

# Syllabus

for course at first level

**Research Methods in Business Administration**  
**Forskningsmetoder i företagsekonomi**

**7.5 Higher Education  
Credits**  
**7.5 ECTS credits**

<b>Course code:</b>	FE3822
<b>Valid from:</b>	Summer 2016
<b>Date of approval:</b>	2013-11-04
<b>Changed:</b>	2016-06-13
<b>Department</b>	Stockholm Business School
<b>Main field:</b>	Företagsekonomi
<b>Specialisation:</b>	G1F - First cycle, has less than 60 credits in first-cycle course/s as entry requirements

## Decision

The syllabus was decided on by the Educational Committee of the Stockholm Business School, Stockholm University, 2013-11-04, revised 2014-06-05, revised 2014-10-31, last revised 2016-06-13.

## Prerequisites and special admittance requirements

45 credits from Business Studies I and II, or equivalent.

## Course structure

Examination code	Name	Higher Education Credits
3822	Research Methods in Business Administration	7.5

## Course content

The course focuses social science methodologies and methods, literature studies, applications of theories and concepts and theoretical and methodological studies of academic work. Case study methodology is a particular concern. Learning activities consist of lectures, seminars, group projects and individual readings. The lectures develop themes like problematization, literature review, theoretical framework, philosophy of science and academic writing. The seminars are devoted to in-depth discussions of the forementioned themes. The seminar series ends with a peer reviewed presentation of selected group projects.

## Learning outcomes

Intended Learning Outcomes

The overarching aim of the course is to provide basic insights into social science, its methodologies and methods, in particular case study methodology, and in the scientific use of theories and concepts; creating thereby a stable basis for writing a bachelor's thesis.

Upon completion of the course, students should be able to:

Knowledge and understanding

1. demonstrate basic knowledge of social science research approaches, methods and concepts, theoretical studies and applications;

Skills and abilities

2. problematize;
3. demonstrate insights into literature reviewing and the development of theoretical frameworks;
4. demonstrate insights into the choice, development and justification of research approaches and methods;
5. demonstrate accuracy and rigor in terms of text processing, academic formalities and specified time frames;

Judgement and approach

6. on scientific grounds critically evaluate academic work.

### **Education**

The course consists of a combination of lectures, seminars and group work and requires a significant portion of self-study on the part of students. Assessment for the course will be continuous and is carried throughout the different activities of the course.

The course workload is 200 hours equivalent to 7,5 ECTS (40 hours per week equivalent to 1,5 ECTS).

The language of instruction is English

Please note that all teaching and learning activities - such as lectures, seminars, assignments and assessment tasks – are carried out in English when the language of instruction is English.

### **Forms of examination**

Assessment for the course will be continuous and is carried throughout the different course activities. Each assessment task is weighted in relation to its importance in the overall assessment of the course. The student's results from the different assessment tasks are added up to a total course score that will then translate into the final grade for the course.

Assessment tasks

The course contains the following weighted assessment tasks:

- Group Exam written in pairs (Thesis Proposal): assesses intended learning outcomes 1–6; constitutes 20% of total course points.
- Review written in pairs (of a Thesis Proposal): assesses intended learning outcomes 1–6; constitutes 10% of total course points.
- Individually written 24-hour home exam: assesses intended learning outcomes 1–6; constitutes 60% of total course points.
- Attendance at and contribution to the seminar discussions: assesses intended learning outcomes 1–6; constitutes 10% of total course points.

Grading

After completion of the course, students will receive grades on a scale related to the intended learning outcomes of the course. Passing grades are A, B, C, D and E.

Failing grades are Fx and F. A grade Fx can be completed for a grade E.

A course comprises 0–100 course points. Receiving a final passing grade requires  $\geq 50$  course points. The scale for the final grade is tied to fixed score intervals: A: 90-100; B: 80-89; C: 70-79; D: 60-69; E: 50-59; Fx: 45-49; F: 45. The grades correspond to the total score points a student obtains (over a total of 100) for all the weighted assessment tasks combined as part of the continuous assessment for the course.

Each assessment task is awarded 0–100 points. The score for a single assessment task is the number of points multiplied by its percentage weight, and the combined total of score points for all weighted assessment tasks for the course are added up to a final score between 0 and 100 which then translates into a corresponding final course grade between A and F.

Assessment tasks 1 –3 are assessed on a 100-point scale.

Assessment task 4 is assessed on a 100-point scale in three intervals:

- Attending all seminars: 100 points.
- Absent from 1 seminar: 50 points.
- Absent from  $\geq 2$  seminars: 0 points.

The student is responsible for completing the course's assessment tasks: that a sufficient amount of course points is earned and a passing course grade is obtained. The course's final assessment task can be taken twice: 1) during the course's first scheduled occasion; and, if a passing result ( $\geq 50$  course points) was not achieved at the first occasion, 2) at the course's second, scheduled occasion. All other assessment tasks are offered once during the course.

