

# Applied social psychology, 7,5 credits

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Master's program in psychology,  
HT24, Psychology department,  
Stockholm University

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Course leader: Marie Gustafsson Sendén

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## Course content

The aim of the course is to provide deepened social psychological knowledge that pertains to applied social psychology. It focuses on understanding social problems and developing skills to design and evaluate interventions that improve conditions for individuals, groups and societies. The course brings up applied social psychological theories, methods and empirical findings, but also theories from the wider social psychological area, used for specific applied purposes. In addition, the course provides opportunity for elaboration within different applied subareas.

## Expected study results

To pass the course, the student will:

- Understand, give an account of, and employ applied social psychological theories, models and empirical findings on issues and questions that are relevant for the subject area
- value and discuss strengths and weaknesses with different applied social psychological theories, models and empirical findings
- assimilate advanced literature in the form of scientific articles and show an elaborated understanding for applied theoretical and methodological issues and questions

## Educational activities and course requirements/mandatory parts

The course consists of lectures and seminars.

### Course requirements/Mandatory parts

- (a) Written seminar questions & answers before the seminars
- (b) Active participation in oral group discussions at the seminars
- (c) Written reviews (formative evaluations) of peer students' elaboration tasks
- (d) Written elaboration task

Students who do not pass (a or b) at a maximum of one time in the course can be offered the possibility to submit written complementary task. Please contact the course leader if this occurs. Written reviews at deadlines are mandatory at scheduled deadlines.

## Knowledge control and examination

The examination includes (a) written seminar questions handed in before each seminar, (b) oral seminar presentations, (c) written elaboration paper as well as (4) formative evaluations of other students' elaboration papers.

The course grade is based on the individual elaboration paper and marked with a seven-point goal-related grading scale: A (Excellent), B (Very good), C (Good), D (Satisfactory), E (Sufficient), Fx (Insufficient), F (Totally insufficient). The grading criteria are provided at the beginning of the course. Passing the course requires (1) grade E or a higher grade on the individual written elaboration paper, (2) Pass on the written seminar questions, (3) Pass on the oral seminar presentations, and (4) Pass on the reviews of other student's elaboration tasks. The written individual elaboration paper is

evaluated on five different aspects: (a) fulfilling of instructions (see below), (b) use of scientific literature and their scientific quality, (c) the question formulation, (d) the processing of the question formulation, scientific support, (e) conclusions as well as general evaluation (coherence etc). Missing any of these aspects will result in zero points and a grade Fx or F. The written individual elaboration paper can result in a maximum of 70 points. There is a possibility to supplement a grade Fx up to a maximum of an E. If a student gets and Fx and aims for a higher grade a new topic and new literature must be used for the exam.

## Grading criteria

Grade	Points	Description
A	61-70	Excellent -The student can define and in detail give an account of central concepts and theories within the current area. Further, the student can very independently and in detail reason about and nuanced apply these with great security.
B	55-60,5	Very good – the student can define and in detail give an account of central concepts and theories within the current area. Further, the student can independently and in detail reason about and nuanced apply these with great security.
C	47-54,5	Good – The student can define and in detail give an account of central concepts and theories within the current area. Further, the student can independently reason about and apply these.
D	41-46,5	Satisfactory – The student can define and give an account of central concepts and theories within the current area. Further, the student can reason about and apply these.
E	35-40,5	Sufficient (pass) – The student can define and give an account of most central concepts and theories within the current area. Further, the student can in a basic way reason about and to some extent apply these.
Fx	26-34	Insufficient – The student can define and give an account of some central concepts and theories within the current area, but shows a lack of understanding and cannot apply them. Some formal instructions might be complemented.
F	< 25	Totally insufficient – The student hardly documents an understanding of theories and concepts within the current area. Formal instructions on length and references are missing.

## Seminars

There are four (4) seminars in the course following each topic lecture. The seminars focus on a book chapter together with a selection of articles with the related topic. Group discussions based on submitted questions are the focus of the seminars.

Before each seminar, the student individually formulates and answers two questions in relation to two of the articles that will be discussed at the seminars (see literature list). Students are encouraged to mix the types of questions using for instance both discursive/analytical questions and descriptive ones. The Q&As should include 200-400 words (references excluded) with the references included at the end of the paper. **Submit the tasks through Athena** (see deadlines in schedule). *Follow the instruction at Athena.*

Failure to submit the seminar questions on time, or failure to follow instructions require the student to complete a complementary task. This task includes specific questions which can be retrieved after each seminar. Please contact the course leader if applicable.

## Individual elaboration paper - instructions

The individual elaboration task consists of relating social psychology theory and/or empirical findings included in this course to existing research in an area of interest. The paper is theoretical and does not contain any data collection. More specifically, the participant shall formulate one own **applied social psychological question which shall be described in the first paragraph of the paper**. The question should be associated with one of the four areas included in the course: (1) diversity, (2) the environment, (3) learning or (4) the legal context. You may also associate your question with the topic of interventions. Please make sure to state your question clearly.

The written elaboration task should be saved in **word format (not pdf or any other format)**.

