

Doctoral programme The humanities and social sciences 2025/26

Schedule of lectures:

METHODOLOGY AND EPISTEMOLOGY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

There will be 10 lectures mostly Mondays 5 PM to 8 PM; lecture room 21.

The planned schedule is as follows:

1. lecture, Monday, 3 November 2025:

VALENTINA HLEBEC: Social science research: an introduction

A basic introduction to social science research will be provided in order to put the lectures that follow in a more general methodological context. Basic paradigms will be presented with the emphasis on their methodological aspects, followed by characteristics of research designs and a brief overview of sampling strategies in qualitative and quantitative research.

Neuman, W. L. 2006. Social research methods: qualitative and quantitative approaches. Boston: Pearson. (Chapters 4, 6 and 8: The meanings of methodology, Strategies of research design, Qualitative and Quantitative sampling)

2. lecture, Monday, 10 November 2025:

FRANC MALI: Epistemology of social sciences

There will be presented two basic approaches to the epistemic structure and »general methodology« of social science knowledge: naturalistic methodology and hermeneutic methodology. The first approach is based on the category of »scientific explanation« (Erklärung), the second approach is based on the category of »scientific understanding« (Verstehen). In model of scientific explanation (or prediction), the

social phenomena and events should be comprehend by means of universal laws and initial conditions. This approach is based on the assumption that the basic structure of cognition in all kinds of scientific knowledge (the same in natural as well as in social sciences) are the more or less progressed forms of models of scientific explanations (deductive-nomological, inductive probablistic, funcional-teleological, genetic, analogical models). In the model of scientific understanding, which is based on subjective or objective heremeneutic tradition, the differences between the knowledge structure of social and natural sciences is strongly emphasised. Namely, according to these views »difference specific« of cognition in social sciences should be to comprehend the meaning (Sinn) of thought and actions of individual and collective social actors. In the lecture, there will be given deep insight in the origins, forms, recent and future perspectives of both epistemological and methodological »pools« in social sciences, i.e. hermeneutic understanding and naturalistic explanation.

The recommended literature for reading:

Mali, Franc. 2006. Epistemologija družbenih ved, Ljubljana: Založba FDV.

Hollis, Martin. 1994. The philosophy of social science, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

della Porta, Donatella and Keating, Michael (ed.). 2008. Approaches and Methodologies in the Social Sciences (Part I: Epistemology and philosophy of the social sciences, pp. 17-162). Cambridge University Press.

3. lecture, Monday, 17 November 2025:

VALENTINA HLEBEC: Mixed methods research

Combining or mixing quantitative and qualitative research methods has become an advanced research practice when conceptualizing complex research questions and designing research procedures. The purpose of the lecture is to present theoretical and practical issues in designing mixed research projects. We will focus on possible research designs and their components, as well as advantages and disadvantages. Especially, we will address validity and reliability of such designs.

Creswell, J. W., Plano Clark, V. L. 2018. Designing and conducting mixed methods research. London: Sage. Third Edition.

Neuman, W. L. 2006. Social research methods: qualitative and quantitative approaches. Boston: Pearson.

4. lecture, Monday, 24 November 2025:

TINA KOGOVŠEK: Measurement

The lecture covers the three basic steps in quantitative measurement process (conceptualization, operationalization and measurement). Measurement quality is defined in terms of reliability and validity and different ways of their estimation are introduced.

In Slovene:

Ferligoj, A., Leskošek, K. and Kogovšek, T. 1995. Zanesljivost in veljavnost merjenja. Metodološki zvezki, 11. Ljubljana: FDV

OR

In English:

Carmines, E.G. and Zeller, R.A. 1979. Reliability and Validity Assessment. London: Sage.

Bohrnstedt, G.W. 2010. Measurement models for survey research. In: P.V. Marsden and J.D. Wright (Eds.): Handbook of Survey Research. Bingley: Emerald, 347-404.

5. lecture, Monday, 1 December 2025:

KATJA LOZAR MANFREDA: Methodological issues in survey research and web survey methodology

The lecture gives an overview of methodological issues in survey data collection, that is collection of data using standardized questionnaires on larger samples from target populations. We focus on the theory of survey errors (sampling, nonresponse, coverage, measurement) and Examples of studying survey errors in web surveys are given. In the second part of the lecture, two salient issues in survey methodology are presented: the problem of non-probability samples in surveys and eventual replacement of survey by big data.

Callegaro, M. , Lozar Manfreda, K., Vehovar, V. 2015. Web survey methodology. London: Sage. Available: <https://study.sagepub.com/web-survey-methodology> .

Groves et al. 2009. Survey Methodology. Hoboken, New Jersey: Wiley. Available in library and in Zebra.

Baker et al. (2013): Report of the AAPOR Task Force on non-probability sampling. AAPOR. Available: https://aapor.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/NPS_TF_Report_Final_7_revised_FNL_6_22_13-2.pdf

Couper, M. P. (2013). Is the Sky Falling? New Technology, Changing Media, and the Future of Surveys. Survey Research Methods, 7(3), 145–156. Available: <https://doi.org/10.18148/srm/2013.v7i3.5751>.

