working outside of academia for a long time (‘external professional’ PhD’s).

The program is available for admitted PhD candidates to the VU-GSSS. Please discuss with your supervisor & VU-GSSS.

4.3.2 PhD Induction Programme - mandatory

Period: 1 – 4&5 October
Credits: 1 EC
Lecturers: various
Coordinator: Graduate School
Hora Finita code: FSS - PhD Induction Programme
Registration: send an e-mail to the Graduate School before 25 September 2019

Note: to gain EC, you should attend all parts of the programme. Note that the programme takes place on Friday and Saturday.

Schedule/Programme:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Friday, 4 October</td>
<td>12:30-15:00</td>
<td>IN-3B59</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lunch and introduction to the Graduate School</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>15:00-15:30</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Coffee break</td>
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<tr>
<td>Time</td>
<td>Event</td>
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<tr>
<td>15:30-17:00</td>
<td>PhD career preparation workshop</td>
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<tr>
<td>17:00-18:00</td>
<td>Alumni panel</td>
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<tr>
<td>18:00 - &gt;</td>
<td>Drinks &amp; Conference dinner (mandatory) The Basket (VU Campus)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Saturday, 5 October</td>
<td>Workshop Efficiency Skills and Project Management in PhD Projects – trainer: Ellis Vyth (Hertz Training for Scientists)</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Course objectives and content**

During the PhD Induction Conference all first year PhD candidates are welcomed and introduced in the Faculty of Social Sciences. During this 1,5 day programme PhD candidates will learn about the people, research and organization of the Faculty in general; and about PhD issues and practicalities in particular. The programme also contains a workshop on different PhD profiles and career paths and an Alumni Panel offering advice, tips and tricks and do’s and don’ts for PhD candidates. There will be drinks and dinner at The Basket @VU Campus and the programme will be concluded by the workshop *Efficiency Skills and Project Management in PhD Projects*, organized by [Training for Scientists](#).

**Type of assessment**

To obtain one EC for the PhD Induction programme participants are required to participate in all sessions, complete all in-class assignments and actively participate in the discussions.

**Target group**

All first year PhD candidates of the FSS. The induction programme is part of the basic programme for first year PhD candidates; participation is regarded as an essential part of the training plan of all FSS (both internal and external) PhD candidates. The programme is organized at least once per year; PhD candidates are expected to participate in the first opportunity after starting date.
4.3.3 Research Integrity and Responsible Scholarship

**Mandatory**

**Period:** Period 1 - October 2018  
**Credits:** 2 EC  
**Lecturers:** Prof. René Bekkers, Dr. Ivar Vermeulen, Lorraine Nencel, Dr. Ida Sabelis  
**Coordination:** Naná de Graaff  
**Hora Finita course:** FSS - Research Integrity and Responsible Scholarship  
**Registration:** Send an e-mail to the Graduate School four weeks before the start of the course  

*Fee for non VU-GSSS members: € 300,-*

**Schedule***:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Module 1</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Lecturers</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Introduction to the Faculty Ethical Rules</td>
<td>René Bekkers</td>
<td>11-10-2019</td>
<td>10:00-13:00</td>
<td>WN-R239</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Module 2</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Lecturers</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dilemma’s and Ethics in Social Science Research</td>
<td>Lorraine Nencel (for qualitative research) and Ivar Vermeulen (for quantitative research)</td>
<td>14-10-2019</td>
<td>10:00 – 13:00</td>
<td>HG-14A36</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Module 3</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Lecturers</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Integrity at work</td>
<td>Ida Sabelis</td>
<td>18-10-2019</td>
<td>10:00-13:00</td>
<td>HG-09A33</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*N.B. If your schedule does not permit you to participate in October, a similar course can also be followed in June 2020, offered in the programme in the Research Master.*

**Course objectives**

This course follows from efforts of the Faculty of Social Sciences to prevent violations of research integrity. It seeks to contribute to a reflection and discussion on the normative consequences of the abstract ideals of science and an awareness of standards of good conduct among PhD candidates in the social sciences.

Recent scandals in the social sciences have put integrity in research at the heart of much debate in the press and in the academic community. The highly visible cases in social psychology, economics and anthropology may only be the tip of the iceberg. Violations of research integrity include a wide range of behaviors, from seemingly minor problems resulting from 'sloppy science', to questionable
research practices (QRP), research misconduct (RM), abuse of power by dissertation supervisors, and outright fabrication, fraud, and plagiarism (FFP). How can such violations of research integrity be prevented? What should researchers do when they notice violations of research integrity? Formulated in a more positive way: how can researchers contribute to responsible social science research?

Coordinated efforts to promote responsibility originate from self-regulation by the academic community through codes of conduct formulated by National Academies of Science such as NWO, academic journals, professional associations, universities, and faculties. Recently, funders such as the European Commission have increased efforts to promote responsibility in research by adding funding allocation criteria. At the same time, the incentives for individual researchers embedded in tenure tracks, academic careers, publication cultures, are tempting researchers in the direction of violations of integrity. This course helps PhD candidates in the social sciences to develop a position vis-à-vis the conflicting demands regarding research integrity. How should researchers deal with them? Because of the importance of responsibility and integrity in social science research, and of individual responsibility in determining one’s career path, this course is regarded as an essential part of the education of all Social Science PhD candidates.

By the end of this course, participants (1) are aware of the values embodied in science, according to the association of universities (VSNU); (2) are aware of the behavioral consequences of these values in daily practice, and have acquired the knowledge for proper scientific behavior; (3) are aware of the internal review board procedures and quality control procedures within the Faculty of Social Sciences at VU University; (4) are aware of the codes of conduct developed to prevent integrity violations by research funders, professional associations, leading scholars, and academic journals; (5) have developed a critical position on their own responsibility in academic research.

Course content
The course consists of a number of meetings with lecturers from different backgrounds in which you will discuss integrity in research conduct and handling of data and its requirements according to faculty, university, national and disciplinary agreements. You will explore the terrain of scientific integrity and research quality, discuss violations of integrity, sloppy science, and questionable research practices. You will learn about reliable and verifiable publication practices, impartiality, independence and norms on co-authorship. Furthermore, we will discuss critical integrity issues at work and in working relationships.

Form of tuition
Course meetings are a mix between lectures and workshops. In preparation of the meetings you are required to read papers from the recent and ongoing debates on research integrity in the social sciences, which are discussed in the meetings. As part of the course, you will hand in a writing assignment reflecting on an issue of your choice – usually connected to your own discipline or research subject – regarding integrity and quality of research.
**Type of assessment**
To obtain credits for the course participants are required to be present and actively participate in all sessions and sufficiently fulfill all assignments.

