

PhD course activities during the Covid-19 lockdown

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic most universities and related scientific institutions have cancelled additional PhD courses – also some planned for during fall 2020 and spring 2021. We realize, this may have consequences for the progress of your PhD project.

The intention of the present paper is to serve as an inspiration for your supervisor and you, including suggestions of alternatives to traditional courses and to serve an alignment of expectations between you and the PhD School during this COVID-19 situation.

Due to the current situation, the PhD Committee will be flexible in course approval (within the limits of applicable law and regulations). We encourage you to find constructive solutions together with your supervisor as an alternative to courses canceled or postponed: self-study, small study groups, online workshops etc.

As always, the PhD School encourages PhD students to submit application for completed course approval on an ongoing basis. Approval of course activities is granted based on individual application to the PhD Committee.

For the general rules underlying PhD course activities see https://www.sdu.dk/-/media/files/om_sdu/fakulteterne/samfundsvidenskab/phd/ansoegning+om+godkendelse+af+gen-nemfoert+kursusaktivitet+-+efter+01,-d-,01,-d-,19.docx. According to the [PhD Order](#) you must complete PhD courses or similar study elements totaling approx. 30 ECTS points. In general, a PhD course activity should:

- Contain a total workload of 25-30 work hours per ECTS applied for, including lectures, preparation, reading of literature and exam activities
- Be on a scientific level suitable for a research education, see <https://ufm.dk/uddannelse/anerkendelse-og-dokumentation/dokumentation/kvalifikationsrammer/niveauer-i-kvalifikationsrammen/niveau-8>
- Be approved by your principal supervisor, who is – as usual – in charge of ascertaining that there is sufficient scientific spread and level in your course activities.

Within this frame, there is a large degree of freedom, and we strongly encourage you to use this freedom to come up with suggestions in cooperation with your supervisor or another scientific resource person from your own department or an external or even abroad institution. Also, we encourage you to exchange ideas with fellow PhD students from your environment or network.

Next, our ideas follow:

- If a planned course is cancelled, you or your supervisor may contact the course provider and ask as to whether full or part of the course could be offered online – e.g. as a webinar.
- Alternatively, you may take up the plan and syllabus from a cancelled or previously offered course and carry it through as a self-study, either on your own or in collaboration with fellow PhD students. Preferably, such an activity should be supervised or monitored by your supervisor or another senior fellow, who should also see to that some kind of exam is carried out.

- Self-study of any kind, combined with some form of exam held by a senior fellow, will also be an opportunity.
- Online webinars or presentations can be embedded with self-study of literature and followed up by some form of exam.
- Exam activities, in turn, can take many forms. It may be a short, written essay, but it can also take the form of a webinar based oral presentation, discussion of paper or similar.
- Being alone can be counterproductive. We encourage you to take up your ideas with fellow PhD students. This can be in an informal setup as well as more formal fora; see for example inspiration from the PhD for a at University of Copenhagen at <https://uniavisen.dk/jeg-kan-give-dig-din-over-skrift-det-her-har-reddet-min-ph-d/> (in Danish).

If you have a proposal for a study activity that you would like to pursue, the procedure for a pre-approval is simple and fast, and we have in the light of the present COVID-19 situation, sought to make it simpler and faster:

- Agree on and develop the course activity with your principal supervisor
- Send your proposal to the PhD School using our template, see https://www.sdu.dk/da/for-skning/phd/phd_skoler/phduddannelsen_under_samfundsvidenskab/kurser. Please remember to specify literature, online activity (meeting, webinar, online presentation) and exam activity for-mat. Please also specify estimated working hours.
- Preapproval step 1: Your proposal is screened by the chairman of the PhD Committee, who may contact you for clarification. If your application regards less than 5 ECTS the chairman makes the final decision.
- Preapproval step 2: If you apply for 5 or more ECTS the proposal is forwarded to the PhD Committee for final approval.
- You will be informed shortly after the decision is made.

If you wish some sparring on your idea before submitting, you are welcome to contact the chairman of the PhD Committee directly on jtl@sam.sdu.dk.

We wish you good luck and look forward to reading your proposals!

/PhD School of Business and Social Sciences, SDU, September 2020

Kristin B. Munksgaard
Head of PhD School

Jørgen T. Lauridsen
Chairman of PhD Committee