

Department of Business Administration

## EHFE010, Reflexive and Creative Methodology,

7.5 credits

*Reflexiv och kreativ metod,*

*7,5 HP*

*Third Cycle/Forskarutbildningsnivå*

### General information

The course EHFE010 is a course in Business Administration at the third cycle level.

*Language of instruction:* English

*Main field of studies:* Business Administration

The course emphasizes the creative and reflexive side of research and aims to support less boring and more interesting and imaginative studies. Students are encouraged to develop reflexivity both as a way to avoid traps and pitfalls and as a necessary measure for knowing how to engage creatively with the various elements in the research process. The ambition is to produce more interesting and unexpected research results through re-thinking conventions and opening up for more varied and challenging uses of research questions, fieldwork practices, modes of interpretations and styles of writing.

The course aims to develop the participants' skills in conducting qualitative research through exploring how various ideas on reflexivity can increase the quality and creativity of investigations. In particular, the course emphasizes how the process of research can lead to new ideas and theoretical results. The course is intended for PhD students that have good knowledge of the basics of qualitative research (i.e., participated at introductory PhD courses in qualitative methodology) and junior faculty members in management and other social sciences.

### Learning outcomes

#### **Knowledge and understanding**

A passing grade on the course will be awarded to students who:

- Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of reflexive approaches to enhancing the quality and creativity of empirical investigations.

### **Competence and skills**

A passing grade on the course will be awarded to students who:

- Can develop reflexive and creative ways to conduct their research project.

### **Judgement and approach**

A passing grade on the course will be awarded to students who:

- Show ability to reflect critically on basic assumptions in their field of research and their own work.

## **Course content**

Three key themes are emphasized in the course: general reflexivity (critical exploring and perspectivating one's own position; framework and vocabulary), challenging dominant assumptions (also within one's own home area/received wisdoms), and creating something unexpected (mysteries) based on empirical material.

Readings and discussion during the course treats topics such as constructing innovative research questions; the art and technicalities of qualitative research; combining research perspectives; doing reflexive interviews; interpretations and re-interpretations; reflexivity, pluralism and conflict; perspective-seeing as an ideal; and theory development in empirical work.

## **Course design**

The course starts with a series of lectures on key topics. Participants are expected to be well prepared, to have read the course materials in advance and to engage in discussions. It continues with break-out sessions with discussions that draw forth the links between students' own PhD projects and the aims of the course, based on individual short papers submitted in advance.

## **Assessment**

A final course paper critically discussing the course literature and linking the key points of the course with one's individual project (max 3.000 words).

## **Credits**

Grades are Pass or Fail.

*Plagiarism is considered to be a very serious academic offence. The University will take disciplinary actions against any kind of attempted malpractice in examinations and assessments. The penalty that may be imposed for this, and other improper practices in examinations or assessments, includes suspension from the University for a specific period of time.*

## Entry requirements

PhD students accepted to the PhD programme in Business Administration or an adjacent subject are eligible for the course.

## Course literature

See separate literature list.

Department of Business Administration

### Books

Alvesson M. & Kärreman D. (2011). *Qualitative Research and Theory Development*. London: Sage.

Alvesson M. & Sandberg J. (2013). *Constructing Research Questions*. London: Sage.

Additional reference text: Alvesson M. & Sköldberg K. (2018) *Reflexive Methodology*. London: Sage

### Articles

Alvesson, M. (2013). Do we have something to say? From re-search to re-search and back again. *Organization*, 20(1), 79–90.

Alvesson, M. and Ashcraft, K. L. (2009). `Critical Methodology in Management and Organization Research in D. A. Buchanan and A. Bryman (eds), *The Sage Handbook of Organizational Research Methods* (pp. 61–77). London: Sage.

Bartunek, J. M., Rynes, S. L., & Ireland, D. R. (2006). What makes management research interesting, and why does it matter? *Academy of Management Journal*, 49, 9–15.

Davis, M (1971). That's interesting. *Philosophy of the Social Sciences*, 1(4), 309–344.

Gabriel, Y. (1991). Turning facts into stories and stories into facts: A hermeneutic exploration of organizational folklore. *Human Relations*, 44(8), 857–875.

Gabriel, Y. (2013). Researchers as Storytellers: Storytelling in Organizational Research. In M. Gotti & C. S. Guinda (Eds.), *Narratives in Academic and Professional Genres* (pp. 105–122). Berne: Peter Lang.

Geertz, C. (1973) *Deep Play*. In Geertz, C. (1973) *The Interpretation of Cultures* (pp. 412–455). New York: Basic Books.

Hallett, T. (2007). Between deference and distinction: Interaction ritual through symbolic power in an educational institution. *Social Psychology Quarterly*, 70, 148–171.

Hallett, T. (2010). The myth incarnate: Recoupling processes, turmoil, and inhabited institutions in an urban elementary school. *American Sociological Review*, 75, 52–74.

Locke, K., & Golden-Biddle, K. (1997). Constructing opportunities for contribution: Structuring intertextual coherence and “problematizing” in organizational studies. *Academy of Management Journal*, 40, 1023–1062.

Rosen, M. (1988) You asked for it: Christmas at the bosses' expense. *Journal of Management Studies*, 25, 463–480.