

AISSR PhD Courses Brochure
2025-2026
Semester II

Amsterdam Institute for Social Science Research (AISSR)
Graduate School of Social Sciences (GSSS)

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Introduction

Dear PhDs,

In this brochure you can find all courses open to AISSR PhD candidates in the second semester of the academic year 2025-2026.

The AISSR and the Graduate School of Social Sciences (GSSS) offer excellent academic training in an international setting. The training programme includes courses and workshops on the knowledge and skills required to successfully complete a PhD in the social sciences. It is designed to enable PhD students to hone specific expertise as well as engage in interdisciplinary debates.

You can select from over thirty courses and various workshops.

In order to be able to offer a PhD training programme that works for both PhDs and course lecturers, there are some general rules to follow:

- The AISSR introductory course is mandatory for all PhDs;
- All courses are on site; remote participation is not possible;
- You need to consult with your supervisor before signing up to a course;
- Registration implies a commitment to **full** participation: it is not possible to select sessions or skip assignments;
- Registration will be final after our confirmation that you can enroll in the course.

Registration

When registering please provide us with:

- Name:
- Supervisor(s):
- Programme group:
- Title of your research project:
- Starting date of your PhD

You can register for courses by sending an email to aissr@uva.nl (please note: for the PhD Introductory Course, please send an email to Simon.Cijsouw).

We hope you are enthusiastic about the courses we organise this year and look forward to receiving your registration requests.

With best wishes,

Justus Uitermark, AISSR Academic Director

Hebe Verrest, Director of the Graduate School of Social Sciences

Han Bakker, AISSR Office Manager

Simon Cijsouw, AISSR PhD Coordinator

And other members of the AISSR Educational Committee

Regular Courses offered by the AISSR

AISSR PhD Introductory Course

Your PhD training at the AISSR starts with the **mandatory** PhD Introductory Course. This course aims to build scientific awareness and integrity, address PhD-related issues, and stimulate discussion about academic culture, careers and societal relevance. The format of this course will be as interactive as possible (on the basis of short weekly assignments and assigned readings) in which we will collaboratively discuss some main elements of your starting research projects.

The AISSR unites social science research and different disciplines. As a multi-disciplinary institute, we foster interdisciplinary dialogue. As scholars, we come from different disciplinary and cultural backgrounds. The aim of this course is to encourage curiosity towards each other's projects and stimulate conversations and mutual assistance in navigating academia in a global world.

The course consists of 8 sessions with different topics, such as writing your 8th-month paper, academic integrity, research data management and societal impact.

The course is coordinated by Dr Fenne Pinkster and guest lecturers.

For whom?

This course is mandatory for all PhD candidates in Year 1.

More information on the content, locations and reading material will be available on Canvas.

Course dates and time

CLASS	DATES	TIME	ROOM
Introduction	Monday 2 March	15.00 – 17.00	TBA on Canvas
Ethical Reflection	Monday 9 March	15.00 – 17.00	TBA on Canvas
8-Month Paper	Monday 16 March	15.00 – 17.00	TBA on Canvas
Research Data Management	Monday 23 March	15.00 – 17.00	TBA on Canvas
Publishing	Monday 30 March	15.00 – 17.00	TBA on Canvas
Societal Impact	Monday 13 April	15.00 – 17.00	TBA on Canvas
Managing Your Project & Supervisors	Monday 20 April	15.00 – 17.00	TBA on Canvas
Research Integrity	Monday 11 May	15.00 – 17.00	TBA on Canvas

Workload

2 ECTS

Questions

If you have any questions, please contact [Simon Cijssouw](#)

Fundamentals of English Academic Writing

A short practical course for people beginning their research. This course focuses on the fundamentals of academic writing, looking at articles, theses, and at argument, structure, style, paragraphing, writing for different audiences and relevant grammar. This course is taught by Amal Chatterjee MLitt MA and corresponds to 1 ECTS.

Course dates and time

DATES	TIME	ROOMS
Tuesday 10 February	14.00-17.00	REC-E0.07
Tuesday 17 February	14.00-17.00	REC-JK1.26

There will be a minimum of 5 course participants.

Workload

1 ECTS

Writing up Research: English Academic Writing

(Semester I & II)

The course focuses on preparing participants to write up fieldwork, write articles for publication and to write a PhD thesis. It covers aspects of structure, the conventions of academic writing, the differences between writing for publication, for dissertations, and for information purposes (lay readers, popular science writing), grammar, and provides practical guidance on error correction. The course is taught by Amal Chatterjee MLitt MA and corresponds to 3 ECTS.

