

National Research University
Higher School of Economics

Psychology Department

Syllabus for the course
“Research Seminar “Social and Cross-Cultural Psychology”

English-taught Master’s programme “Applied Social Psychology”
(37.04.01 Psychological Sciences)

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I. Basic methodical principles

The research seminar is aimed to introduce to students the international standards of good quality research in the field of social and cross-cultural psychology. During the seminar students will learn how to develop their own research projects, how to plan and organize their own research in the area of social and cross-cultural psychology, and to participate in the scientific discussion. Specific topics addressed are: (1) Standards and evaluation criteria of academic work; (2) Project proposal: structure and content. Formulating research questions and hypotheses; (3) Writing a theoretical overview: information search and quality standards; (4) Study design; (5) Research methods in social psychology; (6) Writing a year proposal.

The main objectives of the course are:

- To introduce to students the international standards of good quality research in the field of social and cross-cultural psychology;
- To develop students' abilities to participate in the scientific discussion;
- To help students to develop their own research projects;
- To teach students how to plan and organize their own research.

Methodical novelty of the course:

- Use of reviews as an instrument for understanding and differentiating a good quality research. Students are asked to write reviews three times: at the beginning of the year they review a published article, then they participate in the conference, and review two presentations, and at the end of the year they review two 1st year papers written by their group mates.
- Group discussions at all stages of the development of students’ research projects. This gives students a unique opportunity to receive feedback not only from teachers, but also from the group, which helps to understand the weaknesses of the project, and improve it.
- All work is organized in a way that students can always connect the tasks with their own research interest, which increases students’ motivation significantly.

Course prerequisites and formed competencies

The course is designed for the first year master students, and is based on the previously learned courses (“Social psychology”, “Cross-cultural psychology”, “Research Methods in Psychology” and “Experimental psychology”).

The language of instruction is English (teaching and all communications). Duration of the course is 4 modules (288 academic hours, 8 credits).

Competencies

General competencies	Specific competencies
Student is able to plan and organize an independent research project according to international academic standards.	Ability to develop a project proposal: formulate research questions, develop hypotheses that are based on an adequate theoretical background,



	and appropriate research methods.
Student is familiar with the research methods of social psychology, and is able to use them appropriately.	Ability to choose research methods that can answer the formulated research questions, and to use them in accordance with ethical and academic standards.
Student is able to use modern IT technologies for information search	Ability to find appropriate literature in the electronic library databases of HSE.
Student is able to carry out research on the international level	Students are familiar with the international standards of academic work, and are able to present their research projects and participate in a scientific discussion.
Student is able to present the results of scientific work in a written and verbal form in English.	Ability to write a theoretical overview and a research project proposal in English. Ability to present this work using illustrations (e.g. Power Point slides) in English.

II. Course contents

Novelty of the course:

- The course is aimed to integrate international and Russian standards of scientific work, which is a new practice in the training of master students in the field of psychology in Russia.
- The integration is achieved through the adjustment of APA standards for conducting and presenting psychological study to the requirements of Higher School of Economics for master’s 1st year paper and thesis.
- Course format is usual for master students training in Higher School of Economics, however it does not have analogues for master students training in “Social and Cross-Cultural Psychology” area in Russia.

Thematic plan

№	Topic	Hours in total	Seminars	Self-Studying
1	Introduction. Standards and evaluation criteria of academic work. Academic writing	55	20	35
2	Project proposal: structure and content. Formulating research questions and hypotheses.	63	25	38
3	Writing a theoretical overview: information search and quality standards.	70	30	40



4	Research design and methods in social psychology.	56	21	35
5	Writing a year essay (1 st year paper).	60	20	40
	TOTAL	304	116	188

III. Program contents

Topic 1. Introduction: Standards and evaluation criteria of academic work

Introduction to the course: thematic plan, homeworks’ structure and content, methods of assessment and grading procedures. Group discussion about students’ research experience and interests. Lecture, followed by discussion about the types of articles according to APA, standards of conducting and reporting empirical research, criteria for writing a master thesis. Students present an overview and analysis of psychological studies that impressed them the most. Presentation of HSE library’s electronic resources. Practical session on using library’s electronic resources. At the end of this part of the course students prepare assignment 1 – review of a published empirical paper (for the details, see Appendix A).

