METHODS IN MIDDLE EASTERN STUDIES
CMEN20

Course description

This course aims to provide a comprehensive overview of foundational social scientific research theories and procedures, research methodologies, and research proposal writing. Through a combination of lectures, seminars, workshops, presentations and written assignments, students will acquire theoretical knowledge and applied practical skills in various aspects of the research process, from reflection, planning and outline, to data collection, processing, analysing, and reporting of research. Emphasis will be placed on understanding how various methodological perspectives apply to contemporary Middle Eastern studies.

The course begins with an introduction to research design, encompassing both qualitative and quantitative research methods and their uses, seen in relation to the question of validity. Research techniques necessary for data collection and analyses of interviews, surveys, observation, and database material will be taught in a combination of seminars and workshops. Development of the skills required for both written and oral dissemination of results is also a key feature of the course. Assessment for the course will be based on a combination of in-class and take-home assignments, as well as the final research proposal. The methods course is not least designed to prepare students for their master’s thesis project. In the individual research proposal assignment, which concludes the course, students are encouraged to engage with their third semester project ideas. The final assignment consists of a written research proposal, with an emphasis on methodological reflection.