

National research university “Higher School of Economics”

Department of Psychology

Course syllabus for the discipline
“Research Seminar – Social and Cross-cultural Psychology”

For the students of the MSc program “Applied social psychology”
(specialization 37.04.01. “Psychology”)

Authors:

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1. The main objectives of the course are:

- 1) introducing students with main research directions in the field of social and cross-cultural psychology;
- 2) developing skills for theoretical analysis in the field of social and cross-cultural psychology;
- 3) developing skills to conduct surveys and data processing;
- 4) preparing students' master theses.

2. Novelty of the course:

1. Training students to use in their research the latest methods of mathematical-statistical data.
2. Using techniques of group discussions, brainstorming to discuss novelty of master dissertation, formulation of research problem, and research hypotheses.

Preliminary note. During the second year, students consistently prepare their master's theses and discuss with teacher and group parts of their work: plan of empirical research, research tools, results of preliminary mathematical processing, final results of mathematical processing, text of the master thesis. There is no special literature for each of the topics proposed due to students work on and discuss their theses at seminars for the second year.

Thematic Plan

№	Topic	Total number of hours	Class hours	Self-Studying
			seminars	
1	The formulated problem in the master study. Discussion of the tasks in the master study	20	4	10
2	Presentation of the theoretical bases of master study. Formulation of hypotheses	20	8	10
3	Writing and discussing the plan-prospect of the research in the master thesis	25	8	18
4	Developing skills of analysis and review of scientific works, writing and discussion review of the scientific works	26	8	20
5	Critical analysis of planned master study methodology	26	8	18
6	Discussing research design of the master thesis	26	10	20

7	Analysis and discussion of sampling plan of the master study	26	10	20
8	Discussing final plan of empirical study of master thesis	30	10	18
9	Presentation of first results of mathematical-statistical analysis from empirical study	30	10	18
10	Presentation of final results of mathematical-statistical analysis from empirical study	30	10	20
11	Preliminary defense of the master thesis	45	10	36
Total for the second year of studying		304	96	208

Content

Topic 1. The formulated problem in the master study. Discussion of the tasks in the master study

Discussion on the subject, object, objectives and hypotheses of the study. Discussion about novelty of master's research, as well as its practical and theoretical significance.

Topic 2. Presentation of the theoretical bases of master study. Formulation of hypotheses

Final discussion of the theoretical foundations of students' theses, and formulation of the final version of the research hypotheses.

Topic 3. Writing and discussing the plan-prospect of the research in the master thesis

Students prepare and present the plan-prospect of empirical research. This plan should include description of methods, sample and time frames of the empirical study.

Topic 4. Developing skills of analysis and review of scientific works, writing and discussion review of the scientific works

The class focuses on the critical analysis of empirical studies of master's theses of students from previous years of studying. Students need to prepare a critical review of received theses and make a presentation of their review. It is assumed that ability to see an errors and omissions in existing dissertations will reduce the likelihood that students will make similar mistakes in their own works.

Topic 5. Critical analysis of planned master study methodology

During seminar teacher and group critically analyze and discuss empirical methods of each student' thesis.

Topic 6. Discussing research design of the master thesis

Discussion on the design of the whole study. During the discussion, it is important for students to understand whether the selected design is adequate to test the proposed hypotheses.

Topic 7. Analysis and discussion of sampling plan of the master study

Discussion on the ways of collecting data, sample characteristics, required sample size, socio-demographic composition of the sample. Discussion on possible ways of recruiting respondents.

Topic 8. Discussing final plan of empirical study of master thesis

Discussion of the final and complete version of study plan: tools, sample, time frame. Students begin to collect empirical data after approval of the study plan at the workshop.

Topic 9. Presentation of first results of mathematical-statistical analysis from empirical study

Students present preliminary results of mathematical and statistical processing of collected data. The results are put under critical analysis and discussion at the class. Further ways of data processing are outlined.

Topic 10. Presentation of final results of mathematical-statistical analysis from empirical study

Discussion of the final results of mathematical and statistical processing. Assessed the correctness of applying the selected processing methods to the data, which were obtained by the student.