**Target group**
First (or second) year PhD candidates of the FSS. This course is part of the basic programme for first year PhD candidates; participation is regarded as an essential part of the training plan of all FSS PhD candidates (see §2.2). If applicable it is also open to candidates in later years. Also open to non-FSS participants, providing space.

### 4.3.4 Writing a Data Management Plan - **mandatory** - offered twice

**Period:** Period 1 – 24 October 2019  
**Period:** Period 4 - 23 April 2020  
**Credits:** 1 EC  
**Lecturers:** Jolien Scholten (VU Library)  
**HF code:** FSS - Writing a Data Management Plan  
**Registration:** send an e-mail to the Graduate School four weeks before the start of the course

**Schedule:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Thursday 24 October 2019</td>
<td>14.00-17.00</td>
<td>HG-0G13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday 23 April 2020</td>
<td>14.00-17.00</td>
<td>TBA in Spring</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Course objectives**
During this course you learn how you write a good Data Management Plan (DMP), in which you discuss:
- which laws and codes of conduct your research should comply with
- where you are going to store your data
- where you are going to archive them for the long term
- how you can make them FAIR (Findable, Accessible, Interoperable, Reusable).

**Course content**
Good RDM (e.g. storing, sharing, archiving, describing your research data) contributes to research transparency and integrity. Due to the advance of new technologies, data volumes and numbers of files are constantly increasing. For that reason good data management is an essential part of data-driven research as well. In this workshop, we will introduce and discuss the different aspects of RDM which typically need to be covered in a data management plan (DMP), such as data description, data storage during research, sharing data with colleagues, data archiving after research and data citation. The various components of research data management will be related to the FAIR principles (that is, principles to make data Findable, Accessible, Interoperable and Reusable). We will also address the
ethical and legal framework, including the General Data Protection Regulation (the European law on privacy).

In this training, you’ll learn why good RDM is necessary and how it can be beneficial to your research. In an interactive workshop, Jolien will provide you with practical guidelines and instruments to manage your data properly. You will be working on a DMP for your own research, so that you can apply the things you learn to your own project.

4.3.5 Writing Academic English - Intermediate - revised
Period: Indication: 4 (March)
Credits: 3 EC per track
Lecturer: Dr. Maria Sherwood
Registration: Send an e-mail to the Graduate School four weeks before the start of the course

*If space allows, open to PhD candidates from ABRI, GS HUM, and AISSR (UvA)*

**Schedule: to be confirmed, may be subject to change**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Meeting</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Meeting 1 | tba   | Introduction session
Indication of duration: approximately 3h | tba |
| Meeting 2 | tba   | Indication of duration: approximately 3h | tba |
| Meeting 3 | tba   | Indication of duration: approximately 3h | tba |
| Meeting 4 | tba   | Indication of duration: approximately 3h | tba |
| Meeting 5 | tba   | Indication of duration: approximately 3h | tba |
| Meeting 6 | tba   | Presentations | tba |

**Course objectives**
This course is mainly geared towards helping you to determine how confident you can afford to be about your written academic English. It shows you what you can do to improve your confidence in the short term, helps you to eradicate those silly mistakes, and hopefully gives you new options for expressing complex ideas in well-structured English sentences. At the end of the course, you will have a clear idea of your strengths and weaknesses concerning written academic English. You will also be a better manager of your own text, and you will be equipped with a set of personalized criteria for editing your text. An additional aim is to give you language-related support in giving oral presentations of your research.

**Course content**
In a first introduction session participants will briefly meet with their lecturer. During this session you will discuss the goals, content and assignments of the course, how you can best prepare for the course, and most importantly what topics you would like to have included in the course, as there is definitely some flexibility concerning the precise programme.

The actual course consists of six sessions. Session 1 is an introductory session: the lecturer will provide a presentation of participants’ skills profiles, quick fixes, remedial grammar issues; and there is room for Q and A over matters arising from the individual feedback you received on your submitted text. One of the six sessions will be devoted to oral presentations, and each participant will give a short presentation. Note that the content of the lectures of the intermediate track and the advanced track differ.

Classes will contain a mix of interactive lecture elements and class exercises. There will be only a small amount of preparation during the two weeks of the course, but a lot of the work doesn't start until the sessions are over.

**Target group**
This course is open to PhD researchers of the Faculty of Social Sciences and its partners ABRI, GS HUM and AISSR.

**Requirement:** have completed or in the writing stage of the Research Proposal

**Registration**
After signing up, participants are asked to submit a text (proposal or other relevant text for track 1 and one draft article for track 2) that they have recently worked on, up to 2000 words in length. The texts will be used to help determine the appropriate course (intermediate or advanced) and the precise content of the course. Send your text to the course lecturer no later than two weeks before the start of the actual course session. The maximum number for the intermediate course & advanced course of internal PhD candidates (no fee) is 20 in total.

**Type of Assessment**
To obtain credits for the course, participants are required to be present at all sessions and to actively participate during class. Also, participants are required to successfully complete two separate writing and editing assignments and give a presentation.

### 4.3.6 Writing Academic English - Advanced - revised

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Meeting 1</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Location</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction session</td>
<td>tba</td>
<td></td>
<td>tba</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indication of duration: approximately 3h</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Meeting 2</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Location</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>tba</td>
<td></td>
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<td>tba</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Meeting 3</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>tba</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>tba</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Indication of duration: approximately 3h | | |
Course objectives
This course is mainly geared towards helping you to determine how confident you can afford to be about your written academic English. It shows you what you can do to improve your confidence in the short term, helps you to eradicate those silly mistakes, and hopefully gives you new options for expressing complex ideas in well-structured English sentences. At the end of the course, you will have a clear idea of your strengths and weaknesses concerning written academic English. You will also be a better manager of your own text, and you will be equipped with a set of personalized criteria for editing your text. An additional aim is to give you language-related support in giving oral presentations of your research.

Course content
In a first introduction session participants will briefly meet with their lecturer. During this session you will discuss the goals, content and assignments of the course, how you can best prepare for the course, and most importantly what topics you would like to have included in the course, as there is definitely some flexibility concerning the precise programme.

The actual course consists of six sessions. Session 1 is an introductory session: the lecturer will provide a presentation of participants’ skills profiles, quick fixes, remedial grammar issues; and there is room for Q and A over matters arising from the individual feedback you received on your submitted text. One of the six sessions will be devoted to oral presentations, and each participant will give a short presentation. Note that the content of the lectures of the intermediate track and the advanced track differ.

Classes will be contain a mix of interactive lecture elements and class exercises. There will be only a small amount of preparation during the two weeks of the course, but a lot of the work doesn’t start until the sessions are over.

