



DEPARTMENT OF LEARNING, INFORMATICS, MANAGEMENT AND ETHICS

C7F2964, Medical Research Ethics, 1.5 credits (hec)

Medicinsk forskningsetik, 1,5 högskolepoäng

Third-cycle level / Forskarnivå

Approval

This syllabus was approved by The Committee for Doctoral Education on 2023-11-10, and was last revised on 2025-09-23. The revised course syllabus is valid from spring semester 2026.

Responsible department

Department of Learning, informatics, Management and Ethics, Faculty of Medicine

Prerequisite courses, or equivalent

No prerequisite courses, or equivalent, demanded for this course.

Purpose & Intended learning outcomes

Purpose

The objective of this course is for the doctoral student to:

- understand central research ethical theories, principles and guidelines, to gain the possibility to reflect over ethical aspects of his or her own research
- understand what is good research and the boundaries for what is ethically unacceptable research with regards to humans and animals, and to the researcher's own academic integrity
- develop a research ethical approach within his or her own research, to others' research and to society

Intended learning outcomes

After having completed the course, the doctoral student should be able to:

- give an account of research ethical theories, principles, and, to some extent, guidelines
- account for common problems that arise in the area of research ethics
- identify, analyze, and discuss research ethical issues and conflicts

- conduct a research ethical argumentation for or against a matter

Course content

- Central research ethical principles, theories and arguments
- Central philosophy of science - concepts and positions, and its relevance to research ethics
- Research on humans, including informed consent and its components
- Animal research ethics, including arguments for and against using animals for research purposes, and the three R's.
- Ethical reviews and research ethical guidelines, such as the Helsinki Declaration
- Good research practice and deviations from good research practice within research, for example issues concerning fabricated data, fraud and plagiarism, and handling of authorship in scientific writing
- Conflicts of interest in research, such as bias and sponsorship

Forms of teaching and learning

Lectures, group work and general discussions.

Language of instruction

The course is given in English

Grading scale

Pass (G) /Fail (U)

Compulsory components & forms of assessment

Compulsory components

Attendance is mandatory for the group work and general discussions. If the student is absent, he or she can to some extent compensate by handing in written answers concerning the cases that have been discussed.

Forms of assessment

The doctoral student writes an essay on a research ethical theme, in relation to all intended learning outcomes, preferably related to his or her own research. A small number of students get the opportunity to orally present an ethical reflection concerning their research in front of the whole group.

Course literature

Mandatory literature:

- Johansson I och Lynöe N. Medicine and philosophy. A Twenty-First Century Introduction. Ontos Verlag, Frankfurt 2008.

- Declaration of Helsinki 2013: <https://www.wma.net/what-we-do/medical-ethics/declaration-of-helsinki/>

Recommended literature:

- Beauchamp, T. L., & Childress, J. F., *Principles of Biomedical Ethics*. New York, Oxford University Press, (2012)
- Helgesson, G., *Forskningsetik*. Lund, Studentlitteratur, (2015). Not available in English.
- The Swedish Ethical Review Authority: <https://etikprovningsmyndigheten.se/en/>
- Good research practice. Vetenskapsrådets reports 2024, ISBN 978-91-89845-30-5 <https://www.vr.se/english/analysis/reports/our-reports/2025-07-03-good-research-practice-2024.html> Swedish Research Council.