Course dates and time

DATES	TIME	ROOMS
Thursday 5 February	10.00-15.30	REC-B3.11
Thursday 12 February	10.00-15.30	REC-GS.02
Thursday 19 February	11.00-16.30	REC-E0.09
Thursday 5 March	10.00-15.30	REC-B8.09M
Thursday 19 March	Tutorials; 10.00-15.30	REC-B8.09M
Friday 20 March	Tutorials; 10.00-15.30	REC-B8.09M

There will be a minimum of 5 course participants.

Workload

3 ECTS

Ethnographic Research Practices (Beginners)

This course aims to familiarize PhDs having little to no fieldwork experience, with ethnographic research practices.

The following questions will be addressed:

- What is special about ethnography as a research practice, methodologically, epistemologically, and ethically?
- How (by which methods) are ethnographic data “collected” and analysed? (the use of the double quotation marks is quite deliberate and will become evident in the course)
- What are the problems of writing up ethnographic research, and which styles and modes of writing have been practiced to tackle these problems?

The course is taught by prof. dr. Ashley Mears of Sociology and corresponds to 12 ECTS.

Course dates and time

DATES	TIME	ROOMS
Friday 9 January	9.00-12.00	REC-A1.07
Friday 16 January	9.00-12.00	REC-A1.07
Friday 23 January	9.00-12.00	REC-A1.07
Friday 30 January	9.00-12.00	REC-A1.07
Friday 6 February	9.00-12.00	REC-B3.11
Friday 13 February	9.00-12.00	REC-B3.11
Friday 20 February	9.00-12.00	REC-C2.05
Friday 27 February	9.00-12.00	REC-C2.06

Workload

12 ECTS

Ethnographic Methods (Advanced)

This advanced course is for PhD students with previous experience in using ethnographic methods (including participant observation, open interviews, and ethnographically analysing other relevant materials). It will concentrate on issues that emerge in everyday research and challenge you to take a next step in your development as a researcher. As a participant you are addressed as an agent of your own learning process and encouraged to explore methods with an eye towards the development of your own PhD project. The teaching is hands-on and includes joint exercises and micro-ethnographies that we will discuss in class. We will cover different ways of conceptualizing and delimiting the field, observing/recording, writing fieldnotes, and turning observations and notes into vignettes.

The course is taught by prof. dr. Rivke Jaffe of Human Geography, Planning and International Development Studies (GPIO) and corresponds to 6 ECTS.

Course dates and time

DATES	TIME	ROOMS
Monday 2 February	10.00-13.00	REC-B3.11
Monday 9 February	10.00-13.00	REC-B3.11
Monday 16 February	10.00-13.00	REC-D3.00
Monday 2 March	10.00-13.00	REC-C2.01
Monday 9 March	10.00-13.00	REC-B1.02
Monday 16 March	10.00-13.00	REC-B1.02

Workload

6 ECTS

Advanced Social Science Theory

One of the hallmarks of the AISSR is a commitment to exploring various epistemological perspectives and fostering conversations among them. This course introduces two such perspectives: positivism and relational social science. The course consists of two modules which are taught by prof. dr. Abbey Steele and prof. dr. Justus Uitermark. Abbey Steele's module delves into the examination of governance and the state through a positivist lens, while Justus Uitermark focuses on classical contributions in relational sociology. Together, these modules assist participants in comprehending and applying diverse modes of theorizing, enabling them to better position their contributions within the literature. We also cover the relationship between theorizing, research design, and methods.

The course is organized in six meetings, divided over two modules. Each meeting consists of an introduction by the lecturer, followed by a close reading of selected texts. Participants prepare weekly discussion sheets for the course. The study load is one day per week. Successful completion of the course will be based on reading, participation in discussions, and the one-page discussion sheets. You are expected to attend all sessions in this course.

The course corresponds to 6 ECTS.

Course dates and time

	DATE & TIME	ROOMS
Session 1 Abbey Steele	10 April 11.00-13.00 hrs	REC-B3.11
Session 2 Abbey Steele	17 April 13.00-15.00 hrs	REC-B3.11
Session 3 Abbey Steele	24 April 11.00-13.00 hrs	REC-B3.11
Session 1 Justus Uitermark	8 May 10.00-12.00 hrs	REC-C2.06
Session 2 Justus Uitermark	22 May 10.00-12.00 hrs	REC-C2.06
Session 3 Justus Uitermark	29 May 10.00-12.00 hrs	REC-C2.06

Workload

6 ECTS

Workshop offered by the Faculty of Social and Behavioural Sciences

'Mastering My PhD' is a programme developed to offer first-year PhD students guidance and support. It is built on a strong combination of knowledge development, self-awareness and practical applicability. We create the space and opportunity to develop specific skills, to increase awareness in personal needs, strengths and challenges and to create a healthy life balance.

