

AISSR PhD Courses Brochure 2026-2027

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

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Contact persons:

Simon Cijssouw (s.t.cijssouw@uva.nl) – AISSR PhD Coordinator

Han Bakker (via aissr-fmg@uva.nl) – AISSR Office Manager

Visiting address: Nieuwe Achtergracht 166, 1018 WV Amsterdam

Postal address: AISSR, Postbus 15718, 1001 NE Amsterdam

Tel.: + 31 (0)20 525 2262

Email: aissr-fmg@uva.nl

Website: aissr.uva.nl

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Introduction

Dear PhD student,

In this brochure you can find all courses open to AISSR PhD students.

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 PhD students 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
- Please note: for registering for a GSSS master course your SIS-number is required

You can register for courses by sending an email to aiissr@uva.nl (please note: for the PhD Introductory Course, please send an email to s.t.cijssouw@uva.nl).

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 Cijssouw, AISSR PhD Coordinator

And other members of the AISSR Educational Committee

Regular Courses offered by the AISSR

AISSR PhD Introductory Course

(Semester I & II)

The AISSR introduced a **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. Saskia Bonjour, prof. dr. Kristine Krause and guest lecturers.

For whom?

This course is mandatory for all PhD candidates in Year 1. We encourage PhD candidates that have started in the spring of 2026 to join as well. More information on the content, locations and reading material will be available on Canvas in August.

Course dates and time

CLASS	DATES	TIME	ROOM
1. Introduction	Monday 26 Oct 2026	14.00-16.00h	TBA on Canvas
2. Ethical Reflection	Monday 2 Nov 2026	14.00-16.00h	TBA on Canvas
3. 8-Month Paper	Monday 9 Nov 2026	14.00-16.00h	TBA on Canvas
4. Research Data Management	Monday 16 Nov 2026	14.00-16.00h	TBA on Canvas
5. Publishing	Monday 23 Nov 2026	14.00-16.00h	TBA on Canvas
6. Societal Impact	Monday 30 Nov 2026	14.00-16.00h	TBA on Canvas
7. Research Integrity	Monday 7 Dec 2025	14.00-16.00h	TBA on Canvas
8. Managing your supervisor	Monday 14 Dec 2026	14.00-16.00h	TBA on Canvas

A second group will start in the 2nd semester (February-March 2027).

Workload

2 ECTS

Questions

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

Fundamentals of English Academic Writing

(Semester I)

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 November	10.00-13.00h	REC-L0.01
Tuesday 17 November	10.00-13.00h	REC-C3.04

Workload

1 ECTS

Writing up Research: English Academic Writing

(Semester I)

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 1 October pt. 1	10.00-13.00h	REC-C3.07
Thursday 1 October pt. 2	13.00-15.30h	REC-B2.11
Thursday 8 October pt. 1	10.00-13.00h	REC-JKB.58
Thursday 8 October pt. 2	13.00-15.30h	REC-V1.13
Thursday 15 October	10.00-15.30h	REC-B3.11
Thursday 5 November	9.30-15.00h	REC-E0.08
Thursday 12 November	Tutorials; 10.00-15.30h	REC-B8.11M
Thursday 19 November	Tutorials; 10.00-15.30h	REC-B8.11M

Workload

3 ECTS

Methodology Course: Research Design

(Semester I)

The objective of this course is to help AISSR PhD students of all disciplines to develop the research design and methodology for their own research projects. We discuss all stages of research, from the conception of the research question via concept- and/or proposition-building, to the definition and operationalization of propositions, to case and/or data selection and choice of method of analysis, on through to analysis and interpretation of results.

This is not a methods course but a course about research design. Using practical examples drawn from all participants' projects, we will discuss the merits and challenges of different epistemological and methodological approaches, the ways in which research using these different approaches and methods can be designed, and which common mistakes need to be avoided. The practical aim is to help students in the design and production of their PhD project, to make their findings convincing to broad audiences. To this end, students' own research proposals will be discussed in detail and guidance will be given towards the completion of the 8th-month paper (full research design) and/or the methodological chapter of the dissertation.