Topic 11. Preliminary defense of the master thesis

Students pass the standard procedure of preliminary defense of their theses, including report on the main results of student research work, questions, and free discussion (for the details, see Appendix A).

Intermediate tasks that have to be done within the second year of studying

1st module – project proposal and questionnaire;

2nd module – report on the analysis of the dissertation research data;

3rd module – defending master thesis.

Methods of assessment

5. Quality of the written form of the questionnaire and project proposal.

Form of the assessment	Criteria
1) Homework 1. Project proposal MT and final version of questionnaire. Students should plan their research: formulate a research question, develop hypotheses, find appropriate research methods, and present this plan and final version of questionnaire in a written form. Project proposal should also be presented in the class and final version of questionnaire.	1. Adequacy of the research question(s). 2. Quality of the theoretical overview. 3. Adequacy of hypotheses. Connection of hypotheses with the theoretical overview. 4. Appropriateness of the research methods chosen to test the hypotheses. 5. Quality of the written form of the questionnaire and project
2) Homework 2. The report	1. Adequacy of the descriptive or

<p>describing the main results of the empirical study</p> <p>This chapter addresses the results from your data analysis only. This chapter does not include discussing other research literature or the implications of your findings.</p>	<p>exploratory/confirmatory analyses (e.g., reliability tests, factor analysis)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Appropriateness of the statistical methods chosen to test the hypotheses. 3. All results concerning the research problem that are part of the empiric verification of the hypothesis must be shown. 4. The statistical study should start from the values of descriptive statistics that further statistical tests refer to. The analysis results must contain the full information that is the value of the statistical test, the number of degrees of freedom, and the accurate level of significance. 5. Tables and/or figures should be used to illustrate and summarize all numeric information. 6. The tables and drawings should be formatted in the same way throughout the whole thesis. The student must also remember that titles of tables are given above them, and captions of drawings – below them. 7. For qualitative and historical research, this chapter usually is organized by the themes or categories uncovered in your research. 8. If you have conducted focus groups or interviews, it is often appropriate to provide a brief descriptive (e.g., demographic) profile of the participants first.
<p>Preliminary defense of master thesis</p>	<p>The text should include the following sections:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Introduction (the importance of the study is clearly described; the goal of the study; the research question(s) are clearly reported). 2. Theoretical chapter (chapters should be logically ordered; the literature should be sufficient in terms of number and relevance of references; all of the key concepts should be clearly defined; the literature should be integrated and critically described; concise but complete evidence should be provided for

	<p>the hypotheses; if the logic of your theoretical chapter allows, it would be good to finish this section with a chapter “The present research”, where you develop the hypotheses for your empirical study.</p> <p>3. Study method (the sample; the instrument(s), and procedure are concisely, clearly and completely described).</p> <p>4. Results. This chapter addresses the results from your data analysis only. This chapter does not include discussing other research literature or the implications of your findings.</p> <p>5. Discussion. This chapter include discussing results of your study and other research literature and/or the implications of your findings. Limitasions and future directions of your study.</p> <p>6. Conclusions. Make a brief conclusions based on research results, describe obtained new facts.</p> <p>7. References should be executed in accordance with the APA style (http://www.apastyle.org/).</p> <p>8. Quality of the presentation</p>
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Grading system for the second year of studying

- Grade for 1st module = 0.1 *attendance + 0.2 presentation+0.4*HW1 (MT proposal) + 0.3* questionnaire
- Grade for 2nd module = 0.1 *attendance + 0.2*sample description + 0.3*revised theory+ 0.4* pilot study.
- Grade for 3nd module = 0.1*attendance + 0.4*HW2(results) + 0.5*empirical part.
- Final Grade = 0,3*Grade for 1st module + 0,3* Grade for 3nd module + 0.4*Grade for preliminary defense

Literature for the discipline:

Basic:

1. Dunleavy, P. (2003). *Authoring a PhD thesis: How to plan, draft, write and finish a doctoral dissertation*. New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan.
2. *Publication manual of the American psychological association – 6th edition*. Washington DC : American Psychological Association, 2011.

