



Wageningen School
of Social Sciences

WASS PhD Education Programme 2018-2019

Course Guide

Wageningen School of Social Sciences (WASS)

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1. The WASS PhD Education programme

The WASS PhD Education programme is designed to support PhD candidates in obtaining disciplinary and interdisciplinary knowledge and skills. The objectives of the programme build upon the learning targets of the WASS PhD programme, which - in turn - are based on three competence categories that need to be acquired to meet the general learning targets of the Wageningen University PhD programme (see box 1).¹

Box. 1 Learning targets of the WASS PhD programme

After successful completion of the WASS PhD training programme, the recipient of the doctorate is capable of:

A. *project related competences*

- Managing a research project (A1)
- Integrating his/her research in the corresponding discipline (A2)

B. *general research related competences*

- Placing his/her research in a broader (social sciences and WUR) scientific context (B1)
- Placing his/her research in a societal context (B2)

C. *career related competences*

- Employing transferable skills in different domains/careers (C)

Each year, the programme is evaluated by the WASS Education Committee and renewed via a call for PhD learning activities, that is sent out to all WASS fellows. The resulting education programme is published in this course guide and on the website of the graduate school at the beginning of the Academic Year.

An important component of the Education programme is the WASS Graduate programme, that will run for the first time in 2017/2018. The programme prepares motivated MSc students – through training and an introduction to the scientific community – for an academic career. As such, the courses that are part of the Graduate programme are at an advanced level, highly interactive and form the basis for some of the PhD courses. Therefore, these courses do not fall within the category of MSc courses, for which PhD candidates are restricted to including a maximum of 6 ECTS in their TSP.

1.1 Elements

The Education programme consists of several educational elements:

- **PhD courses (max 4 ECTS):** these intensive courses typically run over a relatively short period of time. Teaching methods rely on some degree of independence of the PhD candidate and on core knowledge and skills in the (disciplinary) field. Some PhD courses (Topic to Proposal and Systematic Literature Review) form a fixed part of the WASS Education Programme and recur bi-annually. The other PhD courses may be renewed each year upon the call for learning activities. PhD courses are assessed for a fail or pass decision.
- **Graduate programme courses (6 ECTS):** these courses offer advanced knowledge on theory or methodology and are open to WASS PhD candidates and highly motivated MSc students from the WASS Graduate Programme. They are scheduled for a period of three years, after which they are prolonged or replaced by another course. Graduate programme courses involve a graded assessment.
- **Interdisciplinary Windows (IW; 2 ECTS):** In these tutorials, small groups of PhD candidates and MSc students (from the WASS Graduate programme), guided by senior exports, deepen their knowledge on a (theoretical or methodological) topic within one of the WASS themes. Interdisciplinary Windows involve a graded assessment.
- **Summer/Winter schools (min. 1.5 ECTS per week):** these are one or two-week intensive programmes with daily meetings. The summer/winter schools usually attract a lot of external participants, and therefore lend themselves perfectly for networking. Detailed programmes will be made available through the WASS courses website.

¹ For transferable skill courses (category C) we refer to the course offer of [Wageningen Graduate Schools](#)

Ad hoc elements

- **Masterclasses (0.5 ECTS):** these one/two day intensive activities are typically followed by a small group of participants, guided by an expert. They handle a focused topic for which some specific prior knowledge may be required and involve a high degree of interaction between participants and expert. Masterclasses involve a pass/fail assessment. As a smaller educational element, masterclasses are organized on a more ad-hoc basis, often at the occasion of a visiting senior researcher. Keep an eye on the WASS courses website for updates on these activities.
- **Literature discussion groups (0.25 ECTS for each article studied and discussed):** in small groups PhD candidates study relevant articles on a specific disciplinary topic together with a WASS fellow. Participants receive 0.25 ECTS per article studied and discussed (with a minimum of 4 articles for each journal club). WASS is currently working on creating an online portal where existing discussion groups can be found and where new initiatives can be launched.

1.2 Practicalities

Registering for courses:

For WASS PhD courses, Interdisciplinary Windows, Summer/Winter schools and Masterclasses, registration can be done via the registration page of the WASS website, see [link](#). Please make sure you provide the most recent contact details so that in case of any changes you will be notified promptly. After your on-line registration you will receive a short notification that your name has been registered. At least 2 weeks before the course you will receive a confirmation about the location and the schedule. WASS will also send an invoice to your address indicated on the registration form. Please send an e-mail to [Marcella Haan](#) in case you have not received the second confirmation two weeks before the course.

For Graduate programme courses, enrolment can be done via My Portal, after registering at the Student Service Center (yearly renewal required, see [link](#)). Participation in Graduate Programme courses is free of charge for registered PhD candidates. At Wageningen University the academic year is divided into six periods. Before a period starts you must register for courses you plan to take. For more information go to [Registration for courses](#). If you register for a course, you are automatically registered for the course examination.

Course fees

Course fees are published together with course schedules, at least two months prior to the start of a course. For regular courses, WASS makes use of the following guidelines for determining fees. Actual fees may deviate from these global guidelines depending on course schedules (e.g., incl. lunch/diner) and required materials.

	2 ECTS course (IW)	4 ECTS course (PhD course)
WASS, PE&RC and WIMEK/SENSE PhDs with TSP ¹	€ 200	€ 300
a) All other PhD candidates, b) Postdocs and staff of the above mentioned Graduate Schools	€ 450	€ 600
All others	€ 650	€ 900

¹ For some courses, PhD candidates from other WUR graduate schools with a TSP are also entitled to a reduced fee. Please consult your Education Coordinator for more information.

Cancellation conditions:

Participants can cancel their registration free of charge 1 month before the course starts. A cancellation fee of 100% applies if a participant cancels his/her registration less than 1 month prior to the start of the course.

The organisers have the right to cancel the course no later than one month before the planned course start date in the case that the number of registrations does not reach the minimum. The participants will be notified of any changes at their e-mail addresses. From Graduate programme courses you can only withdraw during the registration period.

Further Information:

- For details about logistics, registration, fees etc. please contact [Marcella Haan](#), Tel +31 317 484126
- For general information about the WASS PhD Education programme, please contact the WASS PhD Programme Manager [Fennie van Straalen](#), Tel +31 317 484116

2. Course Schedule

2018/2019																									
Calendar week	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	51	52	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
	Period 1								Period 2								Holidays		Period 3					Resit exams	
Graduate Programme	Advanced Microeconomics: UEC-51806								Theorizing Consumers and Consumption: genealogy of theory: SCH-52306								Holidays		Advanced Qualitative Research Design and Data Collection Methods: GEO-55804						
	Theories for Business Decisions: BEC-54806																		Integrating disciplinary approaches in health and sustainable development						
	Advanced Social Theory: RSO-58306																								
	Analysing Discourse: Theories, Methods and Techniques: CPT-56306																								
WASS PhD Programme					WASS PhD Introduction				Systematic approaches to reviewing literature								Holidays		Legal Clinic for your PhD						
					Research Methodology: From topic to proposal																				
									Advanced Behavioural Economic Theory																
					Introduction in R				Critical Perspectives on Social Theory (November, 4 ECTS)				Natural resources and Conflict: Theorizing governance, resistance and violence						Game Theoretic Modelling with Maple						
									Food Value Chain research: understanding Inter-organisational relationships										Holidays						

Note: See WASS website and Study Handbook for detailed course schedules

■ Graduate programme courses (6 ECTS)
 ■ Interdisciplinary Windows (2 ECTS)
 ■ PhD courses (max. 4 ECTS)
 ■ Summer/Winter schools (min. 1.5 ECTS per week)

Calendar week	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35
Graduate Programme	Period 4				Period 5								Period 6							Summer period								
					Advanced Macroeconomics: ENR-51306								Quantitative Data Analysis: Multivariate Techniques: YRM-50806															
	Institutions and Societal Transformation: CPT-57802												Qualitative Data Analysis: Procedures and Strategies: MAT-50806															
	Social orders, institutions and long-term economic development: RHI-54302												Modelling and Simulation of Complex Socio-Technical Systems: INF-51806															
					Visual Research Methods: CPT-53302								Advanced Course on Economic Regulation: AEP-53802															
					Entrepreneurship and Innovation in Emerging Economies: MST-56302								Theories of Policy and Governance for Analysing Water Issues: PAP-54302															
													Embodiment, Food & Environment: CPT-56802															
					WASS Graduate Programme Orientation (3 ECTS)																							
WASS PhD Programme	Academic Publication and Presentation in the Social Sciences				Philosophy of Social Science								Dilemmas in Data collection and Fieldwork							Political Ecology								
					Systematic approaches to reviewing literature															Political Theory								
	WASS PhD Introduction				Research Methodology: From topic to proposal															Risk Analysis								
					Info Metrics															Theory and Practice of Efficiency & Productivity Measurement								

3. Course Descriptions

3.1 PhD courses

3.1.1 Academic Behavioural Economic Theory – 4 ECTS

Lecturers

Ian Levely Development Economics Group (DEC)

Introduction

This Phd course will provide students with a solid understanding of the most important ideas in behavioral economics, diving deep into primary sources of theoretical and empirical research. Behavioral economics has become an influential sub-field over the past few decades. In fact, the most recent Nobel Prize in Economics was awarded to Richard Thaler for his founding work in Behavioural economics.

Neoclassical economic models assume that decision makers are rational and self-interested with consistent preferences over time, and that deviations from these assumptions are not systematic. Behavioral economics has challenged this approach, by taking into account knowledge from other fields, principally psychology, and using experimental methods to build rigorous models of human behavior that can be applied to other areas of economic research.

This course will cover the most important topics in behavioural microeconomic theory, including:

1. Reference-dependent preferences (Prospect theory)
2. Bounded rationality
3. Time preferences
4. Risk and uncertainty
5. Cooperation, coordination and institutions
6. Social preferences

This course will take a cross-cutting approach: even if the research goal is not explicitly to test a hypothesis that falls under one of these categories, accounting for these factors can help researchers to better design studies covering a broad range of themes.

Materials will consist mostly of seminal articles in peer-reviewed journals. We will also use selected readings from Bowles (2006) "Microeconomics: Behavior, Institutions and Evolution."

Learning outcomes

After successfully completing this PhD course, students will be able to:

- Understand the key topics of behavioral economic theory listed above. Specifically, students should operationalize this knowledge in order to:
- Understand both the mechanics of each formal model covered, as well as analyze the models to deduce the underlying logic.
- Apply these theories to explain economic behavior.
- Apply this knowledge the student's respective field of study.
- Evaluate the empirical evidence supporting these models.

In addition, students should develop skills to:

- Independently read and understand articles in peer-reviewed journals that include behavioral economic models.
- Create models of economic behavior for their own research.

Programme

The course will be divided into the six topics listed above (3a). Each topic will comprise (approximately) one week of the course. Meetings will have the following format:

- i) Lectures.
- ii) Interactive learning seminars, in which students will be involved in presenting relevant literature, and discuss problem sets.
- iii) Student presentation seminars, in which students present their own research (or research plans), with a focus on incorporating topics from the course.

Outside of class, students will be expected to read the relevant literature and work on problem sets, in addition to preparing presentations and the final project.

Assessment

Students will be graded on the following elements:

- Interactive learning seminar presentation (15%)
- Incorporation of behavioral economic theory in own research: (40%)
 - i) Written research (plan) that incorporates a topic from the course, and includes a formal model.
 - ii) Class presentation of i).
- In class written exam (30%)
- Class participation (including problem sets) (15%)

Target Group

PhD students in Economics, Management Decision Support, or other Social Science students who have a solid foundation in Economic theory or mathematical modelling.

Assumed Prior Knowledge

Basic economic theory. The course complements Advanced Microeconomics (ECH-51806), which presents the conventional approach to microeconomic theory and Behavioral and Experimental Economics (ECH-51306), which concentrates on empirical methods in experimental economics and is open to bachelors and masters students. (Though these courses are not required prerequisites.)

