

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

Approved  
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Number of credits	8
Contact hours	116 hours
Self-study	188 hours
Year of study	1 <sup>st</sup> year
Format of study	Without online courses usage

**I. COURSE OBJECTIVES, LEARNING OUTCOMES AND COURSE PREREQUISITE**

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.

**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.

## **Learning outcomes**

After fulfilling the course students:

- Know the international standards of high quality research in the fields of economic and organizational psychology;
- Are able to participate in the scientific discussion;
- Know how to develop their own research projects;
- Know how to plan and organize their own research.

## **Course prerequisites**

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”).

## II. COURSE CONTENT

### **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 1<sup>st</sup> 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.

### **The content**

#### *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 .

#### *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.

#### *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.

#### *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.

#### *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 (for the details, see Appendices 1 and 2).

### III. FORMS OF ASSESSMENT

Course grade consists of cumulative grade and the final exam grade. The cumulative grade is calculated as the weighted total of grades received for all ongoing assessments. Ongoing assessment methods are conducted for such activities as class participation and four home tasks. Final examination is arranged in a form of presenting a draft of year essay (both ppt and textual form) and answering the questions about it. The 1<sup>st</sup> year paper preliminary defense is the final examination, hence it does not imply any questions or tests.

#### Formula for the grades

Grades on the following forms of knowledge assessment constitute  $G_{\text{final}}$  – the final grade:

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:

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

There are no blocking elements among the forms of assessment for the course.

Knowledge are assessed in 10-point scale: “Excellent” – 8 to 10 points (on a 10-point scale); “Good” – 6-7 points (on a 10-point scale); “Satisfactory” – 4-5 points (on a 10-point scale); “Fail” – 0-3 points (on a 10-point scale).

An academic failure includes a final grade of less than four (4) points (on a 10-point scale) for a final grade or the result of a student’s absence from the examination without a valid reason.

If student failed, two (2) retakes of a final examination are permitted. Retake is organized in a form which are the same to the final examination: student should present his/her year essay. At the first retake, only a grade received at the examination is eligible for revision. At the second retake, conducted by a special examination board, consisting of at least three examiners, as an exception, ongoing assessment results may be disregarded and a final grade may be given on the basis of the evaluation of a year essay.

#### IV. EXAMPLES OF ASSESSMENT TOOLS

Form of the assessment	Criteria
<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Class activity</i></p> <p>Students work individually or in small groups on offered articles, handouts, exercise materials and drafts of their research.</p> <p>Example of the task: “Analyze the text placed into handouts in accordance with APA style requirements. Find the mistakes and suggest how to improve them. Prepare a short oral report about results of your work. ”</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Homework (4)</i></p> <p>1) Homework 1</p> <p><i>Writing a critical review.</i> Students should review 1 scientific paper. Review should be presented as a written report.</p> <p>The article should be chosen in accordance with the following requirements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-published in a peer-reviewed international journal (Impact factor: 1 and higher);</li> <li>-the chosen paper must present the results of an empirical study;</li> <li>-date of publication - after 2000.</li> </ul> <p><i>Critical review should include:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Summary: research question, design and sample, conclusions</li> <li>2. The review addresses the quality and adequacy (limitations) of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- theoretical review;</li> <li>- research design;</li> <li>- sample;</li> <li>- data sources / measures;</li> <li>- choice of methods of data analysis;</li> <li>- the quality of results presentation based on APA standards;</li> <li>- adequacy of interpretations and acknowledgment of limitations.</li> </ul> </li> </ol> <p>2) Homework 2</p> <p><i>Writing an introduction of the research.</i> Students should write the introduction part of their own research, and present this in a written form.</p>	<p>Being present and active during the discussion</p> <p>Depth and thoroughness of material analysis;</p> <p>Clear structure of report / presentation</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Student used all the necessary standards for the evaluation of academic paper.</li> <li>2. Student understands these standards, and can see the strengths and weaknesses of the paper.</li> <li>3. Student is able to differentiate and recognize a good from a poor quality research.</li> </ol> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Formal requirements should be fulfilled: Size, references, APA-style</li> <li>2. Structure - all necessary parts should be present</li> <li>3. Quality of the content - all</li> </ol>

Form of the assessment	Criteria
<p>The introduction should contain:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Research topic;</li> <li>2. Problem statement;</li> <li>3. Research question/research aim;</li> <li>4. Novelty and potential contribution to the field.</li> </ol> <p>3) Homework 3 <i>Writing a theoretical background.</i> Student should write the theoretical part of their master thesis. The literature should be integrated and critically described; concise but complete evidence should be provided for the 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>Creating and describing the research design.</i> Students should give sample description (Participants), including justification of the sample size. Procedure of the study, design of the study, variables: operationalization of the constructs (description of dependent &amp; independent variables, if applicable) also should be described and explained. This part should be present in written form and as oral presentation in the class.</p>	<p>necessary parts should be not only present but relevant, coherent and specific (concrete)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4. Quality of the text</li> </ol> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Subchapters should be logically ordered;</li> <li>2. The literature should be sufficient in terms of number and relevance of references;</li> <li>3. All of the key concepts should be clearly defined.</li> <li>4. The literature should be integrated and critically described;</li> <li>5. Concise but complete evidence should be provided for the hypotheses.</li> <li>6. Quality of presentation.</li> </ol> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Quality of a sample description;</li> <li>2. Appropriateness of research procedure and design;</li> <li>3. Quality of an operationalization of the constructs;</li> <li>4. Quality of the written report;</li> <li>5. Quality of presentation.</li> </ol>
<p><i>Final examination</i> Year essay. Students present the draft of their year essay in the class both in ppt format (to assess the content) and in textual format (in order to check the fulfillment of criteria)</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Quality of the content presented: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- quality of the theoretical overview.</li> <li>- quality of the project proposal.</li> <li>- compliance with the standards of academic work.</li> </ul> </li> <li>2. Fulfillment of formal requirements to the year essay</li> <li>3. Quality of answers on questions to the presentation and text</li> </ol>