Target group
This course is open to PhD researchers of the Faculty of Social Sciences and its partners ABRI, GS HUM and AISSR.
Requirement one draft* article completed
• To gain most from this course, it is important that the text has not been language edited by others.
**Registration**
After signing up, participants are asked to submit a text (one draft article) that they have recently worked on, up to 2000 words in length. The texts will be used to help determine the appropriate course (intermediate or advanced) and the precise content of the course. Send your text to the course lecturer no later than two weeks before the start of the actual course session. The maximum number for the intermediate course & advanced course of internal PhD candidates (no fee) is 20 in total.

**Type of Assessment**
To obtain credits for the course, participants are required to be present at all sessions and to actively participate during class. Also, participants are required to successfully complete two separate writing and editing assignments and give a presentation.

### 3.3.7 Attractive Academic Writing (Intensive Course)

**Period:** 4, 5, 6 (March-June 2020)
**Credits:** 3 EC
**Lecturer:** Dr. Maria Sherwood
**Registration:** Send an e-mail to the [Graduate School](#) four weeks before the start of the course
**Hora Finita code:** FSS - Attractive Academic Writing (Intensive Course)

*Open for VU-GSSS members only*

**Schedule:**
The dates for this course will be agreed with lecturer and participants once the participants are known.

**Course objectives and content**
This intensive course is designed for any small group of PhD researchers who are in an advanced stage of writing their dissertation (or articles) and who are interested in increasing the attractiveness and sharpness of their writing. The writer's aim at this point in the writing process is to pay more attention to the reader and in that light the focus in this course will be on precise argumentation, concise formulation, and stylistic variation.

The course has an introductory group session focusing on linguistic techniques, two working sessions with peer feedback, and an individual tutorial with the teacher.

**Type of assessment**
Assessment is on the basis of at least one edited thesis chapter (or article) using ELS-online, the ALP feedback system. The precise content of the course will be agreed between teacher and participants in a meeting prior to the course.

**Registration**
The course is open to maximum of 5 PhD researchers who are a member of VU-GSSS and who have completed at lease two chapters (articles) of their
dissertation. After signing up, participants are asked to submit an unedited text that they are currently working on or have recently completed. This course is not open to non-FSS PhD candidates.

4.3.8 How to Publish and Write Journal Articles

**Period:** 1 (Oct-Nov 2019)  
**Credits:** 1 EC  
**Instructors:**  
- **Module 1:** Dr. Frank den Hond and others  
- **Module 2:** Prof. Kathy Davis  
**Coordination:** UBVU & VU-GSSS  
**Hora Finita code:** FSS – How to Publish and Write Journal Articles  
**Registration:** Module 1: tba  
Module 2: send an e-mail to the Graduate School four weeks before the start of the module

**Schedule:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Module 1</strong></td>
<td>22 October</td>
<td>13:00-16:00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Module 2</strong></td>
<td>12 November</td>
<td>13:00-16:00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Course objectives and content**

**Module 1: How to Publish a World Class Paper?**
Publishing your research can be challenging. Determining your audience, choosing a publisher, and dealing with reviewers and editors are important skills in an academic career. On 22 October, the University Library is hosting a seminar to help you with these topics. Experienced authors and reviewers will share their insights and experience with the publishing process. The speakers will focus on the specifics of publishing in the humanities and social sciences. The seminar is organized by UBVU in collaboration with the GSSS.

**Module 2: Publish or Perish: How to write a journal article and get it published**
This workshop tackles the issue of how to get a journal article published – an endeavor which is often fraught with uncertainty, difficulties, and even outright suffering. Drawing upon her experiences as editor, author and reviewer, Kathy Davis addresses how to write a journal article, find a journal, survive the review cycle and manage the revision process. In this interactive, hands-on workshop participants will also do a writing exercise aimed at making the articles they want to write just a little more interesting and, hopefully, a lot more publishable.
Preparation:
Write a few lines about an article you would like to write or are in the process of writing or have completed, but not yet published. This will be the basis for the exercise which will be done in the workshop.

Reading:

Target group
This course is open for PhD’s of the Faculty of Social Sciences. The course aims at PhD candidates that are in the (preparatory) phase of publishing parts of their PhD / findings as journal articles. Module 1 is advised for all candidates. Module 2 is advised for PhD candidates using qualitative research methods or a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods. If you have any questions on whether the course is suitable for you, send an email to the Graduate School.

Type of Assessment
In order to obtain 1 EC for this course, participants have to conclude both Module 1 which consists of participation in the seminar and a short reflection paper (500-750 words) or a blog for Socializing Science and Module 2 which includes active participation, reading and preparation as well as an in-class writing assignment.

Registration
For Module 1 registration takes place via the UBVU, information on this will be announced via email. In order to register for Module 2 participants are asked to send an email to Graduate School four weeks before the start of the course before 15 October.

4.3.9 Time- and Project Management
Period: 5 (April/May 2020)
Credits: 1 EC
Instructor: Ellis Vyth (Hertz trainingen)
Hora Finta code: FSS – Time and Project Management
Open for VU-GSSS members only

Schedule: tbd

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Course objectives and content
In this course you will learn to work more efficiently and effectively. Making better use of your time starts with formulating very clear goals and translating these to
concrete tasks. It’s important to give priority to these tasks when planning a year/month/week/day; don’t be distracted by other nice, important and/or interesting activities. On top of that, it’s important how to make clear to your colleagues and supervisors what your priorities are and what your way of dealing with this, what your working method is. Even more so when you’re combining another job with a part-time PhD-program.

A point of much concern these days is the excessive workload many PhD candidates experience. The work-life balance is under pressure. In this course you explore the possibilities to say ‘yes’ to all the duties and activities that fit your personal choices and to kindly say ‘no’ to yourself and others when the tasks do not suit your plans.

Working efficiently often doesn’t mean trying to do more in less time, it entails having a well thought-out plan for you to work and act accordingly.

Stress is the result of having to do too much in a short time, when there often are deadlines to meet or when you often do too many tasks that don’t really belong to the core activities of your PhD-program.

In this course you will learn to make a distinction between the time management of a day/week, of a long-term project and of a research program. You will learn to analyse the way you spend your time in a day and a week in different ways. This gives you new insights into your strong points and also provides options for improving your working method. Focus is on:

- Set specific goals
- Determine your optimal working rhythm
- Make a weekly planning schedule
- Apply the rules of project management
- Make a planning schedule for research

**Form of tuition**
Interactive lectures, active learning exercises, readings and assignments.

**Type of assessment**
No assessment, active participation required, assignments are discussed in class.

**Target group**
The course is open to all VU-GSSS PhD candidates. It follows up on the workshop on Time Management that you will have followed during the PhD Induction conference.

**Registration**
Please register for this course by sending an email with your name and details (e.g. department, etc.) to FSW Graduate School (graduate.school.fsw@vu.nl). Please note that there is a limited number of places for this course, make sure to sign up in time. In case the course is full external candidates are given priority over internal candidates, since the latter can participate in similar courses without extra costs as offered by VU HRM (see and end of this Study Guide):
Please note the helpful online Project Management Tool for PhD’s by Brigitte Hertz training which is available for free.