3.1.2 Academic Publication and Presentation in the Social Sciences – 4 ECTS

Lecturers

Robert Fletcher	Sociology of Development and Change (SDC)
Meghann Ormond	Cultural Geography (GEO)
Bram Büscher	Sociology of Development and Change (SDC)
Jessica Duncan	Rural Sociology (RSO)

Contact person: [Robert Fletcher](#)

Introduction

This course offers advanced instruction in the skills needed to successfully write and present an academic research paper, as well as in professionalization for an academic career more generally. Lessons will address the various stages of paper writing (outlines, abstracts, literature reviews, overall structure, writing style and strategies, submission for publication), conversion of papers into conference presentations; and understanding the academic career and job market. This course will focus specifically on writing in the social sciences and humanities, which have their particular structures and expectations commonly distinct from most natural science fields.

Learning outcomes

After successful completion of this course, participants are expected to be able to:

1. Develop a quality research paper for academic peer review
2. Deliver a research paper in conference presentation format
3. Demonstrate command of the academic publishing landscape

Programme

To receive course credit participants should attend at 6 out of the 8 sessions (but can certainly do more). Some sessions are considered mandatory, as designated below, while others are optional.

Session	Theme
1	The Art of the Abstract (Mandatory) Writing a good abstract for an article or conference presentation is an important yet underappreciated academic skill. In this session we'll discuss techniques for how to do this well.
2	Understanding the Publishing Landscape (Mandatory) Loehle, Craig. 1990. A Guide to Increased Creativity in Research--Inspiration or Perspiration? <i>Bioscience</i> (40)2: 123-129.
3	The Literature Review (Mandatory) Taylor, Dena. nd. "The Literature Review: A Few tips on Conducting It." University of Toronto. http://www.utoronto.ca/writing/ Bernard, H. Russell. 2004. "The Literature Search." Pp. 96-108 in <i>Research Methods in Anthropology: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches</i> . 4 th Edition. New York: Altamira Press. Becker, Howard S. 2008. "Terrorized by the Literature." Pp. 136-149 in <i>Writing for Social Scientists: How to Start and Finish Your Thesis, Book, or Article</i> . 2 nd Edition. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
4	Outlining your Article/Dissertation (Optional) This session will address how to create a detailed outline to guide the writing process of an article as a component of an overall dissertation or thesis project
5	Writing I; Strategy (Optional) Becker, Howard S. 2008. "One Right Way." Pp. 43-67 in <i>Writing for Social Scientists: How to Start and Finish Your Thesis, Book, or Article</i> . 2 nd Edition. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press. Emerson, Robert, Fretz, Rachel & Shaw, Linda (2005) Chapter Four: Writing Up Fieldnotes II: Scenes on the Page. <i>Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes</i> . Chicago & London: The University of Chicago Press. Pp. 66-107.
6	Writing II; Execution (Optional) Becker, Howard S. 2008. "Freshman English for Graduate Students" and "Persona and Authority." Pp. 1-25 and 26-42 in <i>Writing for Social Scientists: How to Start and Finish Your Thesis, Book, or Article</i> . 2 nd Edition. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press. Orwell, George. 1946. "Politics and the English Language." Reprint.
7	Presentations (Optional) This session will offer strategies and tips for effective academic conference presentations
8	Presentation Boot Camp (Mandatory) In this final session students will do mock presentations of a research paper for feedback from instructors and peers

Assessment

- Mock conference presentation – to assess skill in translating papers into oral delivery
- Final paper – submission of publication quality research paper

Target group and min/max number of participants

This course is intended for PhD and advanced research master students; 10 min/25 max participants

Assumed prior knowledge

Msc. Social science; advanced qualitative research methods; having completed a substantial research period and ready to write up results

3.1.3 Dilemmas in fieldwork and research ethics: Consent, privacy, and beyond – 4 ECTS

Lecturers

Dvora Yanow	Strategic Communication (COM)
Severine van Bommel	Strategic Communication (COM)
Marcel Verweij	Philosophy (PHIL)
Bram Jansen	Sociology of Development and Change (SDC)

Contact person: [Severine van Bommel](#)

Introduction

This is an advanced course in interpretive research methods and the interpretive methodological grounding underlying them. Field research in the social sciences involves interacting with living human beings—sometimes called “human subjects” or, preferably, “research participants.” Although such interactions occur in field (and laboratory) experiments, non-experimental field researchers typically encounter people in a range of everyday settings, including workplaces, coffee shops, schools, their homes, and public settings. These days, internet listserves, chatrooms, and other internet-based contexts (such as Facebook) would also be considered places in which researchers encounter research participants. A variety of methods may be used in such encounters, including interviews, participant-observation/ ethnography, and records and documents.

Increasingly, such encounters are subject to state regulations. Intended to protect research participants, such regulations also impact researchers: governmental requirements, above and beyond professional ethics codes, can impact choices of method and research design. Regulation may require researchers to obtain prior review and approval of their research proposals (e.g., US and Canadian policies) or may focus on consent requirements and privacy protections without requiring prior institutional approval (e.g., the Netherlands). In addition, more and more, scholarly journals are asking for proof that such institutional review and approval has been obtained—some prior to manuscript review or, upon acceptance, as a requirement of publishing the research article.

But what about protecting researchers in their field settings? What are some of the dilemmas researchers face, especially in conflict or post-conflict settings? And do such settings require additional care in protecting research participants? This course will explore the relationships among national regulatory requirements, disciplinary codes of ethics, and the actual dilemmas that confront researchers in conducting field research. These questions will be explored both theoretically, drawing on research ethics literature, and pragmatically, i.e., in terms of student-generated questions from their field experiences (as applicable) and in terms of the university and/or departmental policies, professional associational ethics codes, and/or state regulatory. Real-life stories from researchers doing fieldwork are the leading element during the lectures.

Taking this course will raise course participants’ awareness about: (a) their own regulatory setting(s) and (b) the more general ethical issues recognized in disciplinary ethics codes. Class discussion will be centred around research dilemmas that course participants bring with them.

What this course will not cover:

(1) This is not a course on ethics as treated in the philosophical literature. Although we may draw on some of this as background, the focus will be pragmatic and inductive, i.e., focusing on students’ own regulatory setting(s) and the research challenges they have faced or may face in the field.

(2) Academic integrity includes not only interactions with research participants but also issues of plagiarism, falsification of data, etc. There is insufficient time to address these additional issues, although we may make reference to them in passing.

Learning outcomes

After successful completion of this course, participants are expected to be able to:

1. to understand the disciplinary ethical codes and regulations that apply to their research;
2. to describe some of the historical context that has produced increased regulation of researcher conduct, as well as contemporary critiques of such regulation in the social sciences;
3. to identify and critically reflect on a range of research dilemmas that arise in the field;
4. to apply a range of strategies for thinking about ethical interactions with research participants to fieldwork dilemmas, particularly with regard to deceptive or covert research, informed consent, and privacy protections, and for thinking about protecting the researcher.

Programme

Day	Topic
<u>Monday</u> 09.30 – 10.00	Introductions and course overview
10.00 - 11.00	The promise of doing the right thing Regulating 'ethics' in social science research
11.15 - 12.30	Protecting research participants—Key ideas emerging from these codes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Informed consent • Protection of vulnerable populations • Benefits to outweigh costs Top down vs bottom up ethics and the implications for ethics in field research
12.30 - 14.00	Lunch
14.00 - 17.00	Positionality and power Rethinking 'vulnerability' in light of power dynamics in relationships
<u>Tuesday</u> 9.30 - 12.30	Dilemmas in fieldwork: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gaining access to the field • Managing identity in the field
12.30 – 14.00	Lunch
14.00 - 17.00	Privacy, confidentiality, anonymity
<u>Wednesday</u> 09.30 - 12.30	Informed consent
12.30 - 14.00	Lunch
14.00 - 17.00	Role of deception in social science research – both ways <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undercover research • Truth, lies and rumours
<u>Thursday</u> 09.30 - 12.30	Protecting researchers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparing fieldwork • Upon arrival • Doing fieldwork • After fieldwork
12.30 - 14.00	Lunch
14.00 - 17.00	Protecting researchers (continued) Key threats, risk reduction & contingency planning

Friday	Storing data, destroying data.
09.30 - 12.30	
12.30 - 14.00	Lunch
14.00 - 17.00	Issues in writing and publication

Assessment

The course will be assessed based on:

- 1) pre-course assignment
- 2) initiative and active participation in the discussions during the classes
- 3) the final reflection report

Target group and min/max number of participants

This course is intended for both for those PhD students just coming out of the field (having conducted qualitative interpretive research and in the writing-up stage) and for those planning to go into the field (i.e., working on qualitative interpretative research plans). The maximum number of participants is set at 20.

Assumed prior knowledge

'Dilemmas in Fieldwork and Research Ethics' is not an introductory course. Participants are expected to have a background knowledge on MSc level on ethnographic or qualitative methods. If students have never taken a course in ethnographic or qualitative methods (e.g., they took their M.Sc in natural sciences and are familiar with experimental and/or statistical analyses), students should contact the course coordinator to decide on a tailor made pre-class exercise to help them understand the issues we will be engaging in the course.

3.1.4 Legal Clinic for your PhD - 4 ECTS

Lecturers

Hanna Schebasta	Law and Governance (LAW)
Nadia Bernaz	Middlesex University, London
Kai Purnhagen	Law and Governance (LAW)

Contact person: [Hanna Schebasta](#)

Introduction

Do you deal with a legal aspect in your thesis, and you're not quite sure how to explore it for your topic? Or are you simply curious about how the law is relevant for your PhD topic?

This course offers the opportunity for PhD students to discover and analyse any legal issues that they may come across in their respective topics. The 'Legal Clinic' is a highly personalized course intended to provide course participants with specifically tailored solutions for any legal issues in their respective PhD projects.

Learning outcomes

After successful completion of this course, participants are expected to be able to:

1. Use legal databases (legal literature, laws, court judgments)
2. Analyze legal instruments that are relevant to their PhD topic
3. Compose a basic legal analysis that can be included in their PhD

Programme

Course participants are expected to complete a thesis briefing about the potential legal aspects in their PhD that will be used to adapt the content of the lectures prior to the course.

The course combines short lectures with group and individual work in which the course participants work on their personal topics.

Session	Description
'Discover the Law'	Lecture "Introduction to Law"; Short round of PhD mini presentations Lecture "Researching the Law"; Application in personal topic
Self-study (over the course of three weeks)	Course participants are expected to identify a legal research question either within their ongoing PhD work or another topic of interest and work on this question on the basis of the skills acquired. Course participants may choose between submitting a brief written work or preparing a presentation of their results.
'From the legal point of view...'	Lecture "Legal argumentation"; Application in personal topic Presentation round with feedback session.

Assessment

Participants will be required to demonstrate a constructive participation in the course, either through a minor research note or the presentation.

Target group and min/max number of participants

This course is intended for a maximum number of 10 participants.

Assumed prior knowledge

No prior knowledge required.

3.1.5 Philosophy of social science – 4 ECTS

Lecturers

Henk van den Belt	Philosophy (PHIL)
Cor van de Weele	Philosophy (PHIL)
Leon Pijnenburg	Philosophy (PHIL)
Josette Jacobs	Philosophy (PHIL)

Contact person: [Leon Pijnenburg](#)

Introduction

This course will provide the student insight into the philosophical issues and questions that are basic to social science. For example: what kind of explanation can social science provide? Is it rational or is relativism needed? What is the role of values? What knowledge are we looking for and why?

Learning outcomes

After successful completion of this course, participants are expected to be able to:

1. Critically discuss science and research from the point of view of the philosophy of science (when is evidence compelling?)
2. Analyze and evaluate constructivist and realist assumptions in science
3. Analyze and evaluate types of action and explanations of actions, and their relation to rationality
4. Analyze and evaluate assumptions of fact and value distinctions in social science
5. Explicate and evaluate types of (epistemological) biases in science
6. Make clear and transparent how own research can be judged and evaluated in terms of above mentioned learning outcomes.