**APA style** (see links on Athena)

**Length:** 3000 – 3500 words (excluding title page, abstract (optional), and reference list).

**Font:** Calibri or Times New Roman 12p, single spacing (1.0).

**Format:** Include headings, abstract (max 150 words) and references.

**Reference** to scientific peer-review articles:

- At least 2 from the articles included in the course
- At least 4 articles of relevance based on the research question/topic (more references can be included if needed, however, the total number of references should not include more than 20)
- At least 1 chapter from the course book.
- Indirect/secondary references at a minimum (max 2), besides the articles included above.

At the end of the text there shall be a reference list. References (both in the body of text and in the reference list) shall be in APA-format.

The paper should be uploaded on the course web Athena by the date and time specified in the schedule. The paper will go through an automatic plagiarism check. The uploaded version of the paper is then graded after the closing of the deadline. No changes can then be made to the text.

Note that the task will be graded as Fx, if it does not meet requirements regarding the formal criteria about number of references (see above) and length, or if there is no research question stated in relation to the topics in the course. An Fx can be complemented to get a grade of E.

The development and writing of the elaboration task go in parallel with the course lectures and seminars. On two occasions, the student will submit their drafts and get feedback on their paper from two peer student(s). The content of this feedback is guided by a template and provides a time for reflection between peers in the course. The task of the peer is *not* to say whether a paper may or may not pass, although they can choose to point out aspects of the text that align with or depart from instructions. The course leader will *not* provide feedback or tutoring because the individual elaboration paper is an examination task. The course leader will only interfere if a student does not hand in their peer-feedback, but will not evaluate the content in itself. The deadlines for all submissions are published on Athena. Please note that a positive response from a peer does not indicate a grading. A template will guide you in what to focus on in your evaluation and how to write it (see more on formative evaluations below).

Later deadlines for submission of a revised version of the paper or a completely new paper (so called “*omtentamen*”) will be appointed to students that missed the deadline or when the paper was graded Fx. When a Fx-paper is revised and submitted again it can receive a maximum of a grade E. A completely new paper has the possibility to receive a higher grade than a grade E. However, to be considered a completely new paper, there must be a completely different research question and most likely different scientific sources. If in doubt, please contact the course leader before committing to a new research question.

There will be two deadlines for submission of a revised/completely new paper (*omtentamen*). Dates are announced on Athena.

## Formative evaluations

Each participant will contribute to their peers’ drafts, as an evaluator/reviewer at two separate occasions by reading and commenting. Each participant shall submit their comments on Athena by the times/dates specified in the schedule.

The first formative evaluation is scheduled at the beginning of the course. At this time, the text requires a minimum to evaluate: one or a few **research question(s)** (presented comprehensible to a reader), a short text describing the background to the question(s). If several questions are described, there should be a paragraph describing thoughts and considerations on the choice between them. Please do not include large quotes from readings (such as abstracts), passages that are made up by key-words or the like, but make sure that whatever text is submitted, is readable even if it is in its early stages. Consider this stage as an opportunity to get feedback from your peer, and make sure that you are as clear as possible on what you aim to cover in your paper. Thus, the text must not be too short and/or non-specific.

The second formative evaluation is scheduled some weeks later. The paper should exhibit a marked progression relative the first submitted draft. It might be helpful to clarify how text in has dealt with the comments to the first draft (for instance through inserted comments). At this point in time, the evaluation is likely based on a more “final” product. Again, the evaluators task is to provide feedback not the rank the paper in terms of quality or grades.

A guideline for reviewers is published on Athena. It covers aspects included in the grading criteria’s as well as aspects that a reviewer for a scientific journal often use.

## Plagiarism, cheating and unallowed cooperation

Students need to be aware of the examination rules at Stockholm University. Detailed information is available both at the web pages of the Department of Psychology and Stockholm University (see links on Athena). All teachers are obliged to report suspicion about cheating and plagiarism to the principle and the disciplinary board. Plagiarism and cheating are always disciplinary matters and can lead to shutting off from studies. One example of plagiarism is to verbatim (word-by-word) or almost verbatim – regardless if a source has been given – copy a text (also concerns occasional sentences, structure of a text) and not refer to the source of the text. This also concerns texts that you have yourself authored previously in other courses (self-plagiarism). In exams, you are not allowed to bring or use resources such as a cell phone. To be involved in study groups is developing and time efficient, but when it comes to examination tasks you will need make sure that you are working on your own (if nothing else is instructed).

## Literature

Gruman, J. A., Schneider, F. W., & Coutts, L. M. (2017). *Applied social psychology: Understanding and addressing social and practical problems* (3<sup>rd</sup> Ed.). Los Angeles, CA: Sage.

A list of scientific articles will be published on Athena at the beginning of the course. These are course literature especially for the seminars and your written task.

## Course leader

Marie Gustafsson Sendén, PhD, Associate professor, [mgu@psychology.su.se](mailto:mgu@psychology.su.se), 0707-644144.

## Lecturers and seminar leaders

- Marie Gustafsson Sendén, PhD, Associate professor
- Cecilia Stenfors, PhD, Associate Professor
- Torun Lindholm, PhD, Professor
- Charlotte Alm, PhD, Associate professor

## Course administrator

**Madeleine Arnwald**, [study-master@psychology.su.se](mailto:study-master@psychology.su.se); [studieadmin@psychology.su.se](mailto:studieadmin@psychology.su.se) (08-16 38 09)