

Examination guidelines

MEVIT4810 – Introduction to media and communication research: Theory of science and methodology

See course [website](#)

This course gives an introduction to theory of science and research methodology for master students in media studies. Students will gain an understanding of the basic methodological knowledge necessary to plan an empirical research project. The course provides students with an understanding of scientific knowledge and its limitations, how to design a study, and the ethical implications and challenges associated with empirical research. It furthermore lays a foundation for more specialized methodology courses later in the MA programs in media studies.

Exam: Portfolio

Grades are awarded on a pass/fail scale.

The portfolio should include the following components:

1. Qualitative vs quantitative approaches
2. Research design

The students have submitted drafts and received feedback on these assignments during the course.

Below is a short description of each assignment:

ASSIGNMENT 1 – Qualitative vs quantitative approaches

Identify 2 possible research questions in media and communication research, one that requires a qualitative approach and one that requires a quantitative approach. The questions can be related to a topic you are considering investigating for your thesis. For each question use the readings on the syllabus to explain why the chosen approach is appropriate: What kind of research materials/data will you be working with? What are the advantages and limitations of each approach?

Write one page per question/approach (total 2 pages). Make sure that there is a bibliography listing the sources you used.

Use 12-point font (Times, Times New Roman, Calibri, Arial) and 1,5 line spacing. Your assignment can be written in English or Norwegian.

ASSIGNMENT 2 – Research design

Identify and carefully read one scientific article either related to the topic of your thesis, or from the syllabus of one of the media and communication courses you are taking this semester. The article should present an empirical study that involves the gathering, processing and presentation of some data (in other words, please do not choose a purely theoretical article or a literature review). Within this article, identify the following aspects:

- Topic of the article
- The ontological perspective: What exists in the “world” of the study?
- Research question(s) or aim(s)
- Theoretical framework: What theories are used/discussed? A theory is, essentially, an explanation. Select and describe at least one theory about the phenomenon investigated in the article.
- Variables. A theory will posit that something (independent variable) influences or has a role in shaping something else (dependent variable). What is/are the independent and dependent variable/s? Why?
- Hypothesis/es. What is/are the hypothesis/es of the study? If there are no explicit hypotheses, what could be one hypothesis (i.e. expectation about what you might find based on the theory and variables you have identified?)
- Data material and collection. What kind of materials is the study handling? How are these materials collected?
- Method/s. What method/s is/are used? (ex. a survey, interviews, content analysis...)
- Is the study qualitative or quantitative? (or mixed?)
- What are the potential limitations of this study?

Your paper should be maximum 4 pages long. The article you have chosen should be in the bibliography.

Use 12-point font (Times, Times New Roman, Calibri, Arial) and 1,5 line spacing. Your assignment can be written in English or Norwegian.

EXAM Evaluation criteria

All two assignments should be completed for the exam to pass.

Furthermore, to receive a passing grade the exam should:

- demonstrate understanding of the difference between qualitative and quantitative methods
- demonstrate understanding of concepts related to methodology
- demonstrate the ability to develop a research question and outline how this question can be addressed through empirical research