
Template for course reports at the Faculty of Education and Society at Malmö University

Revised 2020-05-24

The course report is an important instrument for the development of courses and programmes, as well as for guaranteeing student influence in this work. The *Decision on the model for systematic education-related quality work at the Faculty of Education and Society* (UTB 3.1-2017/410) indicates that course reports constitute the basis for the programme boards' efforts to systematically monitor the quality of the programme as a whole.

The *Course evaluation process at the Faculty of Education and Society* (UTB 3..2.2-2018/479) specifies what applies for the course report, including feedback to students.

The course report should include background information/key figures and a summary of the students' course evaluations, as well as analysis and an action plan together with any suggestions for revision of the course syllabus.

The course report is to be published in connection with other information about the course.

Background information

Course name: Research methods in sport science,

Semester: Spring 2021

Ladok code: IV606G

Course coordinator: Marie Larneby

Number of registered students: 24 (of which 2 were not active)

Number of students who responded to the summative course evaluation: 12

Implementation	Mark with an X
The previous course report is communicated in connection with the start of the course	X
Early dialogue on expectations for the course	X
Formative course evaluation	X
Summative course evaluation	X
Feedback to students	

Forms of evaluation

Describe the method(s) and implementation for both the formative and the summative course evaluation.

The course was held digitally on zoom.

Formative course evaluation was held throughout the course within the concept “open office” and in relation to course activities. Questions of what students thought about the course were asked continuously.

The course provided two summative evaluations: one oral with 6 students present, and one digital with 12 students participating.

Summary of the students' course evaluations

The students' views are objectively summarised here based on the various course evaluations for the course (see above). Individuals may not be named in the course report.

As a whole students evaluate the course as well structured, and well guided and appreciated supervision of the teachers. They experienced that they achieved the learning objectives of the course and appreciated the weekly flow of ‘lecture-seminar-hand in of paper’. One student commented that: “I gained good insights in new approaches I have not heard off before”.

The students appreciated that the examination forms was a direct link to the following course One year thesis, they could use assignments in the thesis and as such the thesis's work started already in this course. For students who wait and write the Two year thesis, this course was appreciated as a good first opportunity to start thinking of topic, possible methods and limitations.

Overall the contents was in line with what students expected, but one point was that the seminars could be even more related to the content and literature. The student argued, though, that it could be due to the zoom and break out-room format of the seminar – had the seminar been on campus, it may have been experienced as more fruitful.

Although the examination forms were seen as reasonable, they were a bit too big and especially the annotated bibliography could be changed in regards to how many sources students are to read and discuss.

Summary of the evaluations of the teaching team

The views of the teaching team regarding the content, learning activities and summative assessment of the course are summarised here.

The teaching team consisted of 4 teachers, of which 2 taught and examined about 90% of the course's learning activities and examinations. The whole course was conducted on zoom, with online assignments through the learning platform Canvas.

The teaching team had a continuous contact to update each other on how the weeks went, how the students experienced one week's content, questions that arose, and worked with a focus to relate the course weeks' contents together to create a red line. Our focus was also to put this methods course in relation to the upcoming one year thesis course, and to prepare students who were to write the two year master in spring 2022 for methodological choices and a critical approach to their topic, purpose and research questions.

We summarize the course as successful in the sense that there was in general a high student presence in lectures and seminars (ca 16-22 students/activity). We worked close to the students, providing open offices and also enabled regular question-time after a lecture or seminar. In that sense, we had the possibility to clarify uncertainties and also alter learning activities if needed.

All 22 active students passed the course with an average high quality of assignments. We perceive this as a good result, since the course have 5 hand in assignments in 5 weeks. Most students handed in their assignments on the different due times, some students handed in at the re-exam date.

Analysis

The analysis is based on a summary of the students' and teachers' individual and joint course evaluations. Both success factors and problems are identified.

Overall, the students' evaluations and teachers' evaluations comply, regarding success factors and problems.

We wanted to provide a structured course that was easy to follow and that teachers were available to support the students throughout the course: it is an intense course with many assignments and individual reading and writing is required, and students have different experiences of research methods from their bachelor programs. According to the various evaluations and feedback that we have received, the students have felt that the structure and guidance provided a good base to fulfil the learning outcomes. As teachers, we wanted to challenge the students' way to work with methods and how to critically scrutinize research, and to introduce new perspectives and ways to justify methodological choices. We perceive that this approach was appreciated and new to many of the students. This is an important approach that we shall continue to work with. One way to support the students in this development, was that we provided feedback when returning assessed assignments in order for the students to improve their writing for the next paper throughout the course, which was appreciated.

Another success factor was – this year – the small teaching team of four teachers (of which 2 worked close together 4 weeks). We could follow each other's work closely throughout the course and add small adjustments to the next week depending on what the students needed to deepen, focus or clarify. Being "close" to the students through open offices and available after lectures and seminars also enabled this. Students felt taken care of, listened to and guided.

One challenge was the course literature. Since the course was held off campus, digitally, many students were not in Malmö nor in Sweden. The course literature is available at the university library, however in print. This was solved, though, in that teachers were flexible in which literature was used as long as students asked in beforehand if another methods literature was reasonable. In addition, we suggested other literature and online-editions. Hence, this challenge did not become a problem and many students got hold of the course literature at their home libraries or in book-stores.

One challenge – and for some students a problem – is that there are 3 course assignments: 1) project plan, 2) annotated bibliography, 3) portfolio of three papers. The teaching team rearranged the assignments from previous course to this course within the frame of the learning outcomes and syllabus: we changed the number of articles to read for the annotated bibliography, and changed questions for the portfolio papers. Still they are experienced as too big by some students. Other students feel that if you put 30-40 hours of work load a week, the course provides time to write the papers. It is an intense course, however, two of the three assignments – the project plan and the annotated bibliography – can be directly used in the upcoming One and Two year thesis courses. Students who passed the One year thesis course reconnected that this methods course was a good point of departure, and as such the relation between methods and thesis courses work very well. Hence, the two assignments that are most important for the students' upcoming work should be kept as they are, but we need to look at if and how the portfolio papers can be modified to fit even better to the students' achievement of the learning outcomes and competence within research methods.

Action plan

The short-term and long-term changes that are to be implemented are specified here, along with a timeline. If no action is planned to address a specified problem, this decision must be justified.

Short-term changes:

- Relate seminars even tighter to lectures – especially if next course is also only digital.
- Modify the assignment Portfolio with papers to better fit the learning outcomes and the course as a whole

Long-term changes:

- Add alternatives of course literature to enable more editions and other handbooks of qualitative methods (online and in print)
- Change number of assignments in the course from three to two, and alter these two assignments to have a more critical discussion-part included (especially the project plan).

Proposed revisions to the course syllabus

Suggestions for possible revisions to the syllabus are proposed here, supported by the above evaluation and the action plan.

- Add alternatives of course literature to enable more editions and other handbooks of qualitative methods (online and in print)
- Change number of assignments in the course from three to two, and alter the two assignments Annotated bibliography and Project plan to have a more critical discussion-part included (especially the project plan).