Programme themes

- Classical philosophy of science: When is evidence compelling? Including the case of Semmelweis (Authors: Popper, Lakatos, Kuhn, Hempel)
- Social construction and realism.... (Is social construction a big joke?) (Authors: Sismondo, Latour, Elder-Vass)
- Explanation in social science: causes and/or reasons (Authors: Weber, Hempel, Winch, Taylor, Gadamer, Apel, Davidson)
- Rationality, relativity and action (also from a socio-anthropological point of view) (Authors: Winch, Horton, Moody-Adams, Habermas)
- Revisiting ideals of 'value-free' and 'critical' science (Authors: Weber, Merton, Proctor, Douglas, Sayer, Putnam)
- Selective attention in science: what do and don't we want to know? (Authors: Mercier & Sperber, Firestein, Oreskes, Proctor, Gross)

Assessment

Student will write a reflective essay in which he or she explores i) the ways in which topics of the course appear in own research, and discusses ii) reasons that can be used to criticise and/or justify that.

Target group and min/max number of participants

WASS-PhDs, 10/20 participants

Assumed prior knowledge

none

3.1.6 Research Methodology: From topic to proposal - 4 ECTS

Lecturers

Hilde Tobi	Research Methodology group, Biometris
Peter Tamás	Research Methodology group, Biometris

Contact person: [Hilde Tobi](#) and [Peter Tamás](#)

Introduction

"The project proposal appeared so clear but now I do not know where to start."

"I do not know what my research could add to clarify this issue. It is so obvious what the outcome is going to be."

"Really, everything in my project is so important and interesting. I guess I need some help to learn how to focus."

Do you recognize any of the above concerns? Then this course is for you! Also, when you have little idea about what aspects of methodology could be important to your project, then this course is of interest for you too!

Aim of this course:

The aim of this course is to offer insight into the process of (getting started with) research and the methodological pitfalls you may encounter between formulating a research problem and writing a scientific paper. This course addresses research design and methodological issues for quantitative, qualitative and mixed methods strategies.

In this course we go through the steps from turning a socially relevant interest into a scientifically sound research problem, writing a research proposal and composing a research report. Assignments require you to

work on your own project. By the end of this course you will have developed a (skeleton) research or a paper proposal, depending on your entrance level and the complexity of the PhD proposal.

Topics in the course are:

- Research as a way of thinking
- Research as a process
- Formulating research questions
- From concept to variable
- Choosing a research design
- Types of data collection instruments
- Sampling
- Ethical issues in data collection

Literature:

Ranjit Kumar (2014). Research methodology(4th ed). London, Thousands Oaks, New Delhi: Sage publications Ltd. ISBN 9781446269978.

Learning outcomes

After successful completion of this course students are expected to be able to:

1. Formulate research questions and decide on the appropriateness of hypotheses
2. Make an informed choice between a number of study designs
3. Review pros and cons of several data collection methods
4. Decide on a sampling strategy suitable for their research

Programme

Meeting	Theme
1	From topic to research question: An introduction to the course and the other participants; formulating a research question; from topic to research question; concepts and variables; constructing hypotheses. Please bring with you to class, the title of your project and a short summary of no more than 500 words. Read Chapter 3-4 before you submit the first assignment. Assignment 1 contains your summary of problem definition, research objectives and research questions (max. 2 pages, in Arial 10 or larger with line spacing of 1.5). Please read chapters 5,6 and 13 before the next meeting.
2	Study designs: Designs based on the number of contacts, designs based on the reference period, other commonly used study designs. Please read chapter 7- 8, and finish the exercises before the next meeting.
3	Data collection methods: Primary and secondary sources, observations, interviews, questionnaires, validity and reliability of research instruments, ethical issues in data collection. Please read chapter 9-11 and 14 and finish the exercises before the next meeting.
4	Sampling: Principles of sampling, random and non-random sampling strategies, case selection. Please read chapter 12 and 17, and reread 13 before the next meeting. In addition you will be asked to volunteer your research proposal (max 5 pages, in Arial 10 or larger with line spacing of 1.5) and be requested to review two or three research proposals before the next meeting.
5	Final meeting: Simulation of research assessment meeting in which two or three research proposals are discussed. The meeting will close with other issues raised by course participants, and further details on the final assignment (your proposal).

The first four meetings consist of lectures and exercises that should be treated as small assignments although only one is to be handed in. After the fourth meeting, you will finish the assignment and hand in a (skeleton) research proposal or paper proposal. Two (or three) of the research proposals will be discussed extensively in the fifth meeting when we simulate a research assessment committee meeting. Based on this meeting and the feedback of the lecturer you can improve your proposal. To benefit from the course, active participation during the meetings as well as thorough preparation for each meeting is required. Participants are asked to be

present on time in all of the five meetings. Presence in at least four full meetings is a requirement for passing the course!

Assessment

The course will be completed after the final course assignment has been reviewed and approved as sufficient.

Target group and min/max number of participants

PhD candidates in the Social/Environmental Sciences. Minimum number of participants is 10.

Assumed prior knowledge

Sufficient knowledge of English:

Participants who are obliged to pass a TOEFL or IELTS test as a prerequisite for entering the WU PhD-programme are requested to provide us with the positive results of the TOEFL or IELTS test.

- IELTS: 6.5, with a minimum of 6.0 for each (academic) module.
- TOEFL: 580 points for the written TOEFL, 237 points for the computer based TOEFL and 92-93 points for the internet based TOEFL. All are to be supplemented by results of the Test of Written English (academic TWE). The minimum score required for this test is 5.0

3.1.7 Systematic approaches to reviewing literature – 4 ECTS

Lecturers

Peter Tamás	Research Methodology group, Biometris
Jurian Meijering	Research Methodology group, Biometris

Contact person: [Peter Tamás](#)

Introduction

In medicine, systematic reviews are the standard way to review evidence. This method is rapidly growing in importance in other disciplines. Systematic review is now used to describe theory, concepts, methods and evidence. The course offered at WU is interdisciplinary. In addition to what they require to do their own review, participants learn about research in other disciplines and they will learn how to report their research in ways that are more broadly accessible.

Types of research questions supported:

- What is the evidence on (insert topic)?
- What models/theories are used to study (insert interest)?
- How does the literature understand (insert concept)?
- How is (concept) measured?
- What is known about...?
- What works?
- How is (insert any topic of interest) reported?

This course introduces evidence review methods ranging from meta-analysis (statistical review of quantitative evidence) through to meta-ethnography (synthesis of qualitative evidence through abstraction). Several forms of thematic content analysis appropriate for the description of theory, concepts and methods will also be introduced. Participants will be broken into small working groups for instruction by the analysis methods appropriate for their research question.

Learning outcomes

After successful completion of this course students are expected to be able to:

1. Understand why a systematic approach to reviewing literature in the social sciences is increasingly expected
2. Identify where in their PhD trajectory systematic reviews make sense
3. Choose which type of review is appropriate for each research question they have
4. Know what time and resources each type of review will require
5. Understand what can and cannot claim to be known as the result of a given review
6. Design and, in the most practical terms, execute a review

Programme

Session	Theme
A	Preparatory assignment (approx.20 hours total effort)
1 (1/2 day)	Introduction to systematic review, refining your question, screening articles and discussion of questions arising from the introductory exercise <i>Homework: revise initial design of review and finalise sampling criteria for selection of articles, peer review (approx. 10 hours). This assignment is submitted for review to the instructors and will be returned prior to the session in the library.</i>
2 (full day)	Finding relevant studies (library) <i>Homework: finalise sample of articles to be analysed and make initial selection of analysis method (approx. 5-20 hours)</i>
3 (1/2 day)	Analysis, synthesis and reporting (split sessions) <i>Homework: prepare a rough draft of the final product, peer review, revise (approx. 20 hours)</i>
4 (1/2 day)	Review <i>Homework: finalise assignment (20-30 hours)</i>

NOTE: prior to each session participants submit questions that will be taken up in that class.

At the end of the course participants will have at least the skeleton of a publishable review in hand, they will know what is involved in conducting a review, they will know a number of different kinds of systematic review and they will know a great deal more about other scientific disciplines.

Assessment

The course will be completed after the final course assignment has been reviewed and approved as sufficient.

Target group and min/max number of participants

PhD-candidates and postdocs designing a literature review.

Assumed prior knowledge

Library information literacy course or equivalent.

3.1.8 WASS PhD Introduction Course – 1 ECTS

Lecturers

Fennie van Straalen

PhD Programme Manager, WASS

Alfons Oude Lansink

Scientific Director, WASS

Various other lecturers and WASS representatives

Contact person: [Fennie van Straalen](#)

Introduction

Starting a PhD is a big challenge. Especially in the beginning, new candidates will encounter lots of new information and uncertainties; a new workplace, new colleagues, preparing a four-year process, writing a research proposal, etcetera. In order to feel at home within the Wageningen School of Social Science (WASS), to get to know your fellow PhD-candidates, and to overcome pitfalls and problems during the PhD process, Wageningen School of Social Science offers the WASS Introduction Course for new PhD candidates.

The objective of the WASS Introduction Course is to make new PhD candidates more familiar with the WASS organisation and to prepare them for the PhD process. During various sessions, PhD candidates will be introduced to the WASS organisation, its fellows, and the PhD Council. A number of workshops will be offered with the objective to prepare candidates for their PhD process.

More specifically, the following issues will be considered:

- Everything you need to know about WASS
- Meeting the PhD Council
- Ethics in Social Sciences
- Competences necessary for the PhD process
- Proposal approval & Code of conduct
- Methodological challenges and pitfalls
- Dealing with your supervisor

Next to informative sessions and workshops, the program also includes social (teambuilding) activities. Since the Introduction Course lasts 3 days and is held at an external location (Conference centre De Werelt in Lunteren), there will be plenty of opportunities to get to know your fellow PhD candidates. Activities include, among others, a cultural evening on the arrival day and an outdoor (teambuilding) activity.

Learning outcomes

After the completion of this introduction course participants:

- are better prepared for their PhD process by being:
 1. Informed about practicalities and formalities in their PhD process
 2. Aware of the competences that are needed in their PhD process
 3. Aware of communication issues that can occur with supervisors and learning how to deal with these
 4. Informed on the approval procedure of their research proposal
- have a better understanding of the WASS organisation and feeling as a member of WASS
 1. The (international) candidates have a better insight in the Dutch culture
 2. Candidates are aware of the WASS mission and themes
 3. Candidates know the importance of ethics within WASS research and can relate that to their own research
 4. Candidates know each other and are familiar with the WASS staff and the WASS fellows.

Programme

The course is structured in two parts:

1. *Get to know WASS and its practicalities*: the focus will be on getting to know each other, the WASS organisation, working and living in Wageningen, and 'what to do when' during your PhD process.
2. *PhD process related workshops*: various workshops are offered on topics that are relevant to strengthen the PhD process and that focus on development of skills such as communication, ethical issues or networking.

Assessment

None

Target group and min/max number of participants

Target group are new WASS PhD candidates. The course is mandatory for all WASS PhDs with a TSP.

Assumed prior knowledge

The Introduction Course does not require specific knowledge or preparation. This course is especially useful for WASS PhD candidates that have just started their PhD project.

