

Researcher in Society 7.5 ECTS / Forskaren i samhället 7.5 hp

Study guide, HT 2025

Content and aims

This course aims to expand students' understanding of the relationship between society, educational research, and the Swedish discipline of 'Pedagogik'. It critically examines societal expectations of the academic discipline from a historical perspective, how educational research has been organized and financed, explores different methods of communicating research, and discusses collaborations with various actors and stakeholders. These topics will be addressed in connection with the students' research projects throughout the course.

Overall, the course focuses on the role of researchers in society, elaborating on for *who*, *when*, *why*, and *how* research is conducted. Furthermore, the course asks: What aspects and responsibilities might the 'researcher in society' involve, and what are the related challenges, evolving trends, and changes? By doing this, the goal is to provide insight into both the potential and confines of educational science and its position in society.

The course consists of four themes, including a variety of teaching activities such as lectures, seminars and workshops. An overview of these themes, along with the corresponding literature and scheduled dates, is provided below.

Introduction: Sep 3, 10.00 – 11.30 Course introduction on Zoom

We will meet on Zoom to go through the study guide, discuss the course structure and the examination.

Theme 1: Sep 17, 09.00 – 15.00, room 1708, Societal expectations and 'Pedagogik' from a sociohistorical perspective

The role and status of educational research, and how it is mobilised for policy reforms, varies from context to context and can transform over time. In the first theme of this course, beginning with a broad sociohistorical perspective, we will trace societal expectations of *Pedagogik* and educational research in Sweden. While possessing its own unique history and values, Swedish educational research and policymaking have also been clearly influenced by the "international" in last decades. The literature we will engage with will expound on how the boundaries around disciplines and knowledge production in education are complex and malleable, offering insights into the trajectory that precedes the place and position of educational research in Swedish society today.

Literature:

Burman, A., Landahl, J., & Larsson, A. (2024). *Pedagogikens politik: Utbildningsforskning och utbildningspolitik under efterkrigstiden*. Södertörn Academic Studies. (Introduction chapter)*

Karseth, B., Sivesind, K., & Steiner-Khamisi, G. (Eds.). (2022). *Evidence and Expertise in Nordic Education Policy*. Springer. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-91959-7> (Introduction Chapter)

Landahl, J., & Larsson, A. (2022). Pedagogy and the Humanities Changing Boundaries in the Academic Map of Knowledge, 1860s–1960s. In A. Ekström & H. Ö. Gustafsson (Eds.), *The Humanities and the Modern Politics of Knowledge* (pp. 81–103). Amsterdam University Press. <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctv2svjznh>

Nylander, E. (2024). A bibliometric study of Swedish educational research: Mapping key themes, 2000–2020. *Scandinavian Journal of Educational Research*, online first <https://doi.org/10.1080/00313831.2024.2421300>

Ringarp, J., & Waldow, F. (2016). From ‘silent borrowing’ to the international argument – legitimating Swedish educational policy from 1945 to the present day. *Nordic Journal of Studies in Educational Policy*, 2016(1), 29583. <https://doi.org/10.3402/nstep.v2.29583>

**Optional reading*

Theme 2: Oct 7, 09.00 – 15.00, room 2431, Organizing and financing of educational research

Where and when educational research takes place in and for state-funded institutions, educational research can be viewed as a public good. How educational research is organized and financed are thus important questions to explore and scrutinise. In this theme, we will move from a broad sociohistorical perspective into exploring more specifically, and from the vantage point of Swedish Research Council funded projects, what types of educational research projects have been “valued” and supported. Given that we are in the field of higher education ourselves, we will additionally explore how the organization of educational research is intricately linked and propelled by the pursuit of “knowledge for the unknown”; how expectations of the future can shape and direct educational research priorities.

Literature:

Börjesson, M., Bengtsson, F., Giorio, L., & Boberg, J. (2023). [*Kartläggning av utbildningsvetenskaplig forskning 2001-2021*](#). Vetenskapsrådet.

Geschwind, L., & Gustafsson, H. Ö. (2024). Knowledge for the unknown? A history of the future in Swedish higher education and research policy, 1970–2020. *Higher Education*, 89, 349–365. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10734-024-01210-4>

Hemmaty, M. (2024). [*Spelar metod roll? En analys av metodinriktningar bland forskningsansökningar i tre beredningsgrupper inom humaniora och samhällsvetenskap 2015–2023*](#). Vetenskapsrådet.

