Sustainability Research in the Social Sciences and Humanities: Applications and Explorations

Educational subject description sheet

Basic information

Field of study Joint Bachelor in Sustainability **Speciality** Social Sciences & Humanities **Organizational unit** Faculty of Law and Administration **Study level** first cycle (joint degree programme) **Study form** full-time degree programme **Education profile** General academic **Mandatory** obligatory	**Education cycle** 2025/26 **Subject code** UJ.WPAJBSSSHS.880.16586.25 **Lecture languages** english **Subject related to scientific research** Yes **Disciplines** Sociology of science, Learning about the culture and religion, Political science and administration **ISCED classification** 0288 Interdisciplinary programmes involving broad field 02 **USOS code**

Subject coordinator	Piotr Szwedo
Lecturer	Basil Bornemann

Period Semester 4	**Examination** graded credit **Activities and hours** Discussion class: 28	**Number of ECTS points** 3.0

Goals

C1	This course aims to build on the methodological foundation provided in the previous course “Sustainability Research in the Social Sciences and Humanities: Approaches and Methods” by enabling students to apply SSH-based approaches and methods in small research projects. Students will gain hands-on experience in designing, conducting, and presenting research. The course emphasizes project-based learning, collaboration, and the practical application of research skills. It also aims to strengthen cohort cohesion through group projects and regular meetings.

Subject's learning outcomes

Code	Outcomes in terms of	Effects	Examination methods
Knowledge – Student knows and understands:			
W1	how to conceptualize, design and implement SSH-based research projects on a specific sustainability issue.	JBS_K1_W04, JBS_K1_W06	credit with grade, project, presentation
W2	how to what end different research methods can be applied in real-world settings.	JBS_K1_W07	credit with grade, project, presentation
Skills – Student can:			
U1	conduct small-scale research projects using SSH methodologies, focusing on one specific method.	JBS_K1_U01, JBS_K1_U03, JBS_K1_U04	credit with grade, project, presentation
U2	synthesize and present research findings effectively.	JBS_K1_U02	credit with grade, project, presentation
Social competences – Student is ready for:			
K1	to collaborate effectively in research teams and can reflect on their own roles and competences.	JBS_K1_K01, JBS_K1_K02	credit with grade, project, presentation
K2	to present their research in a professional setting.	JBS_K1_K05	credit with grade, project, presentation

Calculation of ECTS points

Activity form	Activity hours*
Discussion class	28
preparation for classes	14
preparation of a project	30
preparation of a multimedia presentation	10
preparation of a paper	8

Student workload	Hours	ECTS
	90	3.0

* hour means 45 minutes

Study content

No.	Course content	Subject's learning outcomes
1.	Introduction to Course and Project Work • Overview of course goals, structure, and expectations • Introduction to project-based learning • Organizational matters and project assignments	W1, W2, U1, U2, K1, K2
2.	Project Design and Planning • Elements of project design • Developing research questions and hypotheses • Creating a project plan and timeline	W1, W2, U1, U2, K1, K2
3.	Group Work Session I: Initial Planning • Group discussions on project ideas • Refining research questions and methodologies • Instructor feedback on project plans	W1, W2, U1, U2, K1, K2
4.	Data Collection Techniques • Review of qualitative and quantitative data collection methods • Practical considerations for data collection • Ethical issues in data collection	W1, W2, U1, U2, K1, K2
5.	Group Work Session II: Data Collection Preparation • Finalizing data collection plans • Group discussions and peer feedback • Preparing for fieldwork or data gathering	W1, W2, U1, U2, K1, K2
6.	Group Work Session III: Data Collection in the Field • Fieldwork outside the classroom • Collecting data based on research design • Supervision and support by the instructor	W1, W2, U1, U2, K1, K2