A passing grade (A–E) in the course is obtained when a student has achieved  $\geq 50$  course points.

A failing grade (Fx or F) in the course is obtained when a student has not achieved  $\geq 50$  course points:

- If 45–49 course points are achieved, a grade Fx is obtained, which can be completed for a grade E within 3 semester weeks after receiving instructions from the course director. If a complementary task is not completed within this time limit, and the course's two final assessment tasks have been accomplished, the course grade Fx is confirmed, implying that the student must re-register for the course and that previously acquired course points are forfeited. Note that first-time registered students have priority access to the seminar groups.
- If 45 course points are achieved, a grade F is obtained, implying that the student must re-register for the course and that previously acquired course points are forfeited.

Re-registration implies that:

- first-time registered students have priority access to the course's group registration;
- the final assessment task can be re-assessed without attendance at any of the course's other learning activities and without points from the course's other assessment tasks accredited.

Students receiving a passing grade may not retake the final examination or complete a previously not completed assessment task to attain a higher grade. A passing grade may not be turned into a failing grade upon the request of a student.

Assessment criteria

Assessment criteria are designed as overall assessments, combined qualitative descriptions of what the student is expected to do in order to demonstrate how well the course's learning outcomes are achieved. The assessment criteria are based upon the general abilities as expressed in the degree objectives of the Higher Education Ordinance (appendix 2, System of Qualifications). The list of abilities below is a compilation of these degree objectives. To pass the course (grade E) students should demonstrate general ability to:

- recall, understand and explain course content, the course subject and its scientific basis and methodology;
- apply course content;
- critically analyse course content;
- problematize course content;
- orally and in writing, present and discuss course content;
- assess course content in terms of scientific, social, and ethical aspects;
- relate course content to current social issues;
- meet standards of written presentation and formal accuracy.

The following assessment criteria are used to decide to what extent students have demonstrated these abilities and hence fulfil the course's intended learning outcomes, whereby a grading decision can be made. A higher grade-level presupposes the abilities at lower levels.

**A (Excellent)**

The student demonstrates ability to evaluate and relate to the content of the course from a comprehensive, critically reflective perspective, as well as to transfer and apply insights in new, meaningful contexts.

**B (Very Good)**

The student demonstrates ability to, from an overarching and coherent perspective of the field, understand and use concepts to explain how different aspects of the course relate to each other, interconnect and become meaningful.

**C (Good)**

The student demonstrates ability to discuss the content, tasks and complex issues dealt with in the course from several well-developed but mainly independent perspectives.

**D (Satisfactory)**

The student demonstrates satisfactory ability to discuss the content, tasks and complex issues dealt with in the course in a way that, albeit in-depth and elaborate, is decidedly one-dimensional.

**E (Sufficient)**

The student demonstrates sufficient ability to discuss the content, tasks and complex issues dealt with in the course in a way that is decidedly one-dimensional.

**Fx (Fail)**

The student's knowledge, skills and abilities display minor flaws, overall or in significant parts.

**F (Fail)**

The student's knowledge, skills and abilities display major flaws, overall or in significant parts.

**Interim**

If the course is discontinued, or its contents are substantially altered, students have the right to be examined according to this syllabus once per semester for three further semesters.

**Limitations**

This course may not be included in a degree together with a course, taken in Sweden or elsewhere, of identical or partially similar content.

**Misc**

Exemption from an assessment task is granted if the student presents a valid reason and a written certification (such as illness and a medical certificate), whereupon the student may re-sit the assessment task at a later date decided by the course director, and while maintaining previously acquired course points.

Application for exemption should be submitted to the Director of studies (Student Services) immediately after, or during planned absences well before, the date when the assessment task is carried out. A granted exemption expires at the end of the immediately following semester. Further information can be found on the school's webpage, under the heading Examination.

**Required reading**

Works of Reference

Creswell, John W. (2014) *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed Methods Approaches*. London: Sage Publications.

Bryman, Alan and Bell, Emma (2011) *Business Research Methods*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Balnaves, Mark & Caputi, Peter (2001), *Introduction to Quantitative Research Methods*. London: Sage Publications.

Holliday, Adrian (2007), *Doing and Writing Qualitative Research, Second Edition*. London: Sage Publications.

Eriksson, Päivi & Kovalainen, Anne (2008), *Qualitative Methods in Business Research*. London: Sage Publications.

Hancock, Dawson R. & Algozzine, Bob (2006) *Doing Case Study Research: A Practical Guide for Beginning Researchers*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Simons, Helen (2009) *Case Study Research in Practice*. London: Sage Publications.

Gomm, Roger, Hammersley, Martin & Foster, Peter (2009) *Case Study Method*. London: Sage Publications.

A selection of articles from scholarly peer reviewed academic journals (updated each semester, see the study guide).