The course meets twice a week for two hours (i.e., four hours a week) in November and December, with a final all-day gathering in January. Since practical tasks are regularly assigned alongside the course readings, the course should be considered intensive. For the short time this course lasts, students are expected to give it priority over other commitments and to devote considerable time and effort to it. Doing so is bound to considerably improve your research. We also expect participants to be open to considering diverse epistemological positions and disciplinary conventions in a quest to develop as pluralist social scientists. This course will be taught by prof. dr. Annette-Freyberg-Inan and prof. dr. Brian Burgoon, who are both broadly trained and experienced social scientists working in the Political Science department, and corresponds to 12 ECTS.

Course dates and time

DATES	TIME	ROOMS
2 x 2 hrs/week in November & December (8 weeks)	TBA	TBA
1 all-day meeting in January	TBA	TBA

Workload

12 ECTS

Ethnographic Research Practices (Beginners)

(Semester I-II)

This course aims to familiarize PhDs who have 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 6 ECTS.

Course dates and time

DATES	TIME	ROOMS
Friday 8 January	10.00-13.00h	REC-B3.02
Friday 15 January	10.00-13.00h	REC-B3.02
Friday 22 January	10.00-13.00h	REC-B3.02
Friday 29 January	10.00-13.00h	REC-B3.02
Friday 5 February	10.00-13.00h	TBA
Friday 12 February	10.00-13.00h	TBA
Friday 19 February	10.00-13.00h	TBA
Friday 26 February	10.00-13.00h	TBA

Workload

12 ECTS

Ethnographic Methods (Advanced)

(semester I-II)

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
Friday 22 January	10.00-13.00h	REC-B3.03
Friday 29 January	10.00-13.00h	REC-B3.03
Friday 5 February	10.00-13.00h	TBA
Friday 12 February	10.00-13.00h	TBA
Friday 19 February	10.00-13.00h	TBA
Friday 26 February	10.00-13.00h	TBA

Workload

6 ECTS

Advanced Social Science Theory

(Semester II)

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

DATES	TIME	ROOMS
6 sessions in April & May	TBA	TBA

Workload

6 ECTS

Crash Courses offered by the AISSR (Methods Support)

(Semester I)

Methods Support wants to facilitate access to, and training in, methods that match the research goals of our PhD students and staff. We do so through presentations, crash-courses, and by making accessible current expertise on the web.

Methods Support links methodological demand and expertise. The variety of methodological expertise within the AISSR often reflects different ontological and epistemological standpoints. We strive for discussions between these standpoints, pragmatism, and for question-based research.

We do not see methods as inevitably linked to a single ontological or epistemological position, but rather as tools to be used and combined given the research questions to be answered. We stimulate methodological innovation, not for its own sake but related to the substantive content of research projects at hand.

In the first semester of the academic year 2026-2027, the AISSR will offer crash courses on various methods, three hours for each (no ECTS). The courses will be organized by dr. Jeroen Bruggeman.

The available courses are:

1. Social Network Analysis
2. LaTeX
3. Basics of R focused on Statistics.
4. Complexity Science for the Social Sciences

If less than four people are interested in a course, we try to direct them to other institutions or we give them personal advice rather than organizing a crash course.

Course dates and time

COURSE	DATE	TIME	ROOM
Social Network Analysis	Friday 6 November	14.00-17.00h	REC-B3.01
LaTeX	Friday 13 November	14.00-17.00h	REC-B3.01
Basics of R focused on Statistics	Friday 20 November	14.00-17.00h	REC-B3.01
Complexity Science for the Social Sciences	Friday 27 November	14.00-17.00h	REC-B3.01

Registration

The crash courses are for free for AISSR members and open to a limited number of Research Master students and teachers who are not AISSR members. Registration will be final after our confirmation that you can enrol in the course.

GSSS Research Master courses and workshops

(Semester I & II)

An agreement has been made between AISSR and GSSS regarding the participation of AISSR PhD candidates in courses of the Graduate School of Social Sciences programme's of the University of Amsterdam. On the next page you will find a list of all the courses that are available with mostly three guaranteed spots for PhD candidates from the AISSR in the academic year 2026-2027. Please note that registration for courses is organized per semester and that for most courses master students are given priority. It could therefore be possible that the course of your preference has reached its capacity after the course registration period for master students, and you need to choose another course.

