

Lecture 1 - August 29th

First hour: Into to the course

From 14:50 – 16:00: Guest lecture Knut Hegna, Senior academic librarian, gives a lecture on “How does an article take form? – approaching a topic, searching for sources”.

Practicalities of the course:

Lectures: Wednesdays 14:15 - 16 (sometimes 17.00) in room 3A (IFI).

Discussions and group work.

Presentation of articles, which must be accepted in order to take the exam.

One group assignment, which must be submitted and accepted in order to take the exam.

One group assignment must be submitted and accepted before December 1st. The grades in the course will be based on a three-hour written exam held on December 12th.

Exam information

Each student is required to write an individual written report. Graded marks.

Into to each other:

Presentations of students. Names.

Start thinking about the formation of groups (initially for discussions and support, and presentation of papers, later for a collaborative research project). Ideal size 3-5 persons.

The course will take you through the following issues and topics:

- * Qualitative versus quantitative research methods (the course is about qualitative research)
- * Different philosophical assumptions, often labeled: positivist, interpretivist and critical research paradigms (we will mainly use texts from the interpretivist tradition)
- * Different types of qualitative research: Case study, ethnography, action research, ethnomethodology, grounded theory, discourse/conversation analysis (we will focus on case studies and action research drawing on ethnographic methods).
- *Methods for data collection: Interviews, observations (passive, participant), audio recording, video recording, text analysis, content analysis from media.

We will learn about different types of research (as sketched above), how to do it yourself (assignments are central for learning), and how to analyze and write up your findings. The course has one course book (Silverman), which is a very practical book, in addition we will work with a number of articles, both discussing methodological issues and as exemplars of these different types of studies.

Homework for Sept. 5th:

- * Read chapter 1 and 2 in Silverman (the course book): compare his separation into three types with Myers and Avisons' typology.
- * Read Myers and Avison, Introduction chapter (handed out at first lecture). Look up, look through and bookmark the ISworld section on qualitative research referred to.
- * Locate the Markus (1983) paper: Go to the Library's web pages, select X-port and choose "search for e-journal". Write "Communications of the ACM", follow the link, locate volume 26, no 6 (June 1983), and download/print the paper. Read at least three times and work with it as follows:
 - In the first reading: look up words you don't know and try to get the basic point ("message") of the paper. What is she actually saying here?
 - In your second reading: describe *how* she says that, i.e. the way the article is structured in order to get that message across to the readers. How are the various theories being positioned as similar or different? How is she using the empirical material (case)? What kind of empirical material is she drawing upon? How does she use "the evidence"?
 - When reading for the third time, try to answer these questions: on what basis is she making any claims? What are her basic assumptions about how knowledge is generated? Would you group this work as a positivist, interpretive or critical study? Justify your choice.

Readings for next week:

- * Silverman chapter 1 + 2
- * Myers, M.D., and Avison, D.: An Introduction to Qualitative Research in Information Systems, 2002. Sage. Chap. 1 in Myers and Avison (eds) "Qualitative Research in Information Systems".
- * M. Lynne Markus: *Power, Politics, and MIS Implementation*.