

## Guidelines for PhD Seminars at the Department of Sociology of Law, Lund University.

In accordance with "Policies for the doctoral program in sociology of law, 2009-08-24" the PhD Candidate shall hold at least three doctoral seminars during the period of education; start-up seminar, mid seminar and final seminar. All PhD Candidates shall take part in seminars.

Participation and presentation in seminars is a very important part of the PhD education. To fully reach the learning outcomes formulated in the syllabus for PhD Studies in Sociology of law, seminars are an indispensable part. In particular the following learning outcomes are of high relevance in relation to the three types of seminars:

- demonstrate an ability to identify and formulate issues, critically, independently and creatively, and proceeding with scientific precision, and to plan and, using appropriate methods, conduct research and other advanced tasks within specified time limits, and to scrutinize and evaluate such work.
- demonstrate an ability to present and discuss research and research results with authority, in dialogue with the scholarly community and society in general, orally and in writing, in both national and international contexts.
- demonstrate a potential to contribute to the development of society and support other people's learning, both in the field of research and education and in other advanced professional contexts.

As for content, procedure and more specific learning outcomes of these seminars, the following guidelines are formulated.

### **Start-up seminars.**

The start-up seminar shall normally take place during the semester when the candidate is admitted.

*Content:* The candidate shall present a written research plan comprising the outline of the PhD project, to be sent out by e-mail at the latest one week beforehand. The plan shall give a good picture of the research problem, prior research in the field, research questions and aims, theoretical and methodological considerations, indication of empirical materials and a time plan.

*Procedure:* Two discussants shall be appointed, one senior researcher from the unit, or external, and one PhD Candidate. Seminars shall be chaired by the Director of PhD Studies or by one of the supervisors. First the author makes a shorter presentation and then the discussants will present their comments, preferably starting with the PhD candidate.

Discussants shall focus on presented matters related to the early decisions that have to be taken by the author in relation to the understanding of the research problem, formulation of research questions and aims, choice of theories and methodological strategies. The discussants shall also reflect on the feasibility of the proposed research and alternative theoretical and methodological strategies. Discussants shall also reflect on the choice between monograph and compilation forms of thesis.

*Specific learning outcomes:* The presenting and commentary PhD candidates, as well as the other participating candidates, shall by the seminar deepen their understanding of the early stages of the research process, the importance of making scientifically motivated decisions and not least improving their capability of academic reasoning and to raise scientifically grounded critique on the one hand, and defending a taken stand-point on the other.

### **Mid seminars.**

The mid seminar shall take place during the fourth or fifth semester after the candidate was admitted.

*Content:* The candidate shall present a written text comprising of the formulated research questions, one theoretical chapter and/or one chapter presenting empirical findings and analysis, alternatively one article in a compilation thesis. This text that could be structured in another way than by chapters or articles, shall indicate the “red thread” in the thesis that is how research questions are investigated and analysed with the help of theoretical framework and methodological tools. This paper shall be sent out by e-mail at the latest one week beforehand.

*Procedure:* Two discussants shall be appointed, one senior researcher from the unit, or external, and one PhD Candidate. Seminars shall be chaired by the Director of PhD Studies or by one of the supervisors. First the author makes a shorter presentation and then the discussants will present their comments, preferably starting with the PhD candidate.

Discussants shall focus on the “red thread” in the dissertation work and on weaknesses and strengths in terms of the use of theories and methods to make analysis and draw conclusions in line with the formulated research questions.

*Specific learning outcomes:* The presenting and commentary PhD candidates, as well as the other participating candidates, shall by the seminar deepen their understanding and knowledge of the importance of consistency between research questions, theory, methodology and analysis.

### **Final seminars.**

The final seminar shall take place during the seventh or eighth semester after the candidate was admitted.

*Content:* The candidate shall present the major part of the thesis, alternatively the major part of the articles and a draft of the general introductory thesis frame (GITF) (in Swedish: "kappan"), which clarifies the accumulated scientific contribution of the articles. This material shall be sent out by e-mail at the latest two weeks beforehand.

*Procedure:* One external discussant shall be appointed. The discussant shall be very well acquainted with the specific thesis topic. Seminars shall be chaired by the Director of PhD Studies or by one of the supervisors. The discussant shall start with a brief summary of the thesis and then examine the text presenting both weaknesses and strengths in a dialog with the author in line with the requirements for a PhD thesis in Sociology of law as formulated in the syllabus.

*Specific learning outcomes:* The presenting and commentary PhD candidates, as well as the other participating candidates, shall by the seminar deepen their understanding and knowledge of the importance of consistency between research questions, theory, methodology and analysis in general and the scientific requirements for a successful fulfilment of PhD education in particular.

The final seminar shall also make the candidates prepared for the final defence of the thesis.