4.3.10 University Teaching Programme (UTP) or Basiskwalificatie Onderwijs (BKO)

**Period:** Spring 2020  
**Credits:** 5 EC  
**Teachers:** Hester Morssink and Jan Willem Grijpma  
**Coordination:** LEARN! Academy  
**Hora Finita Code:** LEARN! - University Teacher Training Program  
**Fee:** € 2500, €75 for employees  
**Registration:** Register as soon as possible through LEARN! Academy, note that the course may be fully booked.

_The Graduate School has a budget to fund participation in this course for a limited number of participants (for VU-GSSS members only). In order to apply for this funding, please contact the Graduate School._

**Description**  
This course, offered by LEARN! Academy, prepares academic teachers for the University Teaching Qualification (UTQ; or Basiskwalificatie onderwijs, BKO), which is nationally recognized by all Dutch universities. The UTP has a study load of approximately 150 hours. A certificate is provided after completion of the course.

**Objectives**  
The UTP will teach you how to employ active learning techniques, allow you to practise these techniques and to develop or modify one of your own courses. You will receive close supervision from one of the staff developers at the VU Academic Centre for Human Behaviour and Movement and feedback from a member of the teaching staff at your own faculty (your tutor) and from a peer group of UTQ candidates who are taking the UTP alongside you.

**Course content**  
The UTP consists of three components:

- **Teaching Practice**  
  You will expand your teaching repertoire, tune into your own strengths and weaknesses as a lecturer and develop an individual teaching style. You will directly apply what you have learned in your own teaching, and the results will be immediately apparent.

- **Course Design**  
  You will learn how to design a course or modify an existing one, with the emphasis on justifying the teaching choices you make and on the teaching principles that underlie your choices. You will also be taught valid, reliable methods of assessing student achievement on the course. You will develop a course of your own or modify an existing one. This activity will quickly
enable you to experience the added value of what you have learned and inspire you to apply your newly acquired knowledge and skills.

- **Supervising students**
  You analyze your practice as a supervisor of individual or small groups (2-5) of students and during the course meetings you will have the opportunity to practice specific situations. Within the theme of supervising students, emphasis is put on topics such as being able to tailor the supervision style to the needs of the individual student, giving constructive feedback and adequately combining the roles of supervisor and assessor.

**Programme**
The UTP consists of 15 weekly classes. There is also group work, which allows you and your fellow participants to learn from one another's experiences. These group sessions will be devoted to work on your own projects. Based on your own teaching practice, you will deliver two final assignments – one on teaching practice and one on course (re)design.

**Faculty tutor**
A tutor will be involved in the assessment of your assignments. We would advise you to choose an experienced member of teaching staff from your own faculty or department for this purpose. This tutor should preferably already have the UTQ certificate, though this is not absolutely essential. The tutor will fill in the UTQ Assessment Tool on the basis of the assignments you have completed, observation of your teaching and other relevant factors, and will also be present during the assessment interview. Fulfilment of these duties will take approximately three hours in total. When you have found a tutor, you should email him or her the Instructions for the tutor, the UTQ Assessment Tool and the contact details of the staff developer in charge of the programme.

**Target group**
The UTP is intended for teaching staff at universities who have less than five years' experience of teaching at university level and who do not have a first-level teaching qualification for secondary school teaching. You must do enough teaching during the UTP to make two video recordings of yourself teaching students and to hone your teaching skills on the basis of the material taught on the programme. The UTP for teaching staff at Vrije Universiteit is also available in Dutch, see BKO-opleiding for further details.

**Assessment**
During the UTP, you will be supervised by a staff developer from the VU Academic Centre for Human Behaviour and Movement and will receive feedback from your tutor and from a peer group of UTQ candidates who are taking the UTP alongside you. At the end of the programme, you will have an assessment interview with your staff developer and your faculty tutor, during which the results of your teaching practice assignment and your course design assignment will be discussed.
A successful completion of this track is counted for 6 EC's by VU-GSSS. A short track UTP is available for teachers with a minimum of 5 years of experience in academic teaching. The study load for this short track varies between 50 and 100 hours depending on experience. A successful completion of this track is counted as 3 EC's by VU-GSSS.

For participation by teaching staff of Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam only the administrative costs of € 75,- apply. External participants pay € 2,500,- for this course, please contact the Graduate School to discuss opportunities for funding.

4.3.11 Communicating Science

| Period: | 6 (June 2020) |
| Credits: | 3 EC |
| Lecturer: | Dr. Camiel Beukeboom & Sinan Çankaya |
| Schedule: | t.b.a. - note that this course offered by our Research Master |
| Registration: | send an e-mail to the Graduate School four weeks before the start of the course |

Course objectives
This course teaches Research Master students & PhD candidates how the industry of academic research works and improves their skills in presenting academic research to a lay audience, policy makers, and other stakeholders in society. The impact of social science research is much more than the number of citations in academic outlets. In addition to these traditional outlets, scientific discourse nowadays increasingly occurs on fast online blogging sites hosted by individual researchers or groups, or interactive scientific news sites. This trend fits in an increasing emphasis for scientists to valorize their work and show the societal relevance and real world impact of their research.

This course aims to train students & PhD candidates in communicating their research ideas and results beyond the traditional means of journal articles and books. This course focuses on judgment formation, communication, and learning skills. Students reflect critically on the scientific and societal relevance of research, learn how to disseminate research results using innovative means and their social and ethical aspects. Students also learn to collaborate in internationally diverse teams, and train their communication skills.

Course content and structure
The course consists of two parts: a series of presentations and group discussions on the industry of academic research and a series of assignments producing presentations of research papers, open peer review reports, blog entries, and entries on Wikipedia.

Form of tuition
Lectures and presentations by students and group workshops.
Readings

Assessment
To obtain EC’s for the course participants are required to (1) be present in all sessions and actively participate during the session; (2) read the advance readings, do the all the written assignments and give an oral presentation; (3) write and publish a blog on Graduate School.

Target group
The course is interesting and useful for both first year and more advanced PhD candidates. If space permits PhD candidates from ABRI, Religion and Theology, AISSR (UvA) are welcome.

4.3.12 Science Blogging

Period: flexible, throughout PhD employment
Credits: 1-6 EC
Coordination: Camiel Beukeboom
Hora Finita Code: FSS - Science Blogging

Course objectives
The VU-GSSS blog http://socializingsciencevu.com/ launched on February 19 2014, provides an online platform for all VU Social Sciences PhD candidates. On this website VU-GSSS PhD candidates can post blogs about their own research, scientific research they read, and hear about in colloquia, and reflect on other PhD relevant issues. The blogs are disseminated through social media (@SocSciVu) both within and outside the Faculty. The website also contains a section that introduces VU-GSSS PhD candidates by means of a picture and brief description, and link to their profile on the FSS departmental webpage.