By following this programme PhD students will:

- gain self-confidence
- gain academic and didactic skills
- gain personal and professional effectiveness
- fulfill their academic roles with more 'power and pleasure'
- develop transferable skills, proven to be influential during an academic career
- thrive in their PhD trajectory while enjoying a well-balanced life

Each one of the three course days will have its own theme:

1. Mastering my Life and PhD
2. Work-life balance
3. Effective Communication.

Once you are registered, you are expected to join all three days.

Programme and registrations

Dates of the spring programme and Registration link will be published later.

Please do contact the [PhD Coordinator](#) if you would like to register but cannot use the form, then we will ask the workshop organizers to include you on the list of participants.

VU University – GSSS PhD programme

The AISSR has an agreement with the Graduate School of Social Sciences at the VU University. This entails that AISSR PhDs can participate in courses at VU for free.

Please note that this agreement is limited to the VU-GSSS PhD programme and that participation is only possible if space permits (usually there is a maximum of 15 participants in a course; internal VU PhDs get priority over external participants). This means that if you sign up for a course at VU-GSSS you will first obtain a provisory registration. About a week before the start of a course you will get a definite confirmation that you can participate. If you register at a later date it may not be possible to finalize it.

More information about the courses and how to sign up, can be found through [VU website](#).

AISSR PhD Clubs

The AISSR has several clubs for PhDs. These clubs meet to discuss research plans, design, data, manuscripts, etc. They offer a friendly environment in which to give and receive feedback on research, ideas and papers from a group of peers rather than the supervisory team.

At the same time, these clubs offer an opportunity to learn from fellow PhDs about their research projects and to learn to give constructive feedback. PhDs are highly recommended to take part in one of the AISSR PhD clubs. There might not be a PhD club for your research interest, in that case PhDs are encouraged to start their own PhD club. For information please contact the PhD Coordinator [Simon Cijssouw](#). PhD clubs are not necessarily organized along the lines of the programme groups.

Centre for Urban Studies (CUS) PhD club

The Center for Urban Studies PhD Club is an interdisciplinary community for PhD researchers working on urban issues. Our goal is to foster connection and collaboration between students from different academic backgrounds, united through their shared interest in urban topics such as inequalities, transitions, housing, ecology, technology, or policy.

Through bi-monthly events we create a lively space for peer support, discussion, and cross-pollination. We exchange writings and readings, research ideas and approaches, which we discuss alongside practice-oriented interventions. Urban researchers often work with societal actors, so we seek to discuss the different tensions and opportunities this brings up via workshops and field visits. This combines with social events that cultivate a support system, to lift each other's each other's scholarly pursuits in urban research.

If you're interested in joining the PhD club, or if you have any questions, please contact [Yannick Drijfhout](#) and [Emma Griffith](#).

Quantitative Research on Social Inequalities (QRSI)

We are currently with more than 10 PhDs from different disciplines, most of us do quantitative research on social inequalities in the broadest sense. This means that we discuss a broad variety of topics, such as inequalities in education systems and the labor market, in family and social network structures, in political attitudes and participation, and inequalities between neighborhoods or other geographical inequalities. Anyone who is interested in these, or related topics is welcome to join us. We meet every second Monday of the month (12.30-14.00). In our meetings, one of us shortly presents ongoing work, the others have read it in advance and give constructive feedback. It is also possible to give a short presentation on a paper idea or draft and discuss it with the other members.

If you're interested in joining the PhD club, or if you have any questions, please contact [Natalie Aerts](#).

UvA Migration Dialogue (Amsterdam Research Centre for Migration)

The UvA Migration Dialogue provides a platform for early career migration researchers of diverse disciplines, backgrounds and research topics.

Doctoral and postdoctoral researchers of UvA at different levels of research and academic career progress are invited to join the community to share knowledge of migration theory and methods and have access to original discussions on conceptual and empirical contributions in migration studies.

Advanced master's students with experience conducting migration-related research projects are also welcome to join the circle.

