

<b>MPHN40</b>	<b>Thesis course</b>	<b>30 ECTS</b>
<b>Year 21/22</b>	<b>Course start: 2022-01-17</b>	<b>Course end: 2022-06-05</b>
	<b>Study rate 100%</b>	
Course leader(s)	Anette Agardh, Benedict Oppong Asamoah	
Examiner	Anette Agardh	

## The course

Number of students	At start: 44	At the end: 34
Examination module (name, credits)	Passed at first attempt	Passed later
1301 Uppsats	31	
1302 Försvar	31	
1303 Opposition	31	
1304 Seminarier	31	
Number of other teachers involved:	Of which professors, readers (docent), holding PhD, PhD students, other, and non LU or RS employed.	
	Of which were core course conveners, guest lecturer, assistants, or other minor contributors.	
It was easy to find competent teachers	If no, in what field of knowledge was it hard to find teachers? Why?	
<input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no		
Short description of the course:		
<p>The aim of the thesis course is to provide students with a deeper understanding of a specific topic within the field of public health, increased experience concerning research methodology, and increased knowledge concerning the preparation of a scientific manuscript, i.e., the master's thesis. The student is expected to carry out his/her own (i.e. the work should be individual and is not possible to do in a group) supervised scientific project. The student develops a project plan (as a basis for the thesis work), which must be approved by the course leaders. The project can be carried out in Sweden or abroad. The thesis is presented and defended orally; including a critical review and opposition on a fellow student's thesis project at a presentation seminar, and participation at other presentation seminars.</p>		
Pedagogic model(s) used in the course (exemplify how you work):		
<p>The thesis course is scheduled for the final semester (fourth semester) of the MPH studies. However preparation begins earlier in semester 2. Students are introduced to the thesis course and the thesis process, including identification of thesis ideas, supervision and planning for the actual thesis in semester 2, after which they are invited for a one-on-one thesis idea discussion meetings with the course leaders or a teacher in the MPH programme. The process continues follow ups and allocation of supervisors in semester 3. Students are expected to hand in a thesis project plan which is approved by the course leaders in semester 3. Prior to the thesis work, there is an applied methods course which is expected to support students in learning applicable public health research methods that they intend to use in thesis. Upon the start of the thesis course, the students independently carry out the thesis work under the supervision of a supervisor, who must be a qualified researcher.</p>		
Major changes from last year:		

## Summary of course quality evaluation

### Results – focus on strengths and weaknesses

The percentage of students who complete and defend their thesis in the first thesis examination seminar at the end of the spring semester has increased, so has the number of students who pass on first attempt. There are some challenges with some students getting supervisors in time. Some of the students report feeling a bit alone without contact with the other students during the actual thesis writing process.

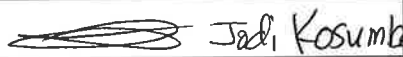

### Possible explanations

The increase in the number of students who complete and successfully defend their thesis in the spring semester is partly due to the changes made with the thesis preparation process since about two years ago. The thesis meetings prior to the last two years begun in semester three and submission of the project plan was scheduled after the start of the thesis course. This implied a shorter planning time for the thesis and somehow made it challenging get available supervisors as most might have filled their schedules for the current semester. However, after replanning the course and scheduling the introduction earlier in semester 2, positive improvements have been realised. Part of the challenge for the students to get suitable supervisors has to do with access to data for the thesis and where students would like to collect their own data, there is also the challenge of ethical clearance for some students.

### Suggestions of measures and further development

For the 2023 thesis course, as part of the preparation process, the course team asked teachers within the MPH programme and former supervisors from the medical faculty to come up with projects that could be advertised for students who might be interested in doing their thesis within such projects. That is part of the plan to bridge the gap in students access to data and also to maximize the use of resources available within the faculty. There were few projects advertised within this frame. Although not enough, we plan to find ways to improve the means to maximise available resources within the MPH programme, medical faculty and associated networks. For Spring 2023, the thesis course team is also planning to facilitate the platforms at CRC (such as booking group rooms for students) to offer students who will want to engage with their colleagues during the thesis to do so with ease. Regarding ethical clearance for the MPH thesis, the university does demand ethical clearance for master thesis. However, we are also aware that in certain situations some students may not be able to do their thesis without that. Thus, there still could be an opportunity to do so but the MPH programme does not fund the application for ethical clearance. We encourage students to have this discussion with supervisors and if they both agree to apply for ethical clearance, they would have to take on the responsibility for it and the supervisor/project lead would have to fund it.

## Signatures

Date: 22/09/2022	Place:
Course leader	Student representative 
Signature 	Signature
Elucidation Anette Agardh	Elucidation

Appendix: Course evaluation