This website facilitates PhD candidates to contribute to a lively scientific environment and community by discussing scientific research both within and outside FSS. It also allows them to take note of their fellow VU-GSSS researchers, to meet fellow scientific researchers or people working in practice, and to partake in the valorization of scientific knowledge.

Moreover, writing blogs gives PhD candidates the opportunity to publish, albeit in an informal manner, at an early point in their PhD trajectories, and to practice writing by explaining scientific research to a broader audience. It also allows both individual PhD candidates, and the Faculty as a whole, to build a reputation of excellence and expertise on particular topics.

Content
PhD candidates are free to determine the content of their blogs as long as it is within a social science scope or about PhD relevant issues. They can write blogs about visited conferences, academic colloquia and presentations; about read
scientific literature; about their own research; about experiences as a PhD student; or reflect on actual topics from a scientific perspective (e.g. the news, TV show etc.). PhD candidates are free to determine when to write blog post, and on what topic. A student assistant assists in scheduling contributions, in order to be able to publish a regular stream of postings on the website. We aim to involve the whole PhD community connected to the various departments of the Faculty of Social Sciences, both internal and external candidates, and candidates working abroad.

**Organization**
PhD candidates are advised to start participating by sharing blogs at the beginning of their PhD employment. This may continue until requirements are fulfilled, and/or the PhD employment ends. The website and publication of blogs is organized by a student assistant. The course manual provides a more extensive description of what to gain from blogging and how to do it well (i.e., general goals, ideas on blog topics, concrete writing tips). To submit a blog or blog posts idea, and for all questions and remarks email SocializingScience.fsw@vu.nl.

**Type of assessment**
When a PhD candidate has published the required number of blogs to obtain 6 credit points, or when employment ends, he or she submits an overview of contributions in a Word doc (with titles and links to published blogs) to c.j.beukeboom@vu.nl to apply for the credits and course certificate.

In order to determine the EC’s awarded for one’s blogging efforts we advance the standard that writing an average elaborate blog, that requires some preparation, corresponds to 7 hours study load. This is determined as follows: One blog is approximately two pages long (500-1000 words). The general norm for writing assignments is 2 hours per page, which means that writing the blog itself equals 4 hours, plus 3 hours for the preparation for writing the blog (e.g., reading literature, attending colloquium etc). Given that one EC corresponds to 28 hours of work, writing 4 blogs corresponds to 1 credit; writing 8 blogs = 2 credits; 12 blogs = 3 credits; 16 blogs = 4 credits; 20 blogs = 5 credits; 24 blogs = 6 credits.

Every now and then someone may write a very short and easy blog (e.g., a very brief note) that requires no preparation, nor a lot of writing time. This is certainly welcomed, but these should not be counted for credits. You may, however, in your submitted overview argue that a number of short and easy blogs or postings should in combination count as one elaborate blog.

**Target group**
All PhD candidates connected to the VU Faculty of Social Sciences.
4.3.13 PhD Career Day – with University of Amsterdam (AISSR and AScoR)

Period: 5 (April – May - June 2020)
Date: tba
Time: tba
Location: CREA, Nieuwe Achtergracht 170, Amsterdam

A programme from lunch to drinks with presentations, workshops and networking opportunities, all focused on your career perspectives. Guest speakers, trainers and alumni working in academia, politics, business and civil society organisations will provide you with insights, tips and short practical training to help you define your career opportunities and develop strategies towards that goal. A more detailed programme will be announced in due time. No credits can be earned by participating in this event. But we are pretty sure that you will benefit from it and enjoy it. It also offers a nice opportunity to meet fellow PhDs from the University of Amsterdam, as well as alumni.

4.3.14 Career Orientation – revised

Period: 1 (October 2019)
Credits: 1 EC
Instructor: Drs. Caroline Rehbach - Hertz Trainingen (tbc)
Hora Finita Code: FSS – Career Orientation
Schedule: 16 & 30 October
Registration: send an e-mail to the Graduate School four weeks before the start of the course

Open for VU-GSSS members only

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Course objectives and content
If you have doubts about how to pursue a job in science or outside of academia or find it difficult to think about which direction to go, if you cannot describe your special skills yet, or if you are not sure which is the best way to start looking for a job, this will be a good course for you.

As a PhD candidate who enters the job market, you should be aware of your own (transferable) skills and should be able to communicate them. Most scientists can present their scientific knowledge, their research- and their practical skills very well. They are, however, less aware of the social, communication and directing skills they have. Every PhD candidate clearly possesses a collection of skills you could see as your 'Transferable Skills'; these are skills you can use in any situation and which make you valuable for the job market both inside and outside of academia.
In a step-by-step approach you will do many different kinds of practical exercises with a focus on the following:

- Formulate personal objectives and values, to discover what is important to you in work, and life in general.
- Define and communicate your skills
- Network conversations as strategy to orientate the job market and create useful contacts
- Sharing experiences and successful strategies
- Map your network and mock interview
- Job applications and interviews tips & trics
- Create action plan: how to develop your skills and network conversation?

**Form of tuition**
Interactive lectures, active learning exercises, and assignments.

**Type of assessment**
No assessment, active participation required, take home assignments, assignments are discussed in class.

**Target group**
The course is open to all PhD candidates from the VU-GSSS and will be particularly useful for candidates in the final year(s) of their PhD.

**Registration**
Please register for this course by sending an email with your name and details (e.g. department, etc.) to the Graduate School. Please note that there is a limited number of places for this course, make sure to sign up in time. In case the course is full external candidates are given priority over internal candidates, since the latter can participate in similar courses without extra costs as offered by VU HRM (see [here](#)).

**Form of tuition**
Interactive lectures, active learning exercises, and assignments.

**Type of assessment**
No assessment, active participation required, take home assignments, assignments are discussed in class.

**Target group**
The course is open to all PhD candidates from the VU-GSSS and will be particularly useful for candidates in the final year(s) of their PhD.

**Registration**
Please register for this course by sending an email with your name and details (e.g. department, etc.) to the Graduate School. Please note that there is a limited number of places for this course, make sure to sign up in time. In case the course is
full external candidates are given priority over internal candidates, since the latter can participate in similar courses without extra costs as offered by VU HRM (see here).

4.3.15 Rise and shine! How to present your academic research

Period:  4 (Feb –March 2020) *
Credits:  1 EC
Coordinator:  Dr. Christine Moser
Hora Finita code:  FSS - How to present your academic research

Fee for non-FSS participants: € 150,-

* Flexible, please contact the Graduate School to discuss possibilities to take this course in another period.