No.	Course content	Subject's learning outcomes
7.	Data Analysis Techniques • Introduction to data analysis methods • Practical exercises in qualitative and quantitative analysis • Tools and software for data analysis	W1, W2, U1, U2, K1, K2
8.	Mid-Project Review • Presentations of project progress • Peer and instructor feedback • Adjusting project plans based on feedback	W1, W2, U1, U2, K1, K2
9.	Group Work Session IV: Data Analysis Preparation • Preparing for data analysis • Group discussions and feedback on analysis plans • Instructor guidance on analysis techniques	W1, W2, U1, U2, K1, K2
10.	Group Work Session V: Data Analysis • Conducting data analysis • Group work on synthesizing findings • Instructor support and feedback	W1, W2, U1, U2, K1, K2
11.	Preparing Research Presentations • Elements of effective research presentations • Designing presentation slides and materials • Practicing presentation skills	W1, W2, U1, U2, K1, K2
12.	Group Work Session VI: Finalizing Projects • Finalizing research findings • Preparing for the conference-style event • Group discussions and peer feedback	W1, W2, U1, U2, K1, K2
13.	Project Conference: Presentations • Presentation of group projects • Peer and instructor feedback • Discussion and Q&A sessions	W1, W2, U1, U2, K1, K2

No.	Course content	Subject's learning outcomes
14.	Conclusion and Course Wrap-up • Reflection on project experiences • Lessons learned and future research directions • Course evaluation and feedback	W1, W2, U1, U2, K1, K2

Course advanced

Teaching methods :

text analysis, project method, conversation lecture, discussion, peer review

Activities	Examination methods	Credit conditions
Discussion class	credit with grade, project, presentation	Group project presentation (70% of the final grade); individually written reflective journal to reflect on the research process, including references to personal strengths and competences that need further development (30% of the final grade); active participation in group projects.

Entry requirements

None

Literature

Obligatory

1. Bianchi, G. (2020). Sustainability competences. A systematic literature review. Bornemann, B., & Simoens, M. (Hrsg.). (2026). Handbook of Research Methods and Applications in Sustainability Transformations: Social Science Perspectives. Edward Elgar. Fahy, F., & Rau, H. (Hrsg.). (2013). Methods of sustainability research in the social sciences. Sage. Franklin, A., & Blyton, P. (2011). Researching sustainability: A guide to social science methods, practice and engagement. Earthscan.

Effects

Code	Content
JBS_K1_K01	The graduate can encourage sustainability-driven practices in the workplace and appraise sustainability of own values, perceptions, roles, and actions, with a special focus on environmental wellbeing.
JBS_K1_K02	The graduate can demonstrate considerable entrepreneurial initiative, autonomy, and readiness to act in complex and changing environments, especially in the context of supporting, undertaking, and co-organising activities beneficial for a sustainable society.
JBS_K1_K05	The graduate can defend the importance of scientific data and methods as a basis for decision-making.
JBS_K1_U01	The graduate can critically analyse academic literature, formulate research questions and conduct research under supervision.
JBS_K1_U02	The graduate can present and report knowledge, methodologies, ideas, problems and solutions, clearly and comprehensively, in different forms destined for different audiences – including discussions and debates which require defending a substantiated opinion, as well as conversations in a foreign language at the CEFR B2 level.
JBS_K1_U03	The graduate can apply adequate methods and tools, including selected IT tools, to solve problems related to data collection, analysis, and management in the context of sustainability.
JBS_K1_U04	The graduate can plan and effectuate simple sustainability-related projects under supervision and in the context of personal lifelong learning, both individually and in a team, using appropriate transversal skills and taking shared responsibility for the outcome.
JBS_K1_W04	The graduate can identify sustainability-related problems specific to selected cultural, geographical, and political contexts.
JBS_K1_W06	The graduate can describe interconnections between various aspects of sustainability and identify their significance in the context of natural and social sciences, with a special focus on disciplines included in the selected specialisation track (law and politics; chemistry and physics; chemistry and biology; economics and geography; economics, management and engineering; humanities).
JBS_K1_W07	The graduate can apply the theory and methodology of disciplines included in the selected specialisation track to sustainability-related problems, taking into consideration practical limitations such as protection of intellectual property.