3.2 Graduate programme courses (6 ECTS)

3.2.1 Advanced Macroeconomics

Lecturers

Jeroen Klomp

Environmental Economics and Natural Resources (ENR)

Contact person: [Jeroen Klomp](#)

Introduction

This course aims to provide training in modern advanced macroeconomic theory and gives students a thorough understanding of some fundamental workhorse models in macroeconomics used to deal with economic problems. The course is divided in two parts. The first part is dedicated to economic growth and tries to explain income differences across countries. The growth models discussed are the Solow economic growth model, the endogenous growth model and growth models with human capital and natural resources. The second part of the course deals with business cycle fluctuations. The main problem dealt with in this part of the course is the trade-off between inflation and unemployment and the consequences for economic output in the short run. Besides, we discuss if governments are capable to stabilize the economy in the short run using fiscal or monetary policy. The course applies the learned theories to relevant research themes for the WUR such as natural resources, land use, climate change and food

Learning outcomes

After successful completion of this course students are expected to be able to:

1. Analyse and evaluate the most fundamental workhorse models in macroeconomics;
2. Evaluate state-of-the-art macroeconomic literature in a broad range of relevant policy issues;
3. Apply the theories learned to relevant research areas for the WUR such as natural resources, climate and agriculture.
4. Design and estimate an empirical macroeconomic model on a WUR relevant research topic or for their own research.

More information: [link Study Handbook](#)

3.2.2 Advanced Microeconomics

Lecturers

Dusan Drabik

Agricultural Economics and Rural Policy (AEP)

Pierre van Mouche

Urban Economics (UEC)

Contact person: [Pierre van Mouche](#)

Introduction

The course consists out of three parts: 1. Microeconomics (focus on producer theory and general equilibrium). 2. Game Theory (focus on games in strategic form and games in extensive form). 3. Information Economics (focus on expected utility theory and asymmetric information). Lectures cover selected parts from the text book (see below). In each part of the course there will be special attention to a practical application: 1. Biofuels. 2. Location. 3. Insurance markets.

Learning outcomes

After successful completion of this course students are expected to be able to:

1. Explain important concepts in micro-economic theory;
2. Design and solve micro-economic models for various real-world problems.
3. Address a microeconomic research question by structuring it as a mathematical model.
4. Assess the assumptions made in micro-economic literature that applies microeconomics, game theory and information economics.

More information: [link Study Handbook](#)

3.2.3 Advanced Qualitative Research Design and Data Collection

Lecturers

Clemens Driessen	Cultural Geography (GEO)
René van der Duim	Cultural Geography (GEO)
Jessica Duncan	Rural Sociology (RSO)
Robert Fletcher	Sociology of Development and Change (SDC)
Stasja Koot	Sociology of Development and Change (SDC)
Rico Lie	Knowledge Technology and Innovation (KTI)
Trista Lin	Cultural Geography (GEO)
Meghann Ormond	Cultural Geography (GEO)
Elisabet Rasch	Sociology of Development and Change (SDC)
Peter Tamás	Research Methodology group, Biometris

Contact person: [Meghann Ormond](#)

Introduction

This course deals with qualitative social science research design and data collection. Students learn about and practice key qualitative methods while gaining exposure to how diverse theoretical lenses make use of these methods.

Learning outcomes

After successful completion of this course, participants are expected to be able to:

1. Understand the analytical strengths and weaknesses of different types of research design and methods from different theoretical perspectives;
2. Anticipate and address ethical issues posed by the use of specific research methods;
3. Develop a methodological strategy in alignment with the epistemological positioning and theoretical lenses adopted by the student in his/her thesis.

Programme

In the compulsory sessions that start and end the course, key qualitative social science research concepts and principles undergirding the choice and use of specific qualitative methods are presented and applied. In between, there are six 'free choice' sessions available that cover a range of qualitative data collection methods

and techniques. Students choose (a minimum of) four sessions that best fit with the research they are undertaking or wish to undertake. However, while at least four must be chosen, students can attend all six if they wish!

Week	Session
Week 1	<p>Compulsory session - Interpretation, representation, comparison and validity <i>Meghann Ormond and Peter Tamás</i> This introductory session helps students understand the choices they will need to make in terms of the relationship between their chosen conceptual standpoint, the type of methods they will use, how they will interpret their results, and how they will then represent all of this in a product.</p>
	<p>Compulsory session - Making knowledge about/with others, reflexivity and positionality, power relations and research ethics <i>Elisabet Rasch and Trista Lin</i> In this session, we review how different ontological and epistemological points of departure shape not only how we understand the worldly phenomena we are seeking to study but also our roles as social scientists in relation to those phenomena and the production of knowledge about them.</p>
	<p>'Free choice' session - Interviews and focus groups <i>Meghann Ormond and Elisabet Rasch</i> There are many ways to get people talking. But it's first essential to consider what it is that we as researchers actually expect from what our respondents say and how they express what they say. Do we wish to reveal objective truths about something that happened, to gather different perspectives on and perceptions of a specific event or policy, or perhaps to see how people collectively come to frame particular topics or experiences? In this session, we examine a variety of interview and focus group methods, including the use of graphic elicitation techniques, keeping in mind students' diverse epistemological points of departure in their research projects.</p>
Week 2	<p>'Free choice' session - Participant observation and (auto-)ethnography <i>Robert Fletcher and Stasja Koot</i> In this session, we delve into the 'poetics and politics' of the central method in ethnographic field research: participant observation (PO). While PO can be done in a variety of ways, at a deeper level it can involve making oneself simultaneously the researcher, the subject, and the instrument of observation in order to develop a subjective, experiential understanding of the phenomenon in question. In this respect, PO may be described as 'auto-ethnography' (the ethnographic study of oneself) as well. Whether this actually qualifies as a legitimate research strategy is often contested, however, as are the ethics and politics surrounding how this type of research should be done. This session will explore these issues in order to give participants the basis to decide whether—and if so how—to incorporate their own experiential researcher positionality into their future research.</p>
	<p>'Free choice' session - Techniques for capturing discourse and studying policy and governance <i>Jessica Duncan</i> This session will introduce students to discourse analysis, with a more practical focus on policy and governance. Used by researchers in varied academic fields (e.g., education, health, law, sociology, gender studies, psychology, public policy, political science, management and organization studies), discourse analysis involves studying the use of language and non-linguistic systems of meaning (i.e., images) as forms of social practice. Discourse analysis is part of a collection of approaches that emphasise the constructed nature of language and politics, and highlights the importance of struggles over interpretation for political processes and for the definition of political 'realities'. Participants in this session will gain an understanding of the importance of language in and across research, as well as the value of discourse analysis as a conceptual and methodological approach. This session starts with a review of interpretive policy analysis which is part of the broader social science research tradition in which discourse analysis can be located. We will then discuss discourse analysis with a focus on what, how and why. We conclude by discussing specific practices that will enable participants to use discourse analysis in their own research.</p>
	<p>'Free choice' session - Techniques for gathering and using secondary sources <i>Meghann Ormond</i> It may not always be necessary to do primary data collection. A wealth of secondary data sources is available to those of us undertaking qualitative research, leading us to do traditional archival work in dusty libraries, study the official documents of relevant organisations or tap into the ever-changing landscape of social media that surround us in our everyday lives. In this session, we will experiment with, and explore the strengths and limitations of, using secondary versus primary data and address the logistical and ethical challenges their use poses.</p>
Week 3	<p>'Free choice' session - Revisiting ontology with 'more-than-human' and 'more-than-representational' approaches <i>Clemens Driessen and René van der Duim</i></p>

	<p>This session will introduce social science perspectives on networks, technologies and science (in terms of Actor Network Theory (ANT)) and the relevance of the 'post-/more-than-human' perspective, subjectivity and affect in the field. We will discuss a series of applications of ANT as an approach in several research projects having to do with tourism, food, and agriculture. We will also cover 'multispecies ethnography', and the ways in which non-humans can be taken seriously in research practice. In so doing, we will discuss how ideas generated over the past years by scholars such as Haraway, Latour, Whatmore, Mol and Tsing may be further developed into new methodologies that crosscut or combine established disciplines and methods. As part of this session, we will visit the Wageningen livestock research laboratory.</p>
	<p>'Free choice' session - Visual research methods <i>Rico Lie</i> This session will introduce visual research methods (VRM). VRM are methods that use film, photographs, drawings, graphs and other visuals in social science research. The focus in the session is on 1) producing and collecting visuals as primary data, 2) various roles that visuals can play in collecting data and, 3) various ways of analysing visual data. The emphasis in the session is on photographs and film. Several examples are reviewed to illustrate what VRM can contribute to social science research.</p>
	<p>Compulsory session - Revisiting the basics of research design <i>Peter Tamás</i> In this session, we will revisit some of the key aspects of research design and focus on the place of data collection methods in a project's overall design. Building on students' research questions, we workshop them through design for data collection.</p>
Week 4	<p>Compulsory one-on-one meeting to receive feedback on students' methodological strategy drafts, followed by submission of all course assignments <i>Meghann Ormond</i></p>

Assessment

- Portfolio of weekly written critical reflections demonstrating understanding of the analytical strengths and weaknesses of different types of research design and methods (5x5% = 25%)
- Methodological strategy in alignment with the epistemological positioning and theoretical lenses adopted by the student in his/her thesis (75%)

Target group and min/max number of participants

This course is intended for PhD and advanced research master students; 10 min/25 max participants

Assumed prior knowledge

The following courses are strongly recommended prior to commencing this course: 'Qualitative Data Analysis' (XX); a social theory course (e.g., 'Critical Perspectives on Social Theory', 'Advanced Social Theory' etc.); and 'Research Methodology: From Topic to Proposal'.

3.2.4 Advanced Social Theory

Lecturers

Kees Jansen	Knowledge Technology and Innovation (KTI)
Joost Jongerden	Rural Sociology (RSO)
Anton Schuurman	Rural and Environmental History (RHI)
Gert Spaargaren	Environmental Policy
Sanneke Kloppenburg	Environmental Policy

Contact person: [Kees Jansen](#)

Introduction

This is an advanced course which is part of the WASS graduate programme in the MSc programmes MME, MID, MDR and MCH. This course enables students to select an inspiring theoretical framework for social

scientific research. The course consists of lectures and discussion groups on influential approaches and issues in social scientific theorizing. This is an advanced course, typically for highly motivated students who are not afraid for theoretical abstraction and close reading and intensive discussions of key texts in contemporary social theory. The course focusses on original texts from key authors (examples are Bourdieu, Collins, Foucault, Habermas, etc.), which help you to build a strong foundation in social theory.

Learning outcomes

After successful completion of this course students are expected to be able to:

1. Distinguish and contrast the main arguments in key texts of important approaches in contemporary social scientific theory;
2. Distinguish and contrast the core themes of important approaches and debates in contemporary social scientific theory;
3. Assess the differences and similarities between these approaches;
4. Appraise a particular social scientific work to these approaches and debates;
5. Assess the opportunities and limitations of these approaches for doing research;
6. Use concepts and theories of at least two of these approaches to compose research questions for social scientific research.

More information: [link Study Handbook](#)

3.2.5 Analysing Discourse: Theories, Methods and Techniques

Lecturers

Hedwig te Molder
Cees Leeuwis

Strategic Communication (COM)
Knowledge Technology and Innovation (KTI)

Contact person: [Peter Feindt](#) and [Noelle Aarts](#)

Introduction

This advanced course is part of the WASS graduate programme in the MSc programmes MME, MID, MDR and MCH, addressing PhD students, graduate students and well-progressed Master students. It provides an overview of different theoretical approaches to discourse analysis and trains students in various techniques for empirical discourse analysis.

Learning outcomes

After successful completion of this course students are expected to be able to:

1. Describe different theoretical approaches to discourse analysis;
2. Evaluate the application of different discourse theories in empirical research;
3. Justify methodological choices in empirical discourse analysis and explain their implications;
4. Apply techniques of discourse analysis to a contemporary research problem;
5. Critically reflect and assess the process of data analysis and interpretation in discourse analysis.