Schedule:

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Course objectives

After successfully completing this short intensive course, you have a basic understanding of the different components of an academic presentation (content, design of visuals, presenter skills, context). Based on this understanding, you have drafted a default presentation that is tailored to your own discipline, preferred design style, and personal skills. Finally, you will have gained experience in presenting the new presentation.

Content

In this short but intensive course, we will focus on the art of presenting academic research.

In academia, presentations at conferences or during seminars are the main way of communicating one's work. Conference presentations are a great way to reach a large audience, and seminar presentations are often instrumental when on the job market. Yet, presentation skills receive scant attention during PhD programs and academic careers in general. To address this gap, in this course we identify the best (and worst!) ways to present your research, by focusing on the content, design, context and skills of the presenter.

The course consists of two 4-hour sessions over the course of 4 weeks. In the first session, we will learn about the four components that any presentation has: content, design, presenter skills, and context. For each of the four components, we will investigate good and bad examples. We will then work in duo's, where you
analyze your partner's presentation in terms of content and design. We will finish the day with a short analysis of what a typical academic conference presentation looks like (using data from a recent survey on the topic) and a short overview of alternative ways to present.

In the second session, we will work on your new default presentation that you prepared based on the first session. You will again work in duo's and provide your duo partner with feedback. Then, every participant will present her/his new default presentation to the group. We will finish the course with a short synopsis of insights.

**Type of assessment**

1) Presentation material (e.g. Powerpoint): each participant will hand in a presentation that has been developed during the course. The presentation will be graded on content and design.

2) Presentation: each participant will present her/his presentation to the group. This “live” presentation will be graded on content, design, presenter skills, and context.

### 4.3.16 Successful Grant Writing

**Period:** November/December 2020  
**Credits:** 1 EC  
**Lecturer:** Dr ir Louise Mennen (Mennen Training & Consultancy)  
**Hora Finita code:** FSS - Workshop Successful Grant Writing  
**Registration:** Sign up latest four weeks before the start of course by sending an e-mail to the [Graduate School](mailto:).  

*Open for VU-GSSS members only*

**Schedule:**

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How do you get attention when there is so much competition to obtain a grant?  
Grant proposals are nothing less but a quotation. It has to give a solution for an existing problem in society/science. It is therefore necessary to focus on the essence (your aim) and on the quality of the deliverables at the end of the project. Saying more while saying (writing) less is crucial for successful grant applications.

**Course content**

During the workshop you work on your proposal. You will learn to write a structured, concise and clear text conveying your enthusiasm and scientific quality. You will learn how to balance between peer and non-peer readers of your proposal. You will do this through several exercises, based on your own work, which you complete individually and in small groups. Sharing and discussing your work with other participants, makes this workshop extremely useful.
Course objectives
At the end of the workshop you will know how to write a structured text, how to put
your scientific proposal in an improved “sales” perspective and how to write reader
friendly and convincing text in a clear and concise way. You will also know which
criteria are important for a grant proposal and what referees are looking for.

Assessment
To obtain credits for the workshop, participants are required to actively participate
in both sessions and fulfill the assignments.

Target group
All FSS PhD candidates who aim to apply for a grant. As you will work on your
personal proposal during the workshop, you will need to have an idea about your
proposal. The maximum number of participants is 12. Advanced PhD candidates
have priority over first year candidates. This course is not open for non-FSS PhD
candidates.

4.3.17 Increase your Impact - Data Science: Visualizations in R
Period: 1-2
Credits: 1 EC per module
Coordinator: Dr. Mariken van der Velden
Hora Finita Code: FSS - Data Science: Visualizations in R
Registration: sign up before four weeks before the start of course by
sending an e-mail to the Graduate School.
Important: Bring your own laptop

Fee for non-VU-GSSS members: € 150,- per module

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<td>Module 2 (advanced)</td>
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Course objectives
After successfully completing Module 1 of this short intensive course, you are able to
critically reflect on the implications of the selection, structuring and manipulation of
data for the outcome of their work. Additionally, you are able to evaluate results
critically and in a systematic manner.
After successfully completing Module 2 of this short intensive course, you have a basic understanding of computational tools for visualization in order to continue to acquire computing skills, work with many types of data and media and involves high level critical and analytical skills.

**Content**

The explosion of digital communication and increasing efforts to digitize existing material has produced a deluge of material such as digitized historical news archives, policy and legal documents, political debates and millions of social media messages by politicians, journalists, and citizens. This has the potential of putting theoretical predictions about the societal roles played by information, and the development and effects of communication to rigorous quantitative tests that were impossible before. Besides providing an opportunity, the analysis of such “big data” sources also poses methodological challenges. One of them being to visualize what is in your data in order to better communicate the results.

This course aims to give students an introduction to data analytics for the visualization of data. R will be used as platform and language of instruction, but the basic principles and methods are easily generalizable to other languages and tools such as python, Stata or SPSS. Participants will be given handouts with examples based on pre-existing data to follow along, but are encouraged to work on their own data and problems using the techniques offered.

The course consists of two modules over the course of 4 weeks. In the first session of Module 1 (Basic), we will cover the basic theory of how to visualize your research data, which numbers (or other quantities of interest) to present, and how to refine your graphs. The second session of Module 1 (Basic) will be a practice session in which you will work with your own data (or if you do not have your own data, data sets will be made available to practice with.

In Module 2 (Advanced) there will be one theory and practice session combined which concludes with an assignment. It will teach you how to transform data to a visual: from a basic graphical display to animated and BBC-worthy graphics (e.g. see here). This course invites you to develop visuals from many data sources, such as textual data, networked data, etc. At the end of the course you will be able to use attractive visualizations to present your research results in both oral and written communications.

**Target Group**

This workshop is open for all PhDs in all stages of their project. It is possible to work with own data for those who have data and/or results to communicate. Mariken will also provide data for those who do not have data yet. Before Module 1 starts you will be asked to hand in a brief survey asking about the kind of research you are conducting, which methods, and which data, if you have experience with statistical programmes and what kind of experience, in which phase of your project you are and in which discipline.
4.3.18 Writing marathons

Coordination: Graduate School
Registration: 4 days in advance, send an e-mail to the Graduate School
Minimum of participants: 6, maximum 10
Important: Bring your own laptop

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Description

A writing marathon is a full day you spend together with fellow PhD candidates to do some focused writing (or other work) in silence. At the beginning of the day you set your goal(s) and with a strict structure of 50 minutes writing in silence and a 10-minute break we aim to reach your goal(s). This structure enables you to begin and end the writing process more easily. International experience learns that it helps students and academics in general to achieve a lot more if they commit themselves to a full day of undistracted writing with a clear goal in mind.

Lunch will be provided during the day, including some snacks during the breaks.

If you would like to organize additional Writing Marathons, please contact the Graduate School.