## V. Resources

### 1. Core literature

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. Levitt, H. M., Motulsky, S. L., Wertz, F. J., Morrow, S. L., & Ponterotto, J. G. (2017). Recommendations for designing and reviewing qualitative research in psychology: Promoting methodological integrity. *Qualitative Psychology*, 4(1), 2-22.
4. McGuire, W. J. (1997). Creative hypothesis generating in psychology: Some useful heuristics. *Annual review of psychology*, 48(1), 1-30.
5. Rosenthal, R., & DiMatteo, M. R. (2001). Meta-analysis: Recent developments in quantitative methods for literature reviews. *Annual Reviews in Psychology*, 52, 59-82.
6. Siddaway, A. P., Wood, A. M., & Hedges, L. V. (2018). How to Do a Systematic Review: A Best Practice Guide for Conducting and Reporting Narrative Reviews, Meta-Analyses, and Meta-Syntheses. *Annual review of psychology*.
7. The International Test Commission Guidelines on the Security of Tests, Examinations, and Other Assessments. (2016). *International Journal of Testing*, 16(3), 181–204.
8. White, L. (2005). Writes of Passage: Writing an Empirical Journal Article. *Journal of Marriage & Family*, 67(4), 791–798.

### 2. Additional literature

- Coolican, H. (2009). *Research methods and statistics in psychology*. 5th ed. London: Hodder Education, 703p.
- Ylijoki, O.-H. (2001). Master's thesis writing from a narrative approach. *Studies in Higher Education*, 26, 20-34.

### 3. Professional data base, informational referral systems, internet sources (electronic educational resources)

№	Name	Access conditions
<b>Professional data base, informational referral systems</b>		
1.	Annual Reviews	<i>From the local network of HSE (agreement)</i> URL: <a href="https://www.annualreviews.org/">https://www.annualreviews.org/</a>
2.	EBSCO	<i>From the local network of HSE (agreement)</i> URL: <a href="http://search.ebscohost.com">http://search.ebscohost.com</a>
3.	American Psychological Association (APA)	<i>From the local network of HSE (agreement)</i> URL: <a href="https://www.apa.org/">https://www.apa.org/</a>

#### 4. Material and technical support of the discipline

Classrooms for lectures on the discipline enable the use and demonstration of thematic illustrations that correspond with the program disciplines and includes:

- Personal computers with Internet access (operating system, office software, antivirus software);
- Multimedia projector with the remote control.

Classrooms for practical and laboratory classes of the discipline have the Internet access to the electronic informational and educational environment of the HSE.

## Appendix 1 – Structure of the 1<sup>st</sup> year paper (Research proposal)

### 1<sup>st</sup> 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  
Year
- e. *You can find the title page template at the end of this document.*

### 2<sup>nd</sup> page: Table of contents

### 3<sup>rd</sup> page: Abstract and key words

#### Introduction (around 10% of the text)

- a. Problem statement;
- b. The research question(s);
- c. 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.*

#### I. Theoretical background (around 60% of the text)

*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.*

- a. Chapters should be logically ordered;
- b. The literature should be sufficient in terms of number and relevance of references;
- c. All of the key concepts should be clearly defined;
- d. The literature should be integrated and critically described;
- e. Concise but complete evidence should be provided for the hypotheses;
- f. 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.

#### II. Research design (around 30% of the text)

- a. Sample description (Participants). Justification of the sample size'
- b. Procedure of the study\*;
- c. Design of the study\*;
- d. Variables: operationalization of the constructs (description of dependent & independent variables, if applicable)\*;
- e. Materials/measures used\* (please specify sources of your methods, information about their validity and reliability);

f. Clear argumentation for all statistical procedures that will be used.

*\*Note: The order of these parts (from e to h) can be different, and will depend on your study design. You can also combine some of these parts (for example, Procedure & Design, or Variables & Measures).*

**References (min. 35 references)**

**Optional: Appendix** (e.g. the questionnaire or stimuli materials)

The paper should be **4-5 thousand words** (14-18 pages, not including the references and appendix).

The text has to be in **Times New Roman, 12pt, double spaced**. For formatting please use **APA style**: <http://www.apastyle.org/> or <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/>

**Appendix 2 - Title page template**

FEDERAL STATE AUTONOMOUS EDUCATIONAL  
INSTITUTION OF TERTIARY EDUCATION  
«NATIONAL RESEARCH UNIVERSITY HIGHER SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS»  
FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES  
DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY  
**Master's Program «Applied Social Psychology»**

Last Name, Name

**Name of Your Topic**

Term Paper

Supervisor

PhD in Soc. Psych.,

Associate Professor

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Moscow, 2018