Theme 3: Nov 12, 09.00 – 15.00, room 2527, Communication of research

Within academia, there is a growing demand for researchers to share their findings with a broader audience. This is sometimes referred to as the researcher's "third mission." However,

effective communication requires both the ability to present research in an accessible, engaging way and the presence of media and public interest in the subject.

Research can be communicated through various methods, including lectures, podcasts, opinion pieces, personal profile pages, and media interviews. How have you shared your research so far, and what potential channels do you see for future communication? What are the challenges and problems with communicating research?

Literature:

Cassidy, A. (2021). Communicating the social sciences and humanities: Challenges and insights for research communication. In *Routledge handbook of public communication of science and technology* (pp. 198-213). Routledge.

Mason, S., & Merga, M. (2021). Communicating research in academia and beyond: sources of self-efficacy for early career researchers. *Higher Education Research & Development*, 41(6), 2006–2019. <https://doi.org/10.1080/07294360.2021.1945545>

DN Debatt. "Professorer i ekonomi gör inte skäl för sin lön" Publicerad 2023-08-27*

<https://universitetslararen.se/2023/12/11/avskaffa-den-tredje-uppgiften/> *

<https://medarbetare.su.se/stod-och-service/kommunikation> *

<https://www.medarbetarwebben.lu.se/forska-och-utbilda/stod-till-forskning/kommunicera-din-forskning/skriva-popularvetenskapligt> *

<https://gupea.ub.gu.se/bitstream/handle/2077/84471/utsatthet-svenska-hogskolor-universitet-tg.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>*

Theme 4: Dec 10, 09 – 15.00, room 2531, Research collaborations

Demands for research to engage with and create collaborations with society have increased over the past decade. Collaboration can take many forms and vary in extent, ranging from research being designed and conducted in close partnership with practitioners to researchers providing expert opinions, responding to consultations, and contributing to investigations and government work. Moreover, collaboration may involve participants such as young children, students, and teachers within participatory research, thereby raising a range of methodological and ethical considerations.

What collaborations have you been involved in so far, and what potential collaborations do you envision for the future? What challenges and difficulties arise in collaboration? This theme begins with a brief presentation by Karin. Thereafter, in pairs, you will present a self-selected aspect of research collaboration. The presentation should also include relevant literature related to the chosen aspect.

Literature:

Gunnarsson, K. (2023). Mutual doings: Exploring affectivity in participatory methodologies. *Humanities*, 12(6), 131.*

Jönson, H., Hultqvist, S., & Iwarsson, S. (2021). SAPO—en modell för samverkan mellan forskare och aktörer utanför akademien inom området äldre och åldrande. *Äldre i centrum Vetenskapligt supplement*, 5–14.*

Rönström, N., Ståhle, Y., Sundelin, Å. & S. Andersson (2022). Samverkan med samhället: utbildning, forskning, FoU-stöd. In Fredriksson, U. et.al. (eds.) *The Department of Education at Stockholm University: Developments and footprints in education and research*. Stockholm: Bokförlaget Atlas.*

<https://www.diva-portal.org/smash/get/diva2:1723724/FULLTEXT01.pdf>

Sjögren, H. (2024). Om värdet av kritisk forskning och oförutsägbart forskningsnyttan inom utbildningsvetenskapen. *Nordic Journal of Pedagogy & Critique*, 10(4), 28–38.*

Final Seminar 5: January 14, 09.00 – 12.00, room 1708, Presentations of the examination assignment

At this seminar, you will present your examination texts. Each presentation will last approximately 25 minutes, with 15 minutes for the presentation and 10 minutes for discussion.

Examination

The course is being examined by an individual text that has been elaborated and peer reviewed during the course and presented at the final seminar. In the text, you examine the role of the researcher in society, drawing on the themes discussed in the course and relating them to your specific research project. You may work with an example of research application, research communication, or research collaboration and then analyse and critically discuss it using the literature. While you may choose to focus on one particular theme, all themes should be addressed, and the literature must be incorporated. The text should consist of approximately 3000-5000 words.

The deadline for the examination is 20 January 2026.