4.3.19 Self Organized Skills Tutorials

Period: throughout the year
Credits: max. 3 EC per tutorial / seminar
Coordinator: Naná de Graaff
Hora Finita Code: FSS - Self Organized Skills Tutorials

Open for VU-GSSS members only

Course objectives and content
PhD candidates can (collaboratively) organize small group tutorials and seminars supervised by a faculty member. Please find more information under 4.4.
4.4 Self Organized Tutorials

*Tutorials* can be organized by individual PhD candidates, or small groups of up to five participants. Tutorials focus on a specialized theoretical or methodological topic or skill and allow PhD candidates to profit from the expertise of Faculty researchers other than their own supervisors on a topic of their need. The content is highly variable, and depends on the research interests and needs of the PhD candidate and the input of the proposed available professor. It may for instance encompass training in designing a particular type of quantitative or qualitative study, a specific advanced method of analysis, using a particular tool, or conducting and writing a literature review on a specific disciplinary topic. Given the small set-up, tutorials are usually highly interactive, and have a hands-on character. They can be organized throughout the PhD trajectory, and are thus highly flexibly both with respect to timing and content. Faculty tutors (only VU FSS) receive compensation for these activities.

*Seminar series or lab group meetings* are self-organized (regular) meetings under the supervision of faculty staff member(s). It can be a series of regular meetings in a broader research group in which participants, for instance, discuss papers (of guest speakers or participants own work), methods, or other topics related to a research theme. It can also be an intensive short-term meeting of a number of days – for instance with (international) guests.

In any case, the participating group should be broader than just one supervisor and his/her own PhD candidates; the goal is to allow PhD candidates to profit from expertise of other Faculty researchers or invited guests other than their own supervisors.

**Organization**

To organize a tutorial or to receive credits for a seminar series, participating PhD candidates (with Faculty member) have to submit a plan prior to the meeting schedule and report afterwards who completed it. This plan needs to be worked in close collaboration with the proposed tutor / Faculty member and in consultation with the VU-GSSS program director. The final plan should be submitted for approval, at least one week before the start of the tutorial / seminar series by email to both the coordinator (n.a.de.graaff@vu.nl) and VU-GSSS (graduate.school.fsw@vu.nl).

Other PhD candidates will be invited by the organizer of the tutorial.

The tutorial / seminar plan should include: 1) Name and details of Faculty member and PhD participants; 2) course objectives; 3) schedule; 4) readings; and 5) assignments. Also add a 6) detailed validation of assigned credits in which it is specified how the content of the tutorial fits to the proposed number of European Credits (EC's). 1 EC stands for 28 hours of work, you can use this [template](#). The study load is based on different parts of the tutorial: readings (number of pages to read), the number and size of assignments completed outside the meetings, and
the number and duration of meetings. Use the following standards to compute the study load for each part:
- Meetings: 1.5 hour meeting = 2 hours study load (preparation included)
- Readings: reading 6 pages of scientific literature = 1 hour study load
- Assignments: Writing a paper = 2 hours study load per page (line spacing 1.5).

A tutorial and seminar series can encompass a maximum of 3 EC’s. PhD candidates can participate in a maximum of two tutorials and two seminar series during their PhD trajectory. Please refer to the course manual for additional detail.

**Finding expertise within FSS**
To facilitate PhD candidates in finding tutors with expertise on specialized topics, we created a document listing expertise of scientific staff within the Faculty of Social Sciences. You can access the [FSS expertise list here](#). Note that this is a living document that can continuously be updated by both PhD candidates and Faculty staff. The goal is to collaboratively create a comprehensive and useful overview of expertise. This will facilitate PhD candidates to find staff members with expertise on a topic of their need to either ask brief questions (helpdesk), or set-up a tutorial. Tutorials are organized in small groups (1-5 students), with meetings on a regular basis. If you need advise or help with the organisation or finding relevant expertise, please contact the overall coordinator Nana de Graaff: n.a.de.graaff@vu.nl

**Type of assessment**
Defined in tutorial proposal

**Target group**
All PhD candidates linked to the VU Faculty of Social Sciences.
5. **Courses offered outside VU-GSSS**

All PhD candidates are stimulated to attend courses that are offered outside the VU-GSSS educational program, provided they are at least research master or PhD candidates’ level. These may be courses and workshops offered at other VU faculties or at other universities in the Netherlands or abroad, in (inter)national research schools, or in VU Interfaculty Research Institutes. Following external courses may be particularly appropriate when they offer a specialized content that is not covered within the VU-GSSS program, or when they are organized in a more convenient time period. Also, some PhD projects are closely linked to a disciplinary research school outside VU-GSSS, which justifies following (part of) the education program offered there.

VU GSSS aims to facilitate linking PhD candidates to suitable research schools, relevant courses and other scientific researchers, both in national and international contexts. The VU-GSSS also collaborates with major research schools in Amsterdam in order to increase supply of courses and flexibility to design individualized training plans. We have an agreement for exchange of course participation free of charge with **Amsterdam Business Research Institute** (ABRI, VU, School of Business and Economics) **Graduate School of Religion and Theology** (GSRT, VU, Faculty of Theology) and **Amsterdam Institute for Social Science Research** (UVA). This means that PhD candidates enrolled in the VU-GSSS can participate without fee in most of the courses offered by these graduate schools. Their course programmes and information about how to sign up can be found on their websites. Note that participation is only possible if space permits. Usually there is a maximum of 12-15 participants in a course and internal PhD’s get priority over external participants.

Many external institutes offering PhD courses provide participants with a certificate specifying the number of EC’s earned once the course requirements are fulfilled. Such a certificate is needed as evidence that a course is completed and needs to be uploaded in Hora Finita. If credits are not specified for a course, PhD candidates can request VU-GSSS to judge the content of the course to specify whether, and how many, credits can be awarded. Make sure to submit a timely request in order to ascertain whether EC’s can be obtained for a course.

5.1 **Courses offered by Vrije Universiteit**

The following courses offered at Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam can be included in a PhD's training plan.

- **PhD Success and Personal Efficacy**
  
  For first-year PhD candidates at Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, Human Resource Management organizes the training PhD success and personal efficacy. In this training, which is taught in English, one will learn how to set their own goals, develop a strategy for realizing them and to communicate them to others. More
information about the course can be found on [VUnet](https://www.vunet.vu.nl). A certificate is provided after completion of the course. A successful completion of this training is counted as 3 EC by VU-GSSS. Participation is free of charge for PhD candidates employed at the VU, but external PhD candidates are usually charged a fee of € 1600,-. External candidates are encouraged to contact Saskia Jans ([graduate.school.fsw@vu.nl](mailto:graduate.school.fsw@vu.nl)) who can advice and connect you with the Human Resource Management department.