Additional:

1. Balian, E. S. (1994). *The graduate research guidebook*. Lanham, MD: University Press of America.
2. Bolker, J. (1998). *Writing your dissertation in fifteen minutes a day: A guide to starting, revising, and finishing your doctoral thesis*. New York, NY: H. Holt.
3. Booth, W. C., Colomb, G. C., & Williams, J. M. (1995). *The craft of research*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.
4. Campbell D.T., Stanley J.S. (1966) *Experimental and Quasi-Experimental Designs for Research* (1966). Houghton Mifflin Company Boston.
5. Cone, J. D., & Foster. S.L. (1993). *Dissertations and theses from start to finish: Psychology and related fields*. Chicago, IL: American Psychological Association.
6. Gay L. R., Airasian P. *Educational research: Competencies for analysis and applications*. 2003. Merrill Prentice Hall
7. Glatthorn, A. A. (1998). *Writing the winning dissertation: A step-by-step guide*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press. Newman, I., Benz, C. R., Weis, D., & McNeil. K. (1997). *Theses and dissertations*. Lanham, MD: University Press of America.
8. Howell D.C. *Fundamental statistics for the behavioral sciences*. 2004. Belmont. CA: Brooks/Cole

9. Neergaard, H., & Ulhøi, J. P. (Eds.). (2007). Handbook of qualitative research methods in entrepreneurship. Edward Elgar Publishing
10. Ogden, E. H. (1997). Completing your doctoral dissertation or master's thesis in two semesters or less. Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press.
11. Rudestam, K. E., & Newton, R. R. (2000). Surviving your dissertation: A comprehensive guide to content and process. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
12. Schwab, D. P. (2004). Research methods for organizational studies. Psychology Press.
13. Secrist, J., Wright, D. J., & Fitzpatrick, J. (1998). Secrets for a successful dissertation. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
14. Shadish, W.D. Cook, T. D., & Campbell, D. T. (2002). Experimental and quasi-experimental designs for generalized causal inference. Wadsworth Cengage learning.
15. Sheffrin H.M., Thaler R.H. The behavioral life-cycle hypothesis // Economic Inquiry. 1988. Vol. 26. P. 609–643.
16. Sternberg, D. J. (1981). How to complete and survive a doctoral dissertation. New York, NY: St. Martin's Griffin.
17. Tabachnick B.G., Fidell L.S. Using Multivariate Statistics. 2007. Pearson Education. Inc Boston, MA
18. Teitelbaum, H. (1998). How to write a thesis. New York, NY: Arco Publishers.
19. Thomas, R. M., & Brubaker, D. L. (2000). Theses and dissertations: A guide to planning, research, and writing. Westport, CT: Bergin & Garvey.
20. Van Wagenen, R. K. (1990). Writing a thesis: Substance and style. New York, NY: Prentice Hall.
21. Wahlund R., Gunnarsson J. Mental Discounting and Financial Strategies // Journal of Economic Psychology. 1996. Vol. 17. P. 709–730
22. Walters, D. L. (1999). The readable thesis: Clear and effective writing. Gilsum, NH: Avocus Publishers.

23. Webster, W. G. (1998). *Developing and writing your thesis, dissertation or project: A book of sound advice about conceptualizing, organizing, developing and finalizing your terminal graduate research*. San Ramon, CA: Academic Scholarwrite.
24. Zerubavel, E. (1999). *The clockwork muse: A practical guide to writing theses, dissertations and books*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Appendix A

Structure of the Master Thesis

1st page: Title page

Title page should include:

- a. Name of the institution (Higher School of Economics), the department (Psychology), and the Master's Program (Applied Social Psychology)
- b. Title of the study
- c. Author's (student's) full name
- d. Supervisor(s)' second name and initials
- e. Year

2nd page: Table of contents

Introduction (minimum 2 pages)

1. Brief overview explaining the background and importance of the study
2. Problem statement (explanation of the problem and what the researcher hopes to achieve by conducting the study);
3. The research question(s) (specifically what the researcher wants to know);
4. The goal of the study
5. Novelty and scientific significance of the study, how will your study contribute to the existing literature on the topic?