More information: [link Study Handbook](#)

3.2.6 Modelling and Simulation of Complex Socio-Technical Systems

Lecturers

Gert Jan Hofstede
Behzad Behdani
Rene Haijema

Information Technology (INF)
Operations Research and Logistics (ORL)
Operations Research and Logistics (ORL)

Contact person: [Gert Jan Hofstede](#)

Introduction

This is an advanced course which is part of the WASS graduate programme in the MSc programmes MME, MID, MDR and MCH. It provides an overview of simulation and modelling approaches for socio-technical systems. It offers hands-on experiences with the most widely used: Agent-based modelling, Discrete event / time simulation, System dynamics. Aimed at those who want to select appropriate methods for their study. We provide the method, the student provides the case in their subfield of the life sciences. The course is dense in both abstract thinking and speed of the computer labs.

Learning outcomes

After successful completion of this course students are expected to be able to:

1. Describe their own research topic as a complex socio-technical system.
2. Select which actors to include in their models.
3. Evaluate the application scope of a range of analytical modelling approaches.
4. Select an appropriate approach for their own case.
5. Create simple models for their own case, neither too complex nor too simple.

More information: [link Study Handbook](#)

3.2.7 Qualitative Data Analysis: Procedures and Strategies

Lecturers

Peter Tamás
Vanessa Torres van Grinsven

Research Methodology group, Biometris
Research Methodology group, Biometris

Contact person: [Hilde Tobi](#) and [Peter Tamás](#)

Introduction

This is an advanced course which is part of the WASS graduate programme in the MSc programmes MME, MID, MDR and MCH. The course prepares for the design and/or analysis of qualitative data either directly or as part of designing (quantitative) questionnaires. The analysis techniques covered are content analysis, metaphor analysis, domain analysis, membership categorization analysis, conversation analysis and discourse analysis.

Learning outcomes

After successful completion of this course students are expected to be able to:

1. Understand the characteristics of qualitative data and analysis techniques
2. Understand data requirements of each method
3. Discuss validity of conclusions for each method
4. Select appropriate analysis method given the collected data for a particular research question

5. Apply these techniques using ATLAS.ti software, interpret the results
6. Reflect critically upon the use and interpretation of the discussed methods

More information: [link Study Handbook](#)

3.2.8 Quantitative Data Analysis: Multivariate Techniques

Lecturers

Ruud Zaalberg

Research Methodology group, Biometris

Ivo van der Lans

Marketing and Consumer Behaviour (MCB)

Contact person: [Hilde Tobi](#) and [Ruud Zaalberg](#)

Introduction

This is an advanced course which is part of the WASS graduate program in the MSc programs MME, MID, MDR and MCH. The course is designed for students that have the ambition to be able to fully appreciate research papers in which more advanced techniques are applied and/or to be able to apply these techniques in their own research. Students should not be afraid of mathematical formulae. The aim of the course is to enhance knowledge and skills with regard to multivariate data-analysis techniques common in quantitative research in the social sciences, including principal component analysis (PCA), exploratory (EFA) and confirmatory factor analysis (CFA), structural equations modelling (SEM), cluster and discriminant analysis, and repeated and multivariate analysis of variance.

Learning outcomes

After successful completion of this course students are expected to be able to:

1. Understand the characteristics of multivariate quantitative research;
2. Explain the principles of the multivariate data analysis techniques: PCA, EFA, CFA, SEM, cluster and discriminant analysis, repeated and multivariate ANOVA;
3. Judge whether these techniques are useful given the collected data;
4. Apply these techniques by using statistical software (SPSS and Lavaan);
5. Interpret the results of multivariate analyses.

More information: [link Study Handbook](#)

3.2.9 Theories for Business Decisions

Lecturers

Miranda Meuwissen

Business Economics (BEC)

Jacques Trienekens

Management Studies (MST)

Jos Bijman

Management Studies (MST)

Frans Verhees

Marketing and Consumer Behaviour (MCB)

Contact person: [Miranda Meuwissen](#)

Introduction

This is an advanced course which is part of the WASS graduate programme in the MSc programmes MME, MID, MDR and MCH. The course discusses fundamental theories underlying business decisions and their translation into research questions and empirical applications in the domains of (i) business performance

(production and cost theory, rational choice theory); (ii) collaboration (contract theory, transaction costs theory, (social) network theory); (iii) market conditions (theory of competition, market orientation theory, stakeholder theory); and (iv) innovation (prospect theory, resource based view).

Learning outcomes

After successful completion of this course students are expected to be able to:

1. Distinguish and contrast fundamental theories related to business decision making;
2. Debate contemporary themes in business theory;
3. Appraise relevant business theories for business problems in uncertain, complex and dynamic business environments;
4. Propose research questions for business oriented scientific research;
5. Evaluate business decision theories for their own research.

More information: [link Study Handbook](#)

3.2.10 Theorising Consumers and Consumption

Lecturers

Bea Steenbekkers	Food Quality and Design (FQD)
Jasper de Vries	Strategic Communication (COM)
Johan van Ophem	Urban Economics (UEC)
Arnout Fischer	Marketing and Consumer Behaviour (MCB)
Stefan Wahlen	Sociology of Consumption and Households (SCH)

Contact person: [Stefan Wahlen](#) and [Arnout Fischer](#)

Introduction

This is an advanced course which is part of the WASS graduate programme in the MSc programmes MME, MID, MDR and MCH. This course is specifically intended for PhD candidates and MSc students who want to deepen their theoretical background in consumer studies theories and approaches. Consumers and consumption are central in multiple disciplines, e.g. economics, sociology, communication, product design, marketing and psychology. These disciplines bring their own traditions and background which energizes a multidisciplinary interest in consumers studies.

In this course we create awareness on how selected classical readings from the various disciplines constitute the foundation for many of the current perspectives in consumer studies. Students investigate ongoing effects of these classical texts in theoretical and empirical decisions in setting up consumer studies. Students are challenged to trace back the roots of their own research project to canonical texts.

The team of experienced lecturers provides and champions a broad range of classical readings. The proposed course covers classical works and authors going back to at least the 19th century. Several seminal contributions of important and relevant authors are taken as a starting point. We select the readings together with participants of the course.

Learning outcomes

After successful completion of this course students are expected to be able to:

1. Distinguish the core themes of foundational authors on current discussions in consumer studies
2. Assess the relevance and influence of classical theories for a research project in consumer studies

3. Appraise the relevance and influence of classical theories for the design of experimental or other empirical data collection in a research project.
4. Compare approaches from a case with other approaches and identify to what extent differences can be traced back to different classical theories and authors

More information: [link Study Handbook](#)

3.3 Interdisciplinary Windows

3.3.1 Advanced Course on Economic Regulation

Lecturers

Justus Wesseler
Kai Purnhagen

Agricultural Economics and Rural Policy (AEP)
Law and Governance (LAW)

Contact person: [Justus Wesseler](#)

Introduction

From an economic perspective, the study of regulation looks at the benefits and costs of different regulatory approaches and to what extent objectives have been achieved. From a legal perspective, it looks at the effect of existing norms and studies evidence-based recommendations how laws, in combination with other policy tools, should to be designed.

In the bioeconomy the field of regulation has gained momentum since phenomena such as climate change, food scarcity, technical (e.g. new plant breeding technology, synthetic biology), and global trade initiates new challenges for regulative measures.

Learning outcomes

After successful completion of this course students are expected to be able to:

1. Understand similarities and differences between common and civil law countries with respect to the use of regulations;
2. Understand the concept of liability law and how this is applied in view of ex-post and ex-ante regulation;
3. Identify the regulations used to govern key bioeconomy technologies
4. Identify and apply the economic tools to assess welfare implications of regulations (ex post and ex ante);
5. Assess specific regulations from an economic as well as legal perspective and be able to combine both.

More information: [link Study Handbook](#)

3.3.2 Embodiment, Food & Environment

Lecturers

Harro Maat
Emely de Vet
Cor van der Weele
Phil MacNaghten

Knowledge Technology and Innovation (KTI)
Strategic Communication (COM)
Philosophy (PHIL)
Knowledge Technology and Innovation (KTI)

Contact person: [Harro Maat](#)

Introduction

Embodiment refers to the connection between mind and body. In various disciplines different theories developed about embodiment. Social-psychologists emphasize mind-body interactions, e.g. feelings-as-information theories or 'off-line' mental processes. Such notions are often applied in marketing and consumer studies. Social theories stress socially patterned ways of sensing, informative for understanding how people perceive nature. Anthropologists have theorized about skill-based action helpful to analyse how technologies are used. In philosophy the body is construed by Plato as a prison of the soul, an idea contested in modern philosophy. In the course these and other perspectives are presented and discussed. Cases and examples are selected from food production, cooking, food consumption, nature and environment. Students are encouraged to experience embodiment in concrete activities, for example a walk in nature or prepare and eat food. The course is aimed at advanced Master students and PhD candidates in various fields, most prominently the social sciences, environmental sciences, food and nutrition sciences

Learning outcomes

After successful completion of this course students are expected to be able to:

1. understand and explain the way mind and body interact
2. understand and reflect on how embodiment is conceptualized and applied in different disciplines and scholarly fields;
3. evaluate the benefits and limitations of the presented embodiment approaches
4. analyse real-life experiences related to food and environment

More information: [link Study Handbook](#)

3.3.3 Entrepreneurship in Emerging Economies

Lecturers

Domenico Dentoni	Management Studies (MST)
Thomas Lans	Education and Competence Studies (ECS)
Valentina Materia	Management Studies (MST)

Contact person: [Domenico Dentoni](#)

Introduction

The course provides an introduction to key theories and methods of entrepreneurship and their applications in emerging economies. The key question of the course will entail: why, when and how actors (e.g., farmers, founders of new ventures, business managers or leaders in public or non-governmental organizations) recombine resources (such as technologies, knowledge or other forms of capital) innovatively to seize opportunities or mitigate risks in the unstable, turbulent and dynamic context of emerging economies? To best support students from multiple scientific backgrounds in their PhD or MSc research proposal or thesis development, the focus of the lectures will be on three levels of analysis: individual, organizational/community, and institutional level.

Learning outcomes

After successful completion, participants are expected to be able to:

1. Understand the established and most recent theories of entrepreneurship in emerging economies;

2. Articulate and discuss the key issues under debate facing entrepreneurs and organizations supporting entrepreneurship in emerging economies, especially in food and agriculture;
3. Integrate established theories, methods or concepts related to entrepreneurship in their research proposal or thesis development.

More information: [link Study Handbook](#)

3.3.4 Institutions and Societal Transformation

Lecturers

Sietze Vellema
Maarten Voors

Knowledge Technology and Innovation (KTI)
Development Economics (DEC)

Contact person: [Sietze Vellema](#)

Introduction

The Interdisciplinary Window (IW) Institutions and Societal Transformation engages students with an integrative debate on the entanglement of institutional rigidity and societal transformation. It examines and compares theory-led research on the roles of institutions in addressing complex and persistent societal challenges. It uses 'institution' as a bridging concept in the social sciences and focuses on the development and merits of diverse institutional theories. Students learn how to position their interest in debates within or between distinct schools researching institutions and processes through which societies gain order or produce disorder.

Learning outcomes

After successful completion of this course students are expected to be able to:

1. Explain, review and compare three selected theoretical approaches to institutions;
2. Understand, compare, choose and, if possible, integrate different theoretical approaches for developing original research questions;
3. Present a theoretical argument about how to research flexibility and persistence of institutions;
4. Reflect on the methodological positions used in different scholarly traditions;
5. Explain the methodological consequences of the theoretical argument presented to an interdisciplinary audience.

