

## Political Science III in English

### Course Part 3: Independent Research Project

The Independent Research Project as part of Political Science III consists of a study of a political science problem. The independent research project takes the form of a research paper that is to correspond to approximately two months of full-time studies. The topic of the research paper is to be chosen in consultation with the supervisor, who is either the seminar teacher for the special course or another teacher that is part of the teaching team for the special course.

#### Learning outcomes:\*

After completing the course module the student should be able to:

- formulate a political science research problem
- plan and conduct a social science study
- apply a social science method and discuss advantages and disadvantages of different approaches
- collect empirical material in a broad sense and analyze it on the basis of theoretical or normative perspectives
- examine critically scientific work and discuss its strengths and weaknesses.

\* The research paper should fulfil the general criteria and regulations listed below.

#### Grading criteria

##### **F**

The research paper does not fulfil the requirements for E, comprehensive revision is needed.

##### **F(x)**

The research paper does not fulfil the requirements for E, some revision is needed.

##### **E**

The research paper presents and discusses an independent study of a political science problem involving some independent contribution. The research paper includes a clear purpose that is based on a political science problem and that can be addressed through coherent answers to relevant research questions. There is an adequate analysis of relevant empirical material in the research paper. An approach (method) that is appropriate for the study conducted and that is described is applied in the research paper. The choice of sources is justified and potential delimitations are presented. There is an account of some previous research that is relevant to the analysis in the study. The theoretical points of departure for the research paper are described and related to the study. The theories and/or normative perspectives that are relevant to the analysis in the research paper are described. The different parts of the research paper (formulation of the problem, purpose/research questions, methods, theory, empirical material, conclusions) are related to each other in an acceptable manner. Quotations and paraphrasings are clearly indicated and distinguishable, and references and bibliographical sources are presented in a generally recognized manner. The research paper meets an acceptable linguistic standard. An opposition of another research

paper has been carried out and approved.

#### **D**

In addition to the requirements for the grade 'E' being fulfilled, the grade 'D' requires a methodological discussion with reference to methodological literature. The study must be acceptable in terms of validity and reliability. The description of previous research is clearly related to the study conducted. The study presents an analytic framework/analytical tools and is characterized by at least some parts of the research paper having a critical and argumentative tenor.

#### **C**

In addition to the requirements for the grade 'D' being fulfilled, the grade 'C' requires reflection on the part of the author on the choice of method, empirical material and research design and assumes a reasoning approach to the theory and previous research that is presented. The research paper is characterized by a high degree of thoroughness. The relationship between the different parts of the research paper (formulation of the problem, purpose/research questions, methods, theory, empirical material, conclusions) is consistent and logical. The final discussion is clearly related to the general purpose.

#### **B**

In addition to the requirements for the grade 'C' being fulfilled, the grade 'B' requires a high degree of difficulty as well as a pronounced analytical and argumentative tenor. The interpretations and the conclusions are well-justified. The overall presentation by the author is characterized by independent thinking. A discussion of the contribution of the research paper to previous research is well-considered. The research paper is well-organized and characterized by good balance between the different parts of the paper. The quality of the language is high. A particularly good opposition of another research paper has been carried out.

#### **A**

In addition to the requirements for the grade 'B' being fulfilled, the grade 'A' requires either that the research paper is particularly cohesive, focused and thorough or that it displays a particularly high degree of independent thinking in important respects. This can involve, for example:

- the research paper having particularly well-argued and convincing interpretations of the empirical material;
- the analysis, theoretical connections or methodological discussions in the research paper being particularly impressive.

The research paper is characterized on the whole by both having a high level of ambition and by being conducted in excellent manner. The text is also characterized by a high level of intelligibility and clear linguistic structure.

#### **General criteria and regulations:**

- The research paper should not exceed 12,500 words, including the table of contents and notes. The bibliography and appendices containing, for example, interview guides and/or questionnaires is not included in the word count.
- If the research paper is written jointly, it must be more comprehensive in one or more respects (not to exceed 20,000 words). It should be clearly indicated for at least 2/3 of the research paper who is responsible for which parts.
- A research paper must be presented at a seminar in order to receive a final

grade.