Couper, Mick (2014). What big data may mean for surveys. Proceedings of Statistics Canada's 2014 Int. Symp. Methodol. Issues. Available: www.statcan.gc.ca/eng/conferences/symposium2014/program/14272-eng.pdf .

6. lecture, Monday, 8 December 2025:

ILIJA TOMANIĆ TRIVUNDŽA: (Visual) content analysis

Content analysis is increasingly popular method for systematic analysis of mediated communication and is widely applied to traditional and social media. The lecture offers an introduction to the method and will focus on multimodality of mediated messages. This focus on the multimodality, particularly on inclusion of systematic analysis of visual material such as photographs is particularly important since the analysis of the visual modality of communication remains the blind spot of many academic disciplines. The lecture will practical exercise to demonstrate the challenges and limitations of coding.

Krippendorff, Klaus. 2019. Content Analysis: An Introduction to Its Methodology. London: Sage. Chapters 4-7.

Kuckartz, Udo and Stefan Rädiker. 2023. Qualitative Content Analysis: Methods, Practice and Software. London: Sage. Chapters 4-7.

Luc Pauwels and Dawn Mannay. 2020. The SAGE Handbook of Visual Research Methods (Second Edition). London: Sage. Chapter 22.

Riffe, Daniel, Stephen Lacy, Brendan R. Watson, and Jennette Lovejoy. 2025. Analyzing Media Messages: Using Quantitative Content Analysis in Research (Fifth Edition). Routledge. New York: Routledge. Chapters 3, 6-7.

7. lecture, Monday, 15 December 2025:

KATJA LOZAR MANFREDA: Introductory statistics

The lecture is a summary of key ideas and principles of the collection, display, and analysis of data in social sciences to guide you in making valid and appropriate conclusions about the world. It will include topics like: summary statistics and graphical displays for a single categorical or quantitative variable and for relationships between two variables, sampling distributions, confidence intervals for proportions and means, tests of significance, power and sample size estimation for proportions and means, basic bivariate analysis. In the lecture we will not teach you how to do the mentioned analysis, but rather present (and remind) you of a spectrum of basic data analysis techniques that any quantitative approach to data should include.

In English:

Agresti, A. et al. 2018. Statistics. The art and Science of Learning from Data. Harlow etc.: Pearson. 4th Edition.

OR

Wonnacott T. H., Wonnacott R. J. 1990. Introductory Statistics. New York: Wiley.

Or any other book on statistics that includes descriptive statistics (including correlation) and inference (confidence intervals and hypothesis testing).

In Slovene:

Ferligoj, A., Lozar Manfreda, K., Žiberna, A. 2018. Osnove statistike na prosojnicah: študijsko gradivo pri predmetu Statistika. Ljubljana: Fakulteta za družbene vede. Available in Zebra.

8. lecture, Monday, 5 January 2026:

ALEŠ ŽIBERNA: Multivariate analysis

Presentation of basic multivariate methods, incorporated in mayor statistical packages (eg. SPSS, SAS, STATISTICA, R). The following topics are covered in greater detail: Cluster analysis, Principal components analysis, Factor analysis, Linear regression analysis.

The two suggested books are partly overlapping. I suggest using the first book (Tabachnick, and Fidell, 2013) for everything but clustering and the second book

(Johnson and Wichern, 2007) for clustering, as this second one is a bit more demanding in the sections for other methods. Any book on Multivariate analysis covering the methods discussed should do.

Tabachnick, B.G. and Fidell, L.S. 2013. Using Multivariate Statistics. Pearson/Allyn & Bacon., Boston. (6th edition).

Chapters:

- 1-4: Introduction/refreshments if needed
- 5: Multiple regression
- 13: Principal Components and Factor Analysis

Johnson, R.A. and Wichern, D.W. 2007. Applied Multivariate Statistical Analysis. New Jersey: Prentice Hall, (6th edition).

Chapters:

- 7: Multivariate Linear Regression Models (7.1 – 7.8)
- 8: Principal components
- 9: Factor Analysis and Inference for Structured Covariance matrices.
- 12: Clustering, Distance methods and Ordination (12.1 – 12.4)

9. lecture, Monday, 12 January 2026:

LUKA KRONEGGER: Social network analysis

Basic topics of social network analysis are discussed: types of networks, size and density, network visualization, basic notions of graph theory, centrality measures, cohesion, 1-mode and 2-mode networks, signed networks, blockmodeling.

Literature:

Nooy, W., Mrvar, A., and Batagelj, V. 2018. Exploratory Social Network Analysis with Pajek: Revised and Expanded Edition for Updated Software. Third Edition. New York: Cambridge University Press.

10. lecture, Monday, 19 January 2026:

VALENTINA HLEBEC: Introduction to qualitative methods

The lecture covers the characteristics, advantages and disadvantages of the most common qualitative methods, such as participant observation, interviews, focus groups, case studies, archival data and visual methods. Some basic concepts of data quality evaluation in qualitative research are also covered.

Mesec, B. 1998. Uvod v kvalitativno raziskovanje v socialnem delu. Ljubljana: Visoka šola za socialno delo. str.

Neuman, L. 2003. *Social Research Methods*. Boston: Allyn & Bacon. 390-401 (chapter *Field Research*).