More information: [link Study Handbook](#)

3.3.5 Integrating Interdisciplinary Approaches in Health and Sustainable Development

Lecturers

Silke Gabbert
Annemarie Wagemakers
Stefan Wahlen
Jeroen Warner

Environmental Economics and Natural Resources Group (ENR)
Health and Society (HSO)
Sociology of Consumption and Households (SCH)
Sociology of Development and Change Group (SDC)

Introduction

Human, animal and environmental health are inextricably linked. Understanding causes and impacts of global challenges such as, for example, the spread of infectious diseases, antibiotic resistance, obesity or

malnutrition, requires synergetic and multiple scientific approaches. Moreover, identifying sustainable solutions requires an active involvement of societal actors, including citizens. Interdisciplinary approaches have been widely discussed, yet are rarely implemented in practice as this requires scientists not only to collaborate, but also to integrate information (theories, concepts, techniques, tools, data, and perspectives) or to address challenges that are beyond the scope of a single discipline. Even more scarce are trans-disciplinary approaches in which researchers do not only contribute to their unique expertise but move beyond their own discipline to capture complexity and create new intellectual spaces leading to new holistic solutions. Due to time and resource constraints PhD research projects usually cannot follow such a broad approach. Still, learning to reflect on a PhD research project from an integral perspective is crucial for becoming able to identify and exploit synergies between complementary disciplines, their theories, methods and working styles. Furthermore, it facilitates a convincing communication about research concepts, approaches and results with colleagues and other target audiences outside one's core discipline(s). Ultimately, an integral approach to research stimulates interdisciplinary collaboration in and outside academia, which is essential for developing long-term strategies and solutions related to human, animal and environmental health and sustainable development. **Integral theory** offers a framework that allows positioning our (disciplinary) scientific concepts, methods and results into a broader framework of integral science (e.g. Brown, 2005; Lundi, 2010; Esbjörn-Hargens and Zimmerman, 2009). In particular, it offers a meta theory that draws from as many fields of knowledge and sources of knowledge as possible as a point of departure for developing integral approaches in health, sustainable development, resource- and conflict management. Using this framework, the **aims of this interdisciplinary window** are

(i) to create awareness on complementary perspectives, approaches and working styles in research projects addressing issues of health, sustainable development, resource- and conflict management

(ii) to identify and apply tools that facilitate interdisciplinary collaboration between PhDs, external stakeholders and citizens within these domains.

Learning outcomes

After successful completion participants are expected to be able to:

- To **understand and reflect** on key concepts of multi-, inter- and trans-disciplinary research, the worldview (paradigm), and integral theory;
- To **team up and reflexively apply** integral theory to selected contemporary societal cases related to health and sustainable development;
- To **learn about and practise** interdisciplinary communication in a mixed audience to facilitate **discussion and critical reflection** on the potential and the challenges of interdisciplinary research;
- To **create** an interdisciplinary overview matrix of the own PhD research from an integral viewpoint in order to **identify and synthesize** perspectives, methods and stakeholder groups that are relevant but complementary to the current (disciplinary) focus of the own PhD project.

Programme

In total there will be four meetings of 4 hours. PhD candidates will be asked to do (interdisciplinary) group work to prepare for the next meeting.

Meeting 1:

Content:

- Introduction to interdisciplinary approaches and integral theory;
- Short presentations of participants' PhD projects
- Reflection and discussion on the applicability of the integral approach to the PhD projects.

Working methods:

- Lecture, class and group discussions.

Homework:

Selection of 3-5 studies (scientific papers, reports, policy documents, databases) related to the own research topic but approaching the topic from a different scientific perspective. Prepare list of observations and questions regarding, for example, the aims, methods, terminology, outcomes, target audience, writing style etc. of the selected studies as input to meeting 3.

Meeting 2:

Content:

- 1-2 selected case studies presented by course lecturers, representing well-known events/problems related to health and sustainable development which typically involve several scientific disciplines and stakeholder groups, but where it is also obvious that decision-making has NOT been based on an integral approach. Examples are the EHEC crisis, or the process of decision-making on Glyphosate. If possible, 1-2 stakeholders representing a specific perspective (e.g. risk assessment, health treatment, economics, policy making, public communication, conflict management) will be invited.
- Practical exercise on competences required in interdisciplinary research.

Working methods:

- Presentation
- Interactive discussion rounds

Meeting 3:

Content:

- Discussion of home work and of observations and questions that course participants consider most relevant for working in an interdisciplinary manner on their own PhD research and in science in general;
- Development of a general matrix of perspectives, approaches and working styles that course participants consider most relevant in an interdisciplinary scientific environment.

Working methods:

- Interactive group discussions using the Structured Interview Matrix (SIM) facilitation technique approach, which has been widely used to accommodate the voices of all participants and to generate common grounds for interdisciplinary work on the own research projects (O'Sullivan et al., 2014).

Homework:

Preparation of a draft matrix on all possible research perspectives related to the own PhD topic, using the knowledge, reflection insights and competences acquired in meetings 1-3. Participants will provide peer feedback to each other within groups.

Meeting 4:

Content:

- Development of a matrix unravelling interdisciplinary perspectives related to the own PhD topic, including the involved stakeholder groups, working techniques, and key competences required.
- Synthesis discussion on interdisciplinary perspectives in PhD research and the positioning of the own research project within the developed matrix.

Working methods:

- Peer feedback
- Interactive discussions
- Visualization techniques

3.3.6 Social orders, institutions and long-term economic development

Lecturers

Ewout Frankema

Rural and Environmental History (RHI)

Erwin Bulte

Development Economics (DEC)

Contact person: [Ewout Frankema](#)

Introduction

In this Interdisciplinary Window PhD students will engage in-depth with the cutting-edge literature on the role of violence, social orders and institutions in long-term economic development led by Nobel-laureate Douglas North (1920-2015). Together with Barry Weingast and John Wallis (top scholars in the field of political economy and economic history), North published the extremely influential book "Violence and Social Orders. A

Conceptual Framework for Interpreting Recorded Human History” (2009), which will be the core reading of this Interdisciplinary Window.

This book is dense, complex and extremely challenging, but it is ‘a must read’ for students in social sciences working on topics such as growth, governance and social structure. Students will read the book thoroughly and discuss the various theories and key concepts with respect to 1) long-term paths of economic growth and historical escapes from poverty; 2) the political economy of institutional rigidity and change ; 3) the nature of social orders and the role of violence in the historical evolution of societies and 4) the transition that societies can make from limited access orders (LAOs) to open access orders (OAOs).

This IW is particularly relevant for students who want to understand the deeper historical relations between political, economic and social development. The book will be read and discussed in a number of group meetings with professors Frankema and Bulte. Students are examined on the basis of a short essay in which they apply (part of) the NWW framework.

Learning outcomes

After successful completion of this course students are expected to be able to:

1. Apply the concepts and theories designed by North et al.
2. Understand how historical developments are key for the functioning of present-day societies.
3. Explain why some societies remain stuck in a ‘perverse’ institutional equilibrium, including endemic outbreaks of violence, while other societies have overcome warfare and used in a transition towards a different political and economic equilibrium.
4. Situate the relationship between violence and social orders in a broader literature of (neo)-institutional economics, economic history and comparative politics.

More information: [link Study Handbook](#)

3.3.7 Theories of policy and governance for analysing water issues

Lecturers

Art Dewulf

Public Administration and Policy (PAP)

Jeroen Vos

Water Resources Management (WRM)

Contact person: [Art Dewulf](#)

Introduction

This course is aimed at graduate programme and PhD students who want to deepen their knowledge about policy and governance theories in relation to water issues. Selected policy and governance theories (e.g. multiple streams framework, adaptive governance theory, decision-making theories, governmentality, vernacular management theories) will be discussed and applied to the water sector.

Learning outcomes

After successful completion of this course students are expected to be able to:

1. Explain selected theories of public policy and governance and apply them to water issues
2. Analyse water policies, water reforms and water management practices in terms of public policy and governance concepts
3. Assess water policies and governance arrangements in terms of effectiveness, equity and resilience

More information: [link Study Handbook](#)

3.3.8 Visual Research Methods

Lecturers

Loes Witteveen	Knowledge Technology and Innovation (KTI)
Rico Lie	Knowledge Technology and Innovation (KTI)
Emely de Vet	Strategic Communication (COM)
Bob Mulder	Strategic Communication (COM)

Contact person: [Loes Witteveen](#)

Introduction

Visual research methods are increasingly used in contemporary research. Visual research methods—such as using photography or video—are applied as the numerous obtained visual data can disclose aspects of (inter)action, document certain practices (through repeated observation) and further support multidisciplinary analysis. The selection of visual research methods is also more accessible by technological facilities, both hardware (eg mobile phones) and software e.g. for editing and data management.

The course departs from the notion that the academia are just recently disclosing the full potential of visual data and require capacity building and due reflection. In the social sciences a more awaiting and critical approach is prevailing, articulated in debates on ethical implications. It is however recognised as with all methods in all domains that the assumed richness of visual data also confronts researchers with challenges in the process of collecting, analysing and interpreting of the visual data.

This course focuses on the potential and the qualities of visual data collection in research and will start with a review of the diversity of research strategies that incorporate visual data. Visual literacy and visual ethics will be positioned from an academic point of view to further strengthen visual research methods with a focus on qualitative research.

Learning outcomes

After successful completion participants are expected to be able to:

1. Explain the diversity of research methodologies that incorporate visual data
2. Select a visual research methodology, which is suitable for their research project
3. Create primary visual data; both graphics as video
4. Collect secondary visual data; both graphics as video
5. Analyse and discuss the quality of visual material
6. Apply visual research ethics to collecting and analysing visual data.
7. Transcribing, labelling, coding and analysing footage
8. Differentiate between roles of researcher and photographer / filmmaker
9. Contribute to a further positioning of VRM at WUR as a contemporary research issue

Activities:

The course is a combination of interactive sessions and assignments in relation to topics such as to research design, ethics, representation in practice (portrayal), recording and analysing visual material; graphics and films. Some basic visual production techniques will be trained in a context of a scientific practice. Participants will gain familiarity with multimodal transcription, labelling and coding of observations and analysing footage with respondents/peers.

Examination:

Course participants deliver a final assignment of their choice, which emerged during or otherwise relates with the course content. It is recommended to link this assignment with ongoing research activities. Procedures followed to finalise this product will be discussed with participants individually and require approval by course staff. The final assignment has to be submitted for assessment within 2 months after the taught course. With an assessment of sufficient quality, the certificate of attendance will be issued.

Target group and min/max number of participants:

The course is highly recommended for PhD students at the beginning of their PhD who want to incorporate visual research methodologies. Staff members and other researchers interested in visual research methods in general are welcome. The maximum number of participants is set at 20, the minimum at 10.

Assumed prior knowledge: n.a.

3.4 Summer/Winter schools

3.4.1 Critical Perspectives on Social Theory - 4 ECTS

Lecturers

Martijn Duineveld	Cultural Geography (GEO)
Robert Fletcher	Sociology of Development and Change (SDC)
Bram Buscher	Sociology of Development and Change (SDC)
Clemens Driessen	Cultural Geography (GEO)
Jessica Duncan	Rural Sociology (RSO)
Joost Jongerden	Rural Sociology (RSO)
Chizu Sato	Sociology of Consumption and Households (SCH)

Supplemented by 1 or 2 visiting professors – in previous years: Scott Prudham (Toronto), Jamie Lorimer (Oxford), Steve Hinchliffe (Exeter)

Contact person: [Martijn Duineveld](#) (GEO) or [Rob Fletcher](#) (SDC).

Introduction

This PhD course gives participants an opportunity to intensively engage with some of the major foundational movements in critical social theory, so that they can continue to explore contemporary expansions of those movements in their own research. It is organized as an intensive discussion seminar over the course of four weeks (with two 3-hour sessions/week). With different specialized teachers for each session, from the chair groups RSO, SDC, GEO, SCH and beyond.

Learning outcomes

After successful completion of this course, participants are expected to be able to:

1. Distinguish a range of positions in social theory
2. Critique understandings of the social world by contrasting different theoretical positions
3. Compose a coherent position with regard to multiple theoretical positions relevant to an issue

Programme

Critical social theoretical perspectives are a well-established and essential part of academic debate. For researchers entering into these debates, it is necessary to have at least basic understandings of many branches of theory, both to effectively carry out new research and to recognize subtle references to specific theories while engaging in dialogue with international audiences. Moreover, theoretical development is a cumulative process: as new theories come to the fore, they build on historical waves of previous development. To engage with new developments, it is therefore vital to have working knowledge of what preceded them.