Core reading:

1. APA (2010). *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*. 6th Ed. Washington, DC: APA. <http://www.apastyle.org/>
2. Internet resource: <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/>

For further reading:

1. Bern, D. J. (1987). Writing the empirical journal article. In M. P. Zanna & J. M. Darley (Eds.), *The complete academic: A practical guide for the beginning social scientist* (pp. 171-201). New York: Random House.
2. Bourke, S., Holbrook, A.P. (2013) Examining PhD and research master theses. *Assessment and Evaluation in Higher Education*, 38, 407-416. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/02602938.2011.638738>
3. Johnson, R. B., & Christensen, L. (2008). Mixed research: mixed method and mixed model research. In: R. B. Johnson & L. Christensen, *Educational Research: Quantitative, Qualitative, and Mixed Approaches*. Sage.
4. Sternberg, R. J. (Ed.) (2006). *Reviewing scientific works in psychology*. Washington, DC: APA.

Topic 2. Project proposal: structure and content. Formulating research questions and hypotheses

Discussion of the purpose of research project proposal in the process of planning and conducting an empirical study. Description and discussion of the standards, structure and content of the research project proposal. Analysis of the examples of different project proposals. A special emphasis is put on how to formulate problem statement, research questions, and hypotheses. As a results of this part of the course, students are required to prepare assignment 2 – an individual research project proposal.



Core reading:

1. APA (2010). *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*. 6th Ed. Washington, DC: APA. <http://www.apastyle.org/>
2. Smith, E. (2000). Research design. In: H. T. Reis & C. M. Judd (Eds.), *Handbook of Research Methods in Social and Personality Psychology* (pp. 17-39). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

For further reading:

1. Bern, D. J. (1987). Writing the empirical journal article. In M. P. Zanna & J. M. Darley (Eds.), *The complete academic: A practical guide for the beginning social scientist* (pp. 171-201). New York: Random House.
2. Bourke, S., Holbrook, A.P. (2013) Examining PhD and research master theses. *Assessment and Evaluation in Higher Education*, 38, 407-416. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/02602938.2011.638738>
3. Campbell, D. T., & Stanley, J. C. (1963). *Experimental and quasi-experimental designs for research*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.
4. Goodwin, C. J. (2010). *Research in Psychology: Methods and Design*. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley.
5. Johnson, R. B., & Christensen, L. (2008). Mixed research: mixed method and mixed model research. In: R. B. Johnson & L. Christensen, *Educational Research: Quantitative, Qualitative, and Mixed Approaches*. Sage.

Topic 3. Writing a theoretical overview: information search and quality standards

The guidelines for writing a good-quality theoretical overview are given, and the criteria for its assessment are discussed. Students perform a series of related assignments that lead them at the end to a logically organized, fully-developed theoretical overview. They describe the operationalization of the key concepts of their study, describe the key ideas of the future overview, and present the contents of this overview. Instructors and students in the group give feedback at all stages. As a result, students prepare assignment 3– a theoretical overview of their research topic.

Core reading:

1. APA (2010). *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*. 6th Ed. Washington, DC: APA. <http://www.apastyle.org/>
2. Baumeister, R.F., Leary, M.R. (1997). Writing narrative literature reviews. *Review of General Psychology*, 1, 311-320.
3. Webster, J., & Watson, R.T. (2002). Analyzing the Past to Prepare for the Future: Writing a Literature Review. *MIS Quarterly*, 26, xiii-xxiii.

For further reading:

1. Bern, D. J. (1987). Writing the empirical journal article. In M. P. Zanna & J. M. Darley (Eds.), *The complete academic: A practical guide for the beginning social scientist* (pp. 171-201). New York: Random House.
2. Bourke, S., Holbrook, A.P. (2013) Examining PhD and research master theses. *Assessment and Evaluation in Higher Education*, 38, 407-416. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/>



02602938.2011.638738

3. Rosenthal, R., & DiMatteo, M. R. (2001). Meta-analysis: Recent developments in quantitative methods for literature reviews. *Annual Reviews in Psychology*, 52, 59-82.
4. Sternberg, R. J. (Ed.) (2006). *Reviewing scientific works in psychology*. Washington, DC: APA.
5. Ylijoki, O.-H. (2001). Master’s thesis writing from a narrative approach. *Studies in Higher Education*, 26, 20-34.