**Project management and planning tool**

Not a course but definitely of interest for all PhD's is the Project Management Tool for PhD's. Brigitte Hertz organizes the Project Management training for 1st year PhD's (part of the PhD Induction Programme), but their [online tool](https://www.vunet.vu.nl) is available for free.

**Good Habbitz**

On the [E-learning platform GoodHabbitz](https://www.vunet.vu.nl) there are more than 100 online training courses available for all VU staff. Think for example of a course in the field of personal effectiveness, Windows Office or communication. Each training course consists of five modules and a test. You can follow the modules separately or sequentially and you can start, stop and resume a training at any time. Modules include a piece of theory, videos, an interview with an expert, a quiz, casuistry and a practical assignment. You choose the topics that are useful to you. This can be a complete training, a module or just a part of a module. It is not an end in itself to follow the entire training. You can log in to [VU E-learning](https://www.vunet.vu.nl) with your VUnetID.

**VU Social Programmes for PhD candidates**

At the VU Amsterdam a number of [social events](https://www.vunet.vu.nl) and sports activities for PhD candidates and their families are offered.

**IO Career Thursdays**

International Office offers [Career Thursdays for PhD candidates](https://www.vunet.vu.nl) workshops every other Thursday in the month.

### 5.2 Courses offered at Research Schools within the Netherlands

The following research schools offer PhD courses, and have regular attendance of VU-GSSS PhD’s. These courses are accepted for the training plan. Courses of some schools are open for VU-GSSS PhDs without a fee (ABRI, AISSR). For other schools participation fee is usually required (see Chapter 6 of the Information Document for PhD candidates and Supervisors for financial support).

Graduate Schools where VU-GSSS has an exchange agreement for (limited) participation without fee:

- University of Amsterdam: Amsterdam Institute for Social Science Research (AISSR; information available at the [Graduate School](https://www.vunet.vu.nl))
- Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam: Amsterdam Business Research Institute (ABRI)
- Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam: Faculty of Religion and Theology
Other Graduate Schools that may ask a fee:

- Research School for Resource Studies for Development (CERES)
- Kurt Lewin Institute (KLI)
- Netherlands Institute of Government (NIG)
- Netherlands School of Communication Research (NeSCoR)
- Netherlands Research School of Gender Studies (NOG)

5.3 International Summer Schools
The following international summer schools are accepted for the training plan, but note that a participation fee is usually required (see chapter 6 of the Information Document for PhDs and Supervisors for financial support).

- Essex Summer School (Social Science Data Analysis)
- ECPR Summer School/Winter School, Ljubljana (Methods and Techniques)
- Oslo Summer School (Comparative Social Studies)
- ICPSR Summer Program, Michigan (Quantitative Methods of Social Research)
- Summer School in Comparative Urban Studies, London
- VU Amsterdam Summer School offers three blocks of 2 weeks topical and methodological courses during the summer months/in July and August, some of which are at PhD level.
- Berlin Summer School in Social Sciences
- GESIS Summer School in Survey Methodology, Cologne
- Artisa Dissertation Week, Greece (Dissertation Writing Week & individual coaching)
- Utrecht Summer School

5.4 Online Training
Some MOOC and Coursera courses are be useful for your project and might be accepted for the training plan. Note that the course also need to be at least research master or PhD level and you have to get the certificate in order to gain EC. Please discuss with the Programme Manager before you decide to follow an online course as part of your training plan/to gain EC.

5.5 VU Research Data Services
Finding, managing and archiving research data is a fast-developing field which requires specific knowledge. The Research Data Services (RDS) team of the VU supports researchers and students during the entire data lifecycle, from the initial research plan up to the archiving of results.

RDS offers VU researchers and students, free of charge:

- Support in searching in and downloading from secondary datasets, for both proprietary databases and open data.
- Advice on writing data management plans
- Advice on selecting, collecting, structuring and using data
• Advice on drawing up faculty guidelines and procedures for research data management
• Guidelines on personal data protection
• Support in finding the right partner for customised projects

Feel free to contact the Research Data Services team at: researchdataservices.ub@vu.nl.

5.5.1 Available data sources

Through the university library, you have access to a number of proprietary databases, mostly for company, financial, or economic data. Below we list the most important ones.

5.5.2 Company data

We have several data sources that collect information on companies, such as their size (in terms of employees or assets), performance (revenue, profitability, etc), production (industry or product groups), or organization (governance structure, ownership).

• The Worldscope component in Datastream has information from annual reports on some 80,000 companies internationally, going back to around 1980. The ASSET4 component has information on environmental, social, and governance indicators.
• Amadeus provides extensive information on 300,000 European large European companies, and basic information for millions of small & medium companies. It includes data on ownership and governance structures.
• SDC Platinum and Zephyr provide data on mergers and acquisitions, and on initial public offerings.
• Compustat has annual report data, going back to 1950 for the US and Canada, or approximately 1987 for other countries. The Execucomp component has extensive data on executive salaries and compensation.

5.5.3 Financial markets

The databases below provide data on financial markets for company stocks and bonds, derivatives, currency, or commodities.

• CRSP has information on stocks, indices, and mutual funds going back to 1925. It links to the Compustat data where possible.
• The NYSE, FOREX, and Thomson tick history databases have high-frequency (intra-day) data for different topics.
• SDC and Datastream —already mentioned above— also provide financial market data.

5.5.5 Economic and socio-economic data

In addition to the proprietary data bases listed above there are many sources for data on inflation, trade, GDP, or unemployment, many of which are freely available.

• Statistics Netherlands (CBS) provides many aggregated statistics with a focus, obviously, on the Netherlands.
• **FRED** collects and provides US and international time series from many sources. FRED has data on banking, finance, employment, price indices, and also provides data sets from several influential academic publications. There are useful plugins for Excel and for Stata that allow you to import data directly.

• **International organizations** such as the IMF, OECD, or Eurostat are important sources of data. Often, NGOs also make data available.

5.5.6 Example uses for the social sciences

Below are some examples of how you might use these data. Even if these data are not your main interest, they might provide you with control variables to exclude alternative explanations.

• Information on the ownership structure of firms can be used to identify **networks of firms** or international power structures, see for example [De Graaff (2013)](#). The Amadeus data base can provide this type of data.

• Work on **executive compensation** features in economic sociology and political science; see for example [Diprete et al. (2010)](#). The Execucomp data base has data for executive compensation.

• **Social determinants** of stock market trades is a central theme in behavioral finance and the sociology of finance. Empirical research in this field often uses data from the Compustat and CRSP databases. See for example [Choi & Sias (2009)](#).

• Official statistics from national or international agencies have numerous applications in political economy, public policy, or economic sociology, especially in international or institutional settings. Often, the official statistics are combined with other data. Recent examples include [Rose (2016)](#) and [Jacobs & Dirlam (2016)](#).