This course intends to help researchers situate themselves in relation to different interpretations and lineages of major theoretical perspectives. The main objective is to give participants a brief opportunity to engage with some of the major foundational movements in critical social theory, so that they can continue to explore different expansions of those movements in their own research. To do so, the course is organized as an **intensive discussion seminar** over the course of four weeks, exploring 7 core theoretical topics, one or two featuring an international guest speaker (see WASS website for more details). Each seminar will have its own set of **required readings**, which include both foundational literature and new research perspectives. Completing these readings is necessary for all students to contribute to discussion during the seminar meeting. These readings will require a substantial time commitment outside of the meeting hours, so participants will need to budget time accordingly in order to fully participate in the course.

From the 7 seminars, participants should take with them new understandings about the foundations of their own theoretical perspectives. These will include the following key topics in social theory, with some of the key authors we will read, introduced and guided by these associated experts:

Marx Karl Marx	Bram Buscher
Marxisms David Harvey, Nancy Fraser	tba
Governmentality and biopolitics Michel Foucault, Paul Rabinow	Jessica Duncan
Feminisms Simone de Beauvoir, Judith Butler, Gibson-Graham	Chizu Sato
Posthumanism/more-than-human geographies Donna Haraway, Anna Tsing, Sarah Whatmore	Clemens Driessen
Colonialisms, decolonization and postcolonialism Edward Said, Arundhati Roy, Gyatri Spivak	Joost Jongerden
Psychoanalysis Jacques Lacan, Slavoj Zizek	Rob Fletcher

The readings by key authors in these fields of social theory will for each session be supplemented by recent work from scholars using or engaging with these classic influential works in research on topics relevant to Wageningen.

Assessment

To complete the 4 credits possible for this course, participants will need to: 1) attend and participate in each seminar (barring emergencies); and 2) submit brief one page reflections after each set of readings; and 3) further to these submit a reflective essay of approximately 2000 words after the end of course sessions demonstrating their engagement with the reading and course content. The topic and structure of the essay can be discussed with the examiners to reflect the student's research interests.

Target group and min/max number of participants

This course is intended for PhDs, postdocs, and staff members who want to expand their engagement with critical social theory in their research. This can include beginning researchers who want an overview of different theoretical approaches, as well as experienced researchers who would like to familiarize themselves with strands of theory outside their normal purview.

The minimum number of participants is 10, the maximum 20, to ensure opportunities for debate during the sessions.

Assumed prior knowledge

Participants should have completed Advanced Social Theory (RSO-32806) or an equivalent course addressing classic thought and different strands of social theory. This is not suitable as a first theoretical course.

3.4.2 Food Value Chain Research: Understanding Inter-Organizational Relationships – 1.5 ECTS

Lecturers

Jos Bijman	Management Studies (MST)
Pieterneel Luning	Food Quality and Design (FQD)
Stefano Pascucci	Exeter University
Jacques Trienekens	Management Studies (MST)

Contact persons: [Jacques Trienekens](#) and [Jos Bijman](#)

Introduction

This 1-week PhD course focuses on inter-organisational relationships in food value chains. Understanding inter-organizational relationships in food value chains starts with acknowledging that these chains are made up of business organisations that seek to bring food products from producers to final consumers. Studying and explaining relations in food value chains requires an economic-organisational perspective. The key organisations are the firms producing and handling the food products, but many other organisations influence the behaviour of these firms and thus the performance of the chain.

This course aims to make PhD students understand how inter-organisational relationships in food value chains affect value added, food quality and safety, sustainability, fairness and inclusiveness. Important subjects dealt with in the course are food quality and sustainability, horizontal collaboration, vertical collaboration, organizational and institutional environment.

Theories to be discussed include Transaction Cost Economics, Principal Agent / Contract Theory, Social Network Theory, Collective Action Theory, Food Quality Management Theory, and new insights in Circular Economy thinking.

Learning outcomes

After successful completion participants are expected to be able to:

1. Understand the main theoretical insights in the (economic) organisation of food value chains, particularly related to food quality management and sustainability;
2. Understand the main theoretical insights explaining horizontal and vertical collaboration in food value chains;
3. Understand the methods / methodological challenges in research on food chains;
4. Apply the theoretical and methodological insights in their own research projects;
5. Analyse real life cases of food value chain organisation.

Programme

The course consists of lectures, case work, an excursion and discussion sessions. Lectures are planned for the mornings, case work and discussion for the afternoons. Students are expected to read the course documents before the lectures.

- Lectures (mornings): 4hrs per day = 16 hrs
- Excursion: 4 hrs
- Case work + discussion (afternoons): 3 hrs per day = 15 hrs
- Literature (evenings): 1 hrs per day, 4 days = 4 hrs
- Final case discussion (Friday afternoon): 1 hrs

Each day of course focusses on a specific subject: food chain quality management, food chain sustainability management (circular economy approach), horizontal collaboration (POs, Cooperatives), vertical collaboration, institutional environment.

The PhD projects of the participants will be used as cases for the research design sessions. In the afternoons, students will apply the concepts they learn in the morning sessions to their own research projects. This will lead to insights in the possibilities and limitations of applying value chain theories and methods in own research.

Assessment

Students must deliver a report where they show how the concepts thought in the course can be applied in their own PhD research.

Target group and min/max number of participants

This course is intended for PhD students with an interest in inter-company relationships in value chains. Beyond students in business economics and management this course on food value chain research is also of interest for other students in the social sciences. Thus, also students from development economics, agricultural economics, resource economics, environmental policy, sociology, plant production systems and animal production systems can learn from this course. Finally, also PhD students from the technical sciences, having some basic understanding of management or economics, can participate and thereby enhance their knowledge of how social, environmental and economic aspects of food production and distribution is strongly influenced by interrelated strategies of companies.

The maximum number of participants is set at 15, the minimum at 10.

Assumed prior knowledge

Basic knowledge of management and economics. Participants should send a short summary of their PhD research (ongoing or planned) to the course coordinators

3.4.3 Game Theoretic Modelling with Maple – 1.5 ECTS

Lecturers

Pierre van Mouche	Urban Economics (UEC)
Hans-Peter Weikard	Environmental Economics and Natural Resources (ENR)

Introduction

General: The course follows up on the Graduate Programme Course “Advanced Microeconomics”. It covers two topics: applied game theory and computer algebra. Concerning the game theory two areas of applied game theory are highlighted: Mechanism Design (auctions and contracts) and Potential Games (location and congestion games). Maple, a computer algebra program, will be used in order to analyse concrete examples.

Mechanism Design: first, the most relevant types of auction mechanisms will be analysed, the revenue equivalence theorem will be introduced and applications centre around real world auction designs and their characteristics. Furthermore we will discuss mechanism design in the context of incomplete contracts.

Potential games: many of the games encountered in economic applications are (the quite new) potential games. After explaining what potential games are and what they are good for, we focus on congestion and location games.

Maple: Maple is a symbolic and numeric computing environment. There will be effective instruction how to use Maple for the problems that we deal with in this course.

Learning Outcomes

The course's objective is to combine theoretical concepts with applications and provide students insights how to apply theory in their own research. The main learning outcomes are to enable students to understand and model strategic interaction.

After successful completion participants are expected to be able to:

- summarise and appraise game theoretic articles
- build their own models using game theoretic concepts, in particular
- apply mechanism design in their own research
- apply potential games in their own research
- apply Maple to various (economic) problems.

3.4.4 Info Metrics

Lecturer

Amos Golan

Introduction

Info-metrics is a framework for information processing, modeling and inference of problems under uncertainty or under insufficient information. It is an interdisciplinary framework. It deals with the science and practice of inference and quantitative information processing, modeling and decision making under insufficient information and analyzing complex data. It is also a practical tool. *Info-metrics* is at the intersection of information theory, statistical methods of inference, applied mathematics, statistics and econometrics, decision analysis, modeling and the philosophy of science. The study of *info-metrics* helps resolve a major challenge to scientists and decision makers of how to reason (optimize) under conditions of incomplete information.

Objectives of the Short Course

In this course we will concentrate on the study and practice of info-metrics modeling and inference. We will concentrate on estimation and inference of problems where the information we have is quite limited and often very noisy. Though similar problems arise across most disciplines, we will focus on the study of Information-Theoretic (IT) methods of inference in general (within an interdisciplinary perspective) but with a strong emphasis on problems in the social sciences and economics.

We will emphasize both the fundamental theory, the motivation for using the theory, its background, and practice the theory with real or artificial data. Part of the lectures will be complemented with computer experiment in class. We will compare the info-metrics framework with other methods, like likelihood and least squares.

This course will be of interest for participants who did not see this material before and for those who already studied part of this material and are interested in a deeper knowledge and understanding of info-metrics. The course is beneficial to graduate students, researchers and academics from across disciplines. The course is of interest for experienced and unexperienced researchers. It will also be of interest to researchers who deal with small and ill-behaved or complex data.

The background and pre-requisite needed for the course is statistics and/or econometrics traditionally studied during the first year of graduate school in any quantitative discipline.

Some Background and Motivation

All learning, information gathering and information processing, is based on finite and limited information from which a larger 'truth' must be inferred. To learn about the true state of the world that generated the observed information, we use models that represent these outcomes as functions (such as moments) of unobserved structural parameters, parameters of priors and other sampling distributions, as well as complete probability distributions. Since we never know the true state of the world (at least in the behavioral and social sciences), we generally focus, in

statistical sciences, on inferring information about the complete probability distribution, which represents the ultimate 'truth' within our model. Therefore, all inferential problems are translations of limited information about the probability density function toward a more complete knowledge of that probability density function.

But where is the information coming from? What information is observed? What information is not observed? How can we choose a functional form? How can we connect the unobserved entities of interest with the observed information? What is the best way of doing all of these, so we can solve the problem and infer the quantities of interest? How can we validate our theories and the inferred solutions? In this course we will study these issues using the info-metrics framework and the tools of information theory.

Generally speaking, the info-metrics framework is a general framework for developing theories and inferential models with all types of information. It provides a way to tackle the above questions in a logical and coherent way.

In this course we will study in much detail the basic quantities of information theory and their relationships to statistical inference in general, and to data analysis and information processing in particular. We will then use these quantities to develop improved methods of inference, and an improved modeling framework, for problems where traditional methods may not be suitable because we don't have enough observed information. These types of problems are quite common as we rarely know the underlying process that generated the observed information.

Basic Outline

This course concentrates on the statistical analysis and inferential modeling of problems in the sciences in general and in the social sciences in particular. The methods we will study are used for solving different inferential problems. They include the complete 'family' of methods known as Information-Theoretic (IT) methods of inference. The fundamental problem of inference with very little information (say, more unknown parameters than known observations, such as inferring the complete distribution from a small number of observed moments) is a basic example for a common problem within info-metrics. To solve these types of problems (known as under-determined problems), one resorts to quantity known as 'entropy.' That quantity is related to the concept of information.

In the first part of this course, we will define the problems of interest and discuss the information we have to solve such problems. We will formulate these problems as constrained optimization problems. Then, we will study and investigate the basic concepts of information, entropy and related quantities. We will use these quantities to solve simple (pure, or noiseless) underdetermined problems (problems where the number of unknown quantities exceeds the number of observables). This info-metrics method is called Maximum Entropy. We will discuss the 3 mathematical formulations in much detail and will complement this with graphical analyses. We will look at artificial and empirical examples throughout that part of the course.

Next, we will discuss (with minimal formulation) some of the basic properties of the maximum entropy method.