Topic 4. Research design and methods in social psychology

The purpose of this topic is to discuss different types of design and research methods (quantitative, qualitative, and mixed) in psychological studies. This topic also covers issues of the choice of appropriate design and test adaptation for different cultures based on the international experience, standards, and ethics. Particular attention is paid to psychometrical properties of the instruments (tests validity and reliability), and how to test them. As a result, students acquire theoretical knowledge and practical skills that will enable them to choose a research design and develop appropriate instruments for their own research. At the end of this part of the course students prepare assignment 4 – Research design.

Core reading:

1. APA (2010). *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*. 6th Ed. Washington, DC: APA. <http://www.apastyle.org/>
2. Goodwin, C. J. (2010). *Research in Psychology: Methods and Design*. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley.
3. Kline, P. (2000). *The handbook of psychological testing* (2nd ed.). London: Routledge
4. Miller, R. L. Ethical issues in psychological research with human participants. In: S. F. Davis (Ed.), *Handbook of Research Methods in Experimental Psychology* (pp. 127-150). Malden, MA: Blackwell.
5. Smith, E. (2000). Research design. In: H. T. Reis & C. M. Judd (Eds.), *Handbook of Research Methods in Social and Personality Psychology* (pp. 17-39). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

For further reading:

1. Gregory, R. J. (2011). *Psychological testing*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.
2. International Test Commission (2001). International Guidelines for Test Use, *International Journal of Testing*, 1(2), 93-114.
3. International Test Commission (2005). International Guidelines on Test Adaptation. [www.intestcom.org].
4. International Test Commission(2014). ITC Statement On the Use of Tests and Other Assessment Instruments for Research purposes [www.intestcom.org].
5. Johnson, R. B., & Christensen, L. (2008). Mixed research: mixed method and mixed model research. In: R. B. Johnson & L. Christensen, *Educational Research: Quantitative, Qualitative, and Mixed Approaches*. Sage.
6. Michell, J. (2003). The quantitative imperative: Positivism, naïve realism, and the place of qualitative methods in psychology. *Theory and Psychology*, 13(1), 5-31.
7. Reis, H. T., & Judd, C. M. (Eds.) (2000). *Handbook of Research Methods in Social and Personality Psychology*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
8. Robins, R. W., Fraley, R. C., & Krueger, R. F. (Eds.). (2007). *Handbook of Research*



Methods in Personality Psychology. N.Y.: Guilford Press.

9. Rosenthal, R., & DiMatteo, M. R. (2001). Meta-analysis: Recent developments in quantitative methods for literature reviews. *Annual Reviews in Psychology*, 52, 59-82.
10. Smith, J. A. (Ed.) (2008). *Qualitative Psychology: A Practical Guide to Research Methods*. 2nd Ed. London: Sage.

Topic 5. Writing a year essay

Students integrate all the knowledge and skills acquired during the course (reviewing research papers, preparing research project proposal, writing a theoretical overview), to write their 1st year paper (year essay). The drafts of these papers are discussed in small groups. Each student receives 4 reviews of their paper – 2 from the instructors, and 2 from their group-mates, who work on a related topic. Then all the reviews are discussed in these groups during the classes. As a result, students prepare the final text of their 1st year paper and present it at the last class of the research seminar before the official defense.

Core reading:

1. APA (2010). *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*. 6th Ed. Washington, DC: APA. <http://www.apastyle.org/>
2. Baumeister, R.F., Leary, M.R. (1997). Writing narrative literature reviews. *Review of General Psychology*, 1, 311-320.
3. Webster, J., & Watson, R.T. (2002). Analyzing the Past to Prepare for the Future: Writing a Literature Review. *MIS Quarterly*, 26, xiii-xxiii.

For further reading:

