**SCHOOL OF
ECONOMICS AND
MANAGEMENT**

Department of Informatics

# EIN001F, Research in Information Systems and Informatics, 7.5 credits

*Forskning i informationssystem och informatik, 7,5 hp*

*Third Cycle/Forskarutbildningsnivå*

## Details of approval

The syllabus was approved by The Board of the Department of Informatics on 2020-09-09. The syllabus applies from spring semester 2021.

## General information

The course EIN001F is a course in Informatics at the third-cycle level.

*Language of instruction:* English

*Main field of studies:* Informatics

## Learning outcomes

The course focuses on how different approaches, methodologies, and methods can be used in information systems research and introduces the students to the scholarly literature in information systems. The course provides the students with an overview of key areas in information systems research, and how different approaches methodologies, and methods are used. The course also supports the students in their development of a scholarly understanding of the fundamental issues and problems in theory building, theory testing, and theory use in information systems research.

**Knowledge and understanding**

For a pass on the course, the PhD student shall demonstrate knowledge and understanding of

- the characteristics of information systems as an academic discipline, its origins and discourse

- the use of theories in information systems research

- the use of methodological approaches in information systems research

**Competence and skills**

For a pass on the course, the PhD student shall demonstrate competence and skills in

- choices and use of theories in their own dissertation work

- choices and use of methodological approaches in their own dissertation work

**Judgement and approach**

For a pass on the course, the PhD student shall demonstrate the ability to

- independently and critically assess the use of theories within information systems research

- independently and critically assess the use of methods within information systems research

- critically discuss central issues in research in information systems and informatics in an informed way and convey this knowledge to others interested in the topic

## Course background

The academic discipline of information systems is defined as the study of "the effective design, delivery, use and impact of information [and communication] technologies in organizations and society." (Avison & Fitzgerald, 2003). The international academic discipline of information systems was founded in the 1960s under the label of management information systems and is continuously emerging along with the development of information technology (Hirschheim & Klein, 2012). The discipline employs a diversity of methodological approaches to empirical research, as well as theories and models, which can be developed within the discipline, but also adapted from reference disciplines. The discipline of information systems is in a Swedish context also called informatics.

This PhD course includes classic articles covering the historical development of information systems as a discipline, the use of theories within the discipline and the use of research approaches in information systems.

## Course content

The course will be structured around main themes in the literature. These include the following:

- The characteristics of international academic information systems research
- The historical evolution of information systems research
- Theories frequently used in information systems research
- Theory testing and theory building in information systems research
- Rigor and relevance
- Qualitative approaches, methodologies and methods within information systems research

- Selecting and combining different approaches, methodologies and methods
- Social science and engaged scholarship

## Course design

The course will take place over eight course days organized as two-day seminars, held about one month apart. The first three two-day sessions focus on a specific theme:

- Towards an understanding of information systems research (theme I)
- Use of theories, theory building, and theory testing in information systems research (theme II)
- Information systems research approaches and methodologies (theme III)

The course participants are expected to read the articles listed for each theme before the seminars in order to be prepared to present and discuss the contents of the article. During theme II, the course participants are expected to present one frequently used theory in information systems research based on seminal articles of that theory.

The course will end with a seminar where publishable papers based on the content of the course are presented and discussed.

## Assessment

Assessment will be done along several dimensions corresponding to the deliverables of the course. This includes the following:

- Active participation in the discussions and presentations of the four course seminars.

- The writing of three position papers of three pages (single-authored) each representing the three themes of the course.

- The writing and presentation of a publishable article of at least six pages (single-authored or co-authored) based on the course themes as well as an opposition on another PhD candidates' similar article.

## Credits

Grades are Pass or Fail.

## Entry requirements

PhD students accepted to the PhD programme in Informatics or an adjacent subject are eligible for the course.

## Academic integrity

The University views plagiarism very seriously, and will take disciplinary actions against students for any kind of attempted malpractice in examinations and

assessments. The penalty that may be imposed for this, and other unfair practice in examinations or assessments, includes suspension from the University.

## Course literature

See separate literature list.