Next, we will discuss the concept of prior information, how can it be incorporated within the maximum entropy inferential method, and most important where can we 'find' these priors. In the next part of the course, we will extend this approach for analyzing a wider class of problems – problems that are surrounded by much uncertainty. We will use that framework to study the more traditional problems. We will separate that discussion to two types of problems: problems where the dependent variable is discrete and problems where the dependent variable is continuous. The second case (if we will have time to discuss it) includes system of equations, censored regressions, dynamic systems, etc. In each case, we will contrast the info-metrics approach with other approaches, such as maximum likelihood, least squares, empirical likelihood and more. These comparisons will allow us to also study the informational input used by each one of these different approaches. This will help us to understand the advantages and disadvantages of each method for different problems. It will therefore help us to figure out when

we should use a certain approach.

The course will conclude with the presentation of some interdisciplinary applications and case studies, and with the opportunity for participants to discuss their research and see how that research might be addressed within the info-metrics approach.

Structure and Software

The course will be composed of lectures, open discussions, and complementing exercises (to be completed after the course).

The exercises and computer practice will allow each participant to gain the most out of this course where a substantial amount of computing and practice is necessary.

Those who are used to write their own computer codes, the computing can be done by using different software, such as Matlab, GAMS, Python, R, etc. For those who wish to use common statistical/econometric software, the methods we discuss in this course can be used within some of the main software packages, such as STATA, SAS and NLOGIT (LIMDEP).

The basic codes will be provided to the participants and are available on the main book's web page. Temporary licenses for GAMS and NLOGIT will be provided to the participants (STATA and SAS examples will be provided as well).

A web support with many example, references, codes and software is available for the participants. See <http://info-metrics.org/>

3.4.5 Introduction in R

t.b.a.

3.4.6 Natural resources and Conflict: Theorizing governance, resistance and violence – 4 ECTS

Lecturers

Lotje de Vries	Sociology of Development and Change (SDC)
Gemma van der Haar	Sociology of Development and Change (SDC)
Han van Dijk	Sociology of Development and Change (SDC)
Joost Jongerden	Rural Sociology (RSO)
Arjaan Pellis	Cultural Geography (GEO)
Lisa Trogisch	Sociology of Development and Change (SDC)
Maarten Voors	Development Economics (DEC)

Contact person: [Lotje de Vries](#)

Introduction

The extraction, exploitation, distribution and trade of natural resources continue to be a source of conflict worldwide, notwithstanding claims of inclusive and equitable development. The PhD course “Natural Resources and Conflict: Theorizing Governance, Resistance and Violence” offers an in-depth exploration of theoretical approaches to understand the nature of these conflicts, how they reflect local, regional and international power dynamics, and how they relate to institutional change. An issue of particular concern is when and how conflicts turn violent and how to approach such violence theoretically.

This course is relevant both to PhD students who specifically study natural resource conflicts, and to those who encounter forms of conflict and violence as they study topics related to resource management and economic and social development related to for instance land, water, forestry or mineral extraction. The course helps PhD students unravel the multiple contradictions surrounding the governance of natural resources, the resistance these may generate, and the overt and covert forms of violence found in their research settings.

The course is organized around theories that link governance, resistance and violence. The course thus moves beyond theories on resource scarcity and the 'resource curse' that came to dominate the debate on resource conflict in the 1990s but that have been highly criticised. It offers students a solid theoretical basis to problematize the relation between natural resources and conflict, touching upon questions such as: What role does the state play in resource governance? Does it contain or generate resource conflict? What is resistance and when does it become violent? How is violence organised socially and politically?

What does violence communicate? More practically, the course asks: in what ways do conflicts and violence play a role our research projects?

We draw on different disciplines (history, philosophy, political sociology, geography, economics) to rethink the relation between resource governance, resistance and violence. The various sessions in the course combine the reading of foundational texts with readings of more recent academic work on resource conflicts.

Learning outcomes

During the course, participants develop an adequate conceptualization of conflict and violence relevant to their research question and setting. Students will engage directly with foundational texts on governance, resistance and violence and link these to the manifold ways in which resource conflict manifests itself. Students learn to see how conflict and violence are produced and what are the impacts on their research project and on the research population.

After successful completion of this course, participants are expected to be able to:

- Identify core theoretical frames to rethink the ways in which resources and conflicts are linked
- Understand the importance of historical, abstract and theoretical texts and apply them to contemporary debates on the governance of natural resources
- Critically reflect on the implications of different theoretical framings for their research projects
- Develop a conceptualisation of governance, resistance or violence for their own research project.

Activities

The course is organised around reading, self-study, active pre-class preparation, and dialogue. During the week, participants will have morning and afternoon seminar sessions. The readings, including guiding questions, will be provided at least two weeks before the start of the course.

- Session one will serve as an introduction into the topic and set-up of the course. We will allow participants to get to know each other, briefly discuss each other's research projects, and align expectations. We will also elaborate on the different manifestations of conflict and violence in their research projects.
- The literature-based sessions will discuss foundational texts and relate these to contemporary work that addresses the relation between resources and conflict. Where possible we seek to also discuss how the specific literature of that week is applied in empirical research. The sessions start with an introduction of the literature of about 45 minutes. The remaining time is used for a critical dialogue, drawing on questions brought in by the participants.

- The final day of the course we organize a PhD masterclass/research seminar in the morning in which the participants discuss their research in relation to the different perspectives offered in the lectures. We will invite an established scholar in the field, who will respond to these presentations from a methodological and content perspective. In the afternoon, this person will give a public WASS lecture.

Assessment

The assessment consist of 1) an evaluation of the student's participation in the literature sessions and 2) a short essay (3000 words) in which participants will reflect on the ways in which forms or aspects of violence they are confronted with in their PhD research.

1) The active participation in class is assessed through the submission of at least one question for debate and comments on the reading prior to the class, to be submitted at least one day in advance of each session via blackboard. This will also facilitate the teacher in her/his preparation of the lecture.

2) In the final essay, students are asked to apply the theory of one or two sessions and make a connection between the course literature, the theoretical debates in their research and the ways in which they see themselves confronted with forms of violence in their projects. The course is available as a 3 or 4 ECTS course. Only students who opt for the 4th ECTS will have to write the final essay. The course coordinators (Gemma van der Haar and Lotje de Vries) will assess the level of participation and comment on the essays. There will be no final grades.

3.4.7 Political Ecology – 4 ECTS

Lecturers

Robert Fletcher	Sociology of Development and Change (SDC)
Bram Buscher	Sociology of Development and Change (SDC)
Stasja Koot	Sociology of Development and Change (SDC)
Rutgerd Boelens	Water Resources Management (WRM)
Esther Turnhout	Forest and Nature Conservation Policy (FNP)
Clemens Driessen	Cultural Geography (GEO)

Contact person: [Robert Fletcher](#)

Introduction

The course gives motivated PhD and master graduate programme students the chance to deepen their knowledge on political ecologies and to interact with invited scholars doing cutting-edge research in the field. The course covers interrelated and important thematic areas of interest in contemporary political ecology, to change every year to reflect the latest research and thinking.

Learning outcomes

After successful completion of this course, participants are expected to be able to:

1. Demonstrate a thorough knowledge of new dynamics in the links between value, capitalism, the environment and the intersections among these;
2. Critically reflect on different political ecology approaches to these themes and employ these in social science research;
3. Broadly understand some of the main contestations around these themes in relation to theoretical traditions, empirical emphases, political projects and material resources;
4. Formulate whether and how elements of these discussions and contestations could fit on and contribute to their own research projects;
5. Engage in active learning, critical thinking and academic debating, especially by positioning oneself in (relation to) academic contestations.

Programme

Before start of course	Participants send short statement (max. 1 page A4) where they: i) introduce who they are in terms of disciplinary background and education ii); outline how they (intend to) engage with the two identified themes in political ecology (conflict, violence / capitalism and the environment); iii) outline questions or issues on these themes with which they would like to engage; and iv) offer expectations from the course	
Course first week	<u>Self-study</u> : write a 3-4 page reflection document on the required readings and whether and how these are (not) relevant for your research. The aim is not to summarize the readings but rather to distil key points and arguments that interest you, and might influence your research, and why.	
Session 1	<u>Morning</u> : Course Introduction	Prof. Bram Büscher and Dr. Robert Fletcher
	<u>Afternoon</u> : First plenary discussion	Prof. Bram Büscher and Dr. Robert Fletcher
Session 2	<u>Morning</u> : Theme 1 Lecture	Prof. Bram Büscher and Dr. Robert Fletcher
	<u>Afternoon</u> : Theme 2 discussion	Prof. Bram Büscher and Dr. Robert Fletcher
Session 3	<u>Morning</u> : Theme 3 Lecture	Guest lecturer
	<u>Afternoon</u> : Theme 3 Discussion	Guest lecturer
Session 4	<u>Morning</u> : Theme 4 Lecture	Guest lecturer
	<u>Afternoon</u> : Theme 4 Discussion	Guest lecturer
Session 5	<u>Morning</u> : Course Conclusion Lecture	Prof. Bram Büscher and Dr. Robert Fletcher
	<u>Afternoon</u> : Concluding Discussion	Prof. Bram Büscher and Dr. Robert Fletcher

Assessment

- Personal statement* prior to course.
- Annotated bibliography/reflection paper* prior to class sessions
- Revised final paper* following class sessions

Target group and min/max number of participants

This course is intended for PhDs and advanced Master research studies; 10 min/25 max participants

Assumed prior knowledge

MSc in social sciences: anthropology, geography, political science, sociology or development studies.

3.4.8 Political Theory

t.b.a.

3.4.9 Sustainable Supply Chains – 1.5 ECTS

Lecturers

Jacqueline Bloemhof

Operations Research and Logistics (ORL)

Gert Jan Hofstede

Information Technology (INF)

as well as several distinguished guest lecturers from within the EURO Working Group on Sustainable Supply Chains

Contact person: [Jacqueline Bloemhof](#)

Introduction

Sustainability has become an increasingly important topic to consider in the development and application of quantitative modelling approaches for Supply Chain Management. The quantification of environmental impacts as well as their consideration in Operations Research methodologies, however, often leads to complex multi-objective optimization problems. This Summer School addresses these challenges in relation to e.g. mathematical-programming-based and agent-based multi-criteria decision-making approaches. A variety of lecturers will present methods, tools, and case examples related to the most commonly used quantitative tools used to design and operate sustainable supply chains. Participants will also be working on industrial cases from companies and presenting their results.

Learning outcomes

After successful completion of this course, participants are expected to be able to:

1. Access an advanced knowledge base on operations research methodologies in the context of sustainable supply chains
2. Evaluate and assess different methodological approaches in relation to their own PhD research
3. Communicate and discuss complex operational problems in sustainable supply chains with their peers and experts in the field
4. Design solution approaches for industrial case studies and present these to relevant stakeholders

Programme

The programme of the summer school will consist of the following components:

- Welcome and get-to-know-each-other on July 1.
- Tutorials on selected topics on the interface of operations research and sustainable supply chains, e.g. mathematical modelling approaches for sustainable supply chains; multi-criteria decision-making; modelling trade-offs between economic, environmental, and social objectives, dealing with interdisciplinarity, e.g. combining optimization and life cycle assessment; discussion of specific characteristics of e.g. bio-based and food supply chains; current developments in the context of the circular economy.
- Opportunity to discuss own PhD research with peers and expert (guest) lecturers from the field.
- Case assignments in which the PhD students get to work on industry cases. Solutions developed by participants will be presented for industry stakeholders at the end of the summer school.
- The tutorials and casework are expected to end July 5 followed by the 2nd EURO conference on Sustainable Supply Chains, July 6-7, 2018, in Amsterdam. The conference is open for all PhD students in the Summer School as well as other members of the EURO Working Group on Sustainable Supply Chains.

Assessment

Active participation and presentation of group work

Assumed prior knowledge

Participants are expected to already have an MSc-level background in Operations Research and/or Industrial Engineering, as well as basic knowledge and/or interest in its use in the context of sustainable supply chains. Please contact the organizers in case of doubt about the required entry level.

3.4.10 Theory and Practice of Efficiency & Productivity Measurement

t.b.a.