Note that the introduction should give a concise overview of your study. Reader should understand from your introduction what you are going to do, and why and how you are going to do that.

Chapter 1: Theoretical background (minimum 15 pages)

- a. A brief introduction of the objective (problem) of the thesis.
- b. A history of research on the problem and the most important successes (results).

- c. The theoretical and methodological context of the chosen research problem.
- d. Research hypothesis (or questions) that clearly relate to the presented earlier review of literature

Theoretical chapter should include several logically ordered subchapters, each of which can consist of a number of more detailed subchapters. The structure and the content of this chapter depend on your research topic/question(s)/hypotheses, but below you can find some general guidelines how this chapter should be written.

1. Chapters should be logically ordered;
2. The literature should be sufficient in terms of number and relevance of references;

All of the key concepts should be clearly defined (a list of definitions of terms that directly pertain to this study should be provided. The list should include definitions of terms that might be unclear to the reader);

3. The literature should be integrated and critically described;
4. Concise but complete evidence should be provided for the hypotheses;
5. If the logic of your theoretical chapter allows, it would be good to finish this section with a chapter “The present research”, where you develop the hypotheses for your empirical study.

Chapter 2: Method (minimum 3 pages)

1. Sample description (Participants). Justification of the sample size;
2. Variables: operationalization of the constructs (description of dependent & independent variables, if applicable);
3. Procedure (design) of the study;
4. The research scheme (model)
5. Materials/methods used (please specify sources of your methods, information about their validity and reliability);
6. Statistical Analysis (Provide a clear description of the statistical process used for analysis of data. The type of statistical tests should be reflective of the research

hypothesis or
question(s)).

Chapter 3: Results (minimum 10 pages)

- This chapter addresses the results from your data analysis only. **This chapter does not include discussing other research literature or the implications of your findings.**
- All results concerning the research problem that are part of the empiric verification of the hypothesis must be shown.
- Usually you begin by outlining any descriptive or exploratory/confirmatory analyses (e.g., reliability tests, factor analysis) that were conducted.
- Then, address the results of the tests of hypotheses.
- Tables and/or figures should be used to illustrate and summarize all numeric information.
- The tables and drawings should be formatted in the same way throughout the whole thesis. The student must also remember that titles of tables are given above them, and captions of drawings – below them.
- The statistical study should start from the values of descriptive statistics that further statistical tests refer to. The analysis results must contain the full information that is the value of the statistical test, the number of degrees of freedom, and the accurate level of significance.
- For qualitative and historical research, this chapter usually is organized by the themes or categories uncovered in your research.
- If you have conducted focus groups or interviews, it is often appropriate to provide a brief descriptive (e.g., demographic) profile of the participants first.

Chapter 4: Discussion (minimum 10 pages)

- The purpose of this chapter is not just to reiterate what you found but rather to discuss what your findings mean in relation to the theoretical body of

knowledge on the topic and your profession.

- The discussion of results should be started with a reminder of the objective and research problem.
- Begin by discussing your findings in relation to the theoretical framework introduced in the literature review.
- This chapter also should address what your findings mean for communication professionals in the field being examined. In other words, what are the study's practical implications?

Chapter 5: Conclusion (2 page)

Summary of entire thesis in a few pages.

1. Conclusions (a summary of the most important conclusions of the thesis and their meaning).
2. Implications. Speculate about broadest possible consequences, both theoretical and practical.
3. Limitations (factors that were not under the control of the researcher).
Theory, method.
4. Suggestions for future research.

References

Provide a list of references used for this paper\$

Min. 50 references.

Appendix

Questionnaires;

Stimuli materials;

Data, tables or sheets not appropriate for main body of thesis.

For formatting please use APA style: <http://www.apastyle.org/> or <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/>

The paper should be 42-60 **pages** not including the references and appendix
(Times New Roman, 12, double spaced)