All the courses can be found in the [online course catalogue](#). The course catalogue will provide you with more in-depth information about the course(s) you are interested in. When you visit the course catalogue search for the course of interest in the search-bar. Please note that a lot of the courses require recommended knowledge in order to participate. This can be found in the course catalogue.

Make sure that you can provide us with your UvA student ID number with active PhD role (the SIS number). In case you do not have one please contact the AISSR (aisr@uva.nl); they will be able to help you further with finalizing your application at the *College van Promoties*. You can only register for a Research Master course if your application at the College van Promoties has been completed and confirmed. Furthermore, if we have received the maximum number of registrations for the courses with guaranteed spot(s), the next applicants will be put on a waiting list.

If you sign up for a course at GSSS you will first obtain a provisory registration. About a week before the start of a course, you will get a final confirmation that you can participate. If you register at a later date, it may not be possible to finalize the course. Registration implies a commitment to full participation: it is not possible to select sessions or skip assignments.

Registration

When registering please provide us with:

- Name:
- UvA student ID number (SIS number):
- Supervisor(s):
- Programme group:
- Title of your research project:
- Starting date of your PhD
- Name of the Course
- Course catalogue number

Registration deadlines

Semester 1 Block 1 - 3: **25 August 2026** (SIS-nr available 14 August at the latest)

Semester 2 Block 4 - 6: **8 December 2026** (SIS-nr available 27 November at the latest)

GSSS Regular courses and workshops

Semester	Block	Programme	Number of the Course	Name of the Course	EC	Guaranteed spots
1	1	RMSS	75250085FY	Measuring Meaning	6	3
1	1	RMIDS	750501001Y	Theories, Issues and Debates in International Development Studies	9	3
1	2	RMSS	75250066FY	Social Network Analysis	6	3
1	2+3	RMSS	75250077IY	Culture, Markets, Power	9	3
1	2+3	RMSS	75250079IY	Race, Sex, and Postcolonial STS	9	3
1	2+3	RMSS	75250080IY	The Politics of Sustainability: Environments, Cultures, Materials	9	3
1	2+3	RMSS	75250081IY	Immigration, Precarious Labor and Segregation	9	3
1	2+3	RMSS	75250086IY	A Crisis of democracy? Challenge(r)s in the 21 st century	9	3
2	4	RMUS	7515A001FY	Introduction to Geographical Information Systems	6	3
2	4	RMUS	7515A007FY	Practice of Ethnographic Research	6	1
2	4	RMSS	75250088FY	Design in Quantitative Research	6	3
2	4	RMSS	7525A036FY	Interpreting Qualitative Data	6	3
2	4	RMSS	75250089FY	Data and Measurement	6	3
2	5	RMSS	75250092FY	Analysing Talk and Text: Discourse and Conversation analysis	6	3
2	5	RMSS	7525A018IY	Policy Oriented Research	6	3
2	5	RMUS	7515A006FY	Advanced Geographical Information Systems	6	3
2	5+6	RMSS	75250074IY	Statistical Models in the Social Sciences	9	3

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 1

Session 1:	Tuesday 27 October 2026	09:00-13:00h
Session 2:	Monday 23 November 2026	09:00-13:00h
Session 3:	Tuesday 8 December 2026	09:00-13:00h

You need an active UvAnet-ID to access the Registration link:

<https://uva.curatr3.com/courses/mastering-my-phd-fmg/playlist>

Please do contact the [PhD Coordinator](#) when 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 10-15 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.

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 – 14:00h). 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/>
- WTMCM (Science, Technology and Modern Culture) <https://www.wtmc.eu/>
- NIG (Netherlands Institute of Governance) <https://www.nigovernance.nl/>
- NESA (Netherlands School of Anthropology) <https://www.universiteitleid.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 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 send to the [AISSR Secretariat](mailto:ai SSR@uva.nl) (ai SSR@uva.nl).