



LUND
UNIVERSITY

Department of Sociology

A. Reading course in “The Sociology of Quantification” (PhD level)

A third level (PhD) “reading course” does not involve any teaching and typically only has one or a few participants taking part in the course. A reading course for 7,5 credits should cover an ambitious and demanding reading material, which exact page number can vary depending on then nature of texts (i.e., heavy dominance of research articles). The Department of Sociology offer reading courses to its PhD students on areas that cover either a specific topic of high relevance for the PhD thesis, or a specific area of research expertise in the Department. This course belongs to the latter category.

This course has been reviewed by the Director of graduate studies on 26 September 2018.

B. Course Details, Assessment, Grades

This course is offered by **Christopher S. Swader** upon demand as a reading course on the readings listed under D, below. There is no teaching. **The course is examined on the basis of a written paper (in English or Swedish) of 10-15 pages.**

Course description: The aim of this course is for the participant to gain a deeper understanding of the sociology of quantification, as gained through reading key modern texts and some of their precursors in this field. This field describes the historical and contemporary growth and development of statistics, quantitative methods in cataloguing, describing, and researching the social world and the effects of these on social and political spheres.

The grades for the course are awarded as Pass or Fail. To receive a Pass, the student must fulfil the learning outcomes specified for the course and demonstrate an independent, reflective, well-informed and critical relationship to the issues presented in the course.

C. Learning Outcomes

By the end of the course the student should be able to:

- (1) Demonstrate substantial knowledge and understanding of the sociology of quantification
- (2) Apply and assess the relevance of this field to their own work
- (3) Discuss points of agreement, contention, and nuance across the literature
- (4) Write a paper dealing with the topic

D. Admission Requirements

Applicants must be admitted to the Ph.D. program at the Department of Sociology, Lund University, or be accepted as a visiting student to that program.

H. Course Literature

Mandatory readings

- Adolf, M.T. & Stehr, N. (2018). Information, Knowledge, and the Return of Social Physics. *Administration & Society* **50**:9, 1238-1258.
- Berman, E. P., & Hirschman, D. (2018). The Sociology of Quantification: Where Are We Now? *Contemporary Sociology*. 47(3) 257-266
- Bruno, I., Jany-Catrice, F., & Touchelay, B. (Eds.). (2016). *The Social Sciences of Quantification: From Politics of Large Numbers to Target-Driven Policies* (Vol. 13). Springer.
- Carr-Hill, Roy. (2005) The uses and abuses of statistics. *Criminal Justice Matters* **62**:1, 16-41.
- Desrosières, A. (2002). *The politics of large numbers: A history of statistical reasoning*. Harvard University Press.
- Espeland, W. N., & Sauder, M. (2007). Rankings and reactivity: How public measures recreate social worlds. *American journal of sociology*, 113(1), 1-40.
- Espeland, W. N., and Stevens, M.L. (2008). A Sociology of Quantification. *European Journal of Sociology*.
- Fourcade, M., & Healy, K. (2017). Categories all the way down. *Historical Social Research/Historische Sozialforschung*, 286-296.
- Gregory, S. (2013) The tabulation of England: how the social world was brought in rows and columns. *Distinktion: Journal of Social Theory* **14**:3, 305-325.
- Lazarsfeld, P.F. "Notes on the History of Quantification in Sociology--Trends, Sources and Problems," *Isis* 52, no. 2 (Jun., 1961): 277-333.
- Horkheimer, M., und Adorno, T.W.. 2002. *Dialectic of Enlightenment: Philosophical Fragments*. Herausgegeben von Gunzelin Schmid Noerr. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press. Selections from the book, especially chapter 1, "The concept of enlightenment."

Additional readings

- Students will identify additional readings that connect this topic to their own ongoing work and/or wider interests.