Together, we scrutinise migration-related contemporary political and socio-economic issues and decolonial and postcolonial inequalities and challenges. We aim to provide a platform for researchers of all backgrounds and identities to explore critical topics at the intersections of migration, governance, race, gender, human rights, and more.

We organise monthly sessions. To become a member of the Migration Dialogue group at UvA and to receive the event announcements, write to us at: migrationdialogue@uva.nl

Fieldwork related PhD clubs (Department of Anthropology)

In the department of Anthropology two PhD Clubs are organised by staff members and the participating PhDs together. The *pre-fieldwork PhD Club* is a place where PhDs share their work in progress and it aims to support PhDs personally as well as in writing the 8-th months paper. The process of the writing; topics related to Anthropological theory; or the upcoming fieldwork will be discussed during the meetings. The post- and in-between fieldwork PhD Club supports PhD candidates who are doing fieldwork or are in the phase of the writing of their PhD dissertation.

Here, topics are discussed that support the work that people are doing, and own work can be shared and discussed. Regularly other staff members join in to guide a meeting on a specific topic of common interest. The two Anthropology Clubs meet on a monthly basis.

Interested in joining? Get in touch with PhD Mentor [Marieke Brand](#).

Disciplinary Research Schools in the Netherlands

Disciplinary national research schools also offer courses that are open to AISSR PhDs.

- **CERES** (International Development) <https://ceresresearchschool.nl/>
- **ICS Graduate School** (Social Science Theory and Methodology) <https://ics-graduateschool.nl/>
- **WTMC** (Science, Technology and Modern Culture) <https://www.wtmc.eu/>
- **NIG** (Netherlands Institute of Governance) <https://www.nigovernance.nl/>
- **NESEA** (Netherlands School of Anthropology) <https://www.universiteitleiden.nl/nesa/about>
- **NETHUR** (Netherlands Graduate School of Urban and Regional Research) <https://nethur.nl/>

EPICUR

PhDs can participate in the free courses offered by EPICUR. View this website for [more information on EPICUR](#). Among the courses they offer, also language trainings can be found (including a course to learn Dutch). In order to register, you need to show a 'proof of enrolment to the university'. If you don't have the proof enrolment, please contact the PhD coordinator for information how to get this or an equivalent document. Other remarks on the enrolment requirements:

- EPICUR asks for a 'transcript of records'. You can use a copy of the grade list of the MA programme you concluded
- Proof of English Proficiency: all UvA PhD students do indeed already meet this requirement, but unfortunately you have to upload something or the system will not accept it. In order to

reduce bureaucracy, PhDs are given the suggestion to simply upload the MA grade list again, or a self-declaration regarding your level of proficiency in academic English

You can find more information on the enrolment requirements in the [guidance note for applications](#)

AISSR Short Intensive Courses

In case you cannot find the course that you are looking for, you might want to create your own 'Short Intensive Course'! Short Intensive Courses (SICs) are initiated, developed and organized by PhD candidates and/or postdocs themselves with support of the AISSR Bureau (travel and hotel expenses for a guest teacher can be reimbursed). The aim of a SIC is to bring PhD candidates and postdocs from various programme groups together to jointly discuss key methodological, theoretical or other academic related work. We are open to receive ideas for SICs and can support you with working out your ideas into a SIC proposal.

Examples of previous SICs include:

- Care, Context, and the Good Life
- Globalisation, Crisis and Insecurity
- Rethinking Norbert Elias
- Migration, Medicine and Reproductive Insecurity
- Visual Methods
- Decision-making under Information Uncertainty, from Perception to Action
- The Body and Technology
- Human Rights: Activism and Site-Specific Research
- The coexistence of the living and the non-living in the city

There are a few requirements for SICs when applying for AISSR funding:

- There needs to be a minimal amount of people participating, at least 6 PhDs or staff members, preferably from different disciplines. The commitment of these people needs to be clearly stated;
- Non-AISSR participants are only allowed when the minimum requirement of 6 AISSR participants is reached. Please note that this is and should be an AISSR activity, so the majority of participants should always be from the AISSR. Costs for non-AISSR PhDs are usually around € 250 depending on SIC and budget;
- If fulfilled, one can get ECTS points for the course. The points will depend on the duration and reading requirements of the SIC. Literature: 10 pages per hour;
- You can submit a proposal for a SIC. This should include structured proposal with education targets, educational tools, methodology, content, participants, budget indication. Proposals may not exceed 2 pages and can be sent to the [AISSR Secretariat](mailto:aissr@uva.nl) (aissr@uva.nl).