

## **STV4911 (master thesis design) – Evaluation report**

STV4911 was offered for the first time the autumn of 2023 and replaces the old design seminar.

The course was discussed during the evaluation meeting with student representatives and in a meeting in the methods section before Christmas. Moreover, several seminar leaders have sent input.

In general, we conclude that the change of model has been a success:

- Students appreciate memo submission system, to receive written comments, and the workshop model.
- We offered much more and tailored instruction on how to develop a design and plan than before – from development of a good research question and use of theory to practical advice for different types of studies.
- We also offered lectures also for those who don't do empirical studies (mainly theoretical work).
- We offered sessions on project management, data protection and data management.

More critical remarks are:

- Discussion about the content of some lectures, the formal requirements, the number of memos and relationship with supervisor.
- General problem: great variation in students' progress when they start. What they need differ significantly. The most advanced need perhaps mostly time alone and in the seminar group, those struggling and need support get frustrated by the strong methods focus.

Suggestions to consider:

- Make sure the title of the lecture is informative, so students know exactly what to expect.
- Should we consider in the future to tailoring what we offer to students with different needs even further? E.g., offer lecture videos and handouts, and then fewer interactive plenary sessions with group work?
- Can we clarify that it's fine to drop some plenary sessions if advanced, but also let students know they do not necessarily know what's best for them – e.g., they might think they have a good RQ, but they don't.
- Should we “enforce” selection of topic in spring semester? Integrate it in the classes during spring and have an early deadline?
- Change assessments in the seminars. Instead of two memos (every second week) and the final research proposal, reduce to one memo and the final research proposal.