1. Benet-Martinez, V. (2007). Cross-cultural personality research: Conceptual and methodological issues. In: R. W. Robins, R. C. Fraley, & R. F. Krueger (Eds.), *Handbook of Research Methods in Personality Psychology* (pp. 170-189). N.Y.: Guilford Press.
2. Bern, D. J. (1987). Writing the empirical journal article. In M. P. Zanna & J. M. Darley (Eds.), *The complete academic: A practical guide for the beginning social scientist* (pp. 171-201). New York: Random House.
3. Bourke, S., Holbrook, A.P. (2013) Examining PhD and research master theses. *Assessment and Evaluation in Higher Education*, 38, 407-416. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/02602938.2011.638738>
4. Goodwin, C. J. (2010). *Research in Psychology: Methods and Design*. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley.
5. Johnson, R. B., & Christensen, L. (2008). Mixed research: mixed method and mixed model research. In: R. B. Johnson & L. Christensen, *Educational Research: Quantitative, Qualitative, and Mixed Approaches*. Sage.
6. Rosenthal, R., & DiMatteo, M. R. (2001). Meta-analysis: Recent developments in quantitative methods for literature reviews. *Annual Reviews in Psychology*, 52, 59-82.
7. Smith, E. (2000). Research design. In: H. T. Reis & C. M. Judd (Eds.), *Handbook of Research Methods in Social and Personality Psychology* (pp. 17-39). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
8. Sternberg, R. J. (Ed.) (2006). *Reviewing scientific works in psychology*. Washington, DC: APA.



Ylijoki, O.-H. (2001). Master’s thesis writing from a narrative approach. *Studies in Higher Education*, 26, 20-34.

(1) Questions for final exam test

The year essay (1st year paper) and its presentation is the final examination hence it does not imply any questions or tests.

IV. Methods of assessment

Form of the assessment	Criteria
<p><i>Homework (4)</i></p> <p>1) Homework 1 <i>Writing a critical review.</i> Students should review 1 scientific paper with the results of empirical research chosen from the top journals in the area of social and/or cross-cultural psychology. Review should be presented as a written report.</p> <p>2) Homework 2 <i>Introduction of the research proposal.</i> Students should write the introduction part of their own research, and present this in a written form. Introduction should also be presented in the class.</p> <p>3) Homework 3 <i>Theoretical background.</i> Student should present first part of MT. The literature should be integrated and critically described; concise but complete evidence should be provided for the</p>	<p>1. Student used all the necessary standards for the evaluation of academic paper. 2. Student understands these standards, and can see the strengths and weaknesses of the paper. 3. Student is able to differentiate and recognize a good from a poor quality research. <i>Critical review should include:</i> 1. Summary: research question, design and sample, conclusions 2. The review addresses the quality and adequacy (limitations) of theoretical review; 3. Research design; 4. Sample; 5. Data sources / measures; 6. Choice of methods of data analysis; 7. The quality of results presentation based on APA standards; 8. Adequacy of interpretations and acknowledgment of limitations.</p> <p>The introduction should contain: 1. Research topic; 2. Problem statement; 3. Research question/research aim; 4. Novelty and potential contribution to the field.</p> <p>1. Chapters should be logically ordered; 2. The literature should be sufficient in terms of number and relevance of references;</p>



<p>hypotheses; theoretical chapter should be finished with a chapter “The present research”, where student develop hypotheses for empirical study. This part should be present in written form and as oral presentation in the class.</p> <p>4) Homework 4 <i>Research design.</i> Students should give sample description (Participants). Justification of the sample size, procedure of the study, design of the study, variables: operationalization of the constructs (description of dependent & independent variables, if applicable). This part should be present in written form and as oral presentation in the class.</p>	<p>3. All of the key concepts should be clearly defined. 4. The literature should be integrated and critically described; 5. Concise but complete evidence should be provided for the hypotheses.</p> <p>1. Quality of a sample description; 2. Appropriateness of research procedure and design; 3. Quality of an operationalization of the constructs; 4. Quality of the written report; 5. Quality of presentation.</p>
<p><i>Final examination</i></p> <p>Year essay. Students present the draft of their year essay in the class.</p>	<p>1. Quality of the theoretical overview. 2. Quality of the project proposal. 3. Compliance with the standards of academic work.</p>

Formula for the grades

Final grade for course consists of:

- Class activity (attendance, participation) – 30%:
- Homeworks – 50%, which includes
 - Article review (hw1) – 25%
 - Introduction of the research proposal (hw2) – 25%
 - Theoretical background (hw3) – 25%
 - *Research design* (hw4) – 25%
- Final exam (year essay pre-defense) – 20%

Formula for the final grade:

$$O_{\text{final}} = 0.3 * \text{Class activity} + 0.5 * (0.25 * O_{\text{hw1}} + 0.25 * O_{\text{hw2}} + 0.25 * O_{\text{hw3}} + 0.25 * O_{\text{hw4}}) + 0.2 * O_{\text{final exam}}$$