CAS PhD program

Program coordinator:
Prof. Susan Branje, Ph.D.

CAS Board:
Prof. Anneloes van Baar, Ph.D.
Prof. Susan Branje, Ph.D., chair
Prof. Maja Deković, Ph.D.
Prof. Catrin Finkenauer, Ph.D.
Prof. Jaap Denissen, Ph.D.
Ties Fakkel, PhD representative

CAS Educational Advisory Committee:
Prof. Judith Dubas, Ph.D., chair
Regina van den Eijnden, Ph.D.
Jolien van der Graaff, Ph.D.
Marjolein Verhoeven, Ph.D.

Contact information:
Marianne Scholing, secretary
Email: cas@uu.nl

Website:
http://www.uu.nl/en/research/child-and-adolescent-studies

GENERAL INFORMATION
CAS PhD program is part of the Graduate School of Social and Behavioural Sciences of Utrecht University (GSSBS). For general information about the Graduate school, the PhD programs and organization and quality assurance, please see “Educational Quality Assurance Plan for PhD programmes at the Graduate School of Social and Behavioural Science”.

The CAS PhD program includes three components: 1. Individual supervision, 2. General part, and 3. Domain specific part, and covers the entire period of the PhD track with emphasis on following courses specifically during the first years. For PhD-candidates with a Research Master diploma the minimum program size is 10 EC. For PhD-candidates with a ‘Doctoraal’ diploma (Drs) or academic master, the minimum program size is 20 EC (1.5 EC = 1 week, or 1 EC = 28 hr).

In addition, to gain teaching experience, PhD candidates are supposed to spend a maximum of 10% of their time on teaching tasks as part of their research training. The scope of the teaching obligations will be individually determined, but most frequently it will involve individual supervision of the bachelor project or the Master’s thesis (please see the faculty guideline “Regulations for the teaching activities by doctoral candidates 2011”).

Immediately upon start of their PhD track, PhD candidates must submit Request for Exemption and Admission to the Doctoral Program form:
As soon as the request has been approved and no later than 3 months after the starting date of the PhD track, the PhD student, together with supervisors, fills in the Education and Supervision Agreement form, which includes the list of general and/or domain specific courses to be followed by the PhD student, as well as the list of teaching tasks.
1 INDIVIDUAL SUPERVISION
The yearly hours of supervision minimally should amount to 60: two weekly meetings with daily supervisor [co-promotor] and monthly meetings with both daily supervisor and promotor.

2. GENERAL PART OF PHD TRAINING
GSSBS offers several general courses and workshops to PhD candidates. These courses and workshops focus on general academic skills (for example: Scientific writing in English, Presenting your research at conferences) or statistical analyses (for example: Multivariate analyses, Introduction to SEM using Mplus). See website of GSSBS for overview of general courses and application forms:

The Graduate School offers also seven research master programs, accredited by the Accreditation Organization of the Netherlands and Flanders (NVAO). If courses are followed by less than 15 research master students it is possible for PhD candidates to participate in these courses. More information on these research master programs can be found on http://www.uu.nl/masters/en

The courses offered by GSSBS (incl. advanced courses of research masters) are accredited by the GSSBS. This is also the case for the courses taken from KNAW accredited national Research Schools and national research networks accredited by the GSSBS. For courses not (yet) accredited by the GSSBS, approval by the PhD program coordinator and the Dean of the GSSBS is needed.

3. DOMAIN (CAS) SPECIFIC PART OF THE PHD PROGRAM
This part of PhD program is offered by the CAS staff. Some parts are obligatory for all CAS PhD students: Introduction seminar CAS, yearly presentation at Research seminars, and organization of one workshop in the course of the PhD-project. In addition, the CAS staff offer several specialized courses that PhD students may choose, depending on their interests. The course offering is determined yearly by the CAS board. For specific information about the courses, please contact the course coordinator.

I. Introduction seminar CAS
(coordinator: Susan Branje)
This seminar gives a broad overview of the research conducted by four research groups participating in the CAS programs: 1. Social and personality development: A transactional approach, 2. Development and treatment of psychosocial problems, 3. Adolescent development: Characteristics and determinants, and 4. Youth in changing cultural contexts. Program leaders present the major theoretical developments and the ‘state of the art’ in a particular field of research, offer short description of the ongoing PhD-projects in their program, present their perspectives on present debates in the field, and on how the PhD-projects in their program are meant to contribute to these debates. This overview should give the future PhD-students a feel for how their own project fits the field of Child and Adolescent Studies. In addition, they get acquainted with all ongoing research in the participating research groups and with all the other PhD-students.
Format: 4 lectures (intro, lectures of each full professor), January-February each year
Participants: new PhD-students in their first year

II. Research seminar CAS
(coordinator: Judith Dubas)
In this seminar, all PhD students are requested to present their plans for the research and their ongoing work and planned publications in the PhD-project. In addition, all PhD-students have to act as referees for the presentation of the other students. Staff members act as referees as well.
Format: two half days each year (November and May). PhD-students present. All students have to present once each year. All staff members of CAS are required to be present.
Participants: all PhD-students enrolled in the program

III. Workshops CAS
(coordinator: Susan Branje)
In workshops, ongoing work with respect to particular theoretical or methodological issues is presented and discussed. PhD students organize the workshops: they propose a theme, invite (inter)national experts to be present at the workshop and give an introductory lecture on their work, they collect relevant literature that has to be read as preparation for the workshop, and organize all logistics involved in organizing a workshop.

**Format:** the workshops take the form of a one- or two-day seminar. All PhD-students are required to organize one workshop in the course of their PhD-project, in collaboration with one other PhD-student. A maximum of 3 workshops will be organized each year. Proposals for workshops are presented to the board of CAS. Participating in workshops is voluntary, but PhD-students have to participate in at least 3 workshops during their PhD-trajectory.

**Participants:** all PhD-students enrolled in the program

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### IV. Specialized courses offered by CAS staff

**#1 - Publishing in Social Science**

(coordinator: Sander Thomaes)

The aim of this 2 × 4h course is to gain more insight into key aspects of the publication process: How do I prepare for writing a paper? How can I write persuasively? What information do I incorporate in my paper, and what information do I leave out? How do I choose a target journal? How do I revise my paper? In this course, we will focus on style of presentation, tactical decisions, and how to persuade your readership, your scientific peers.

In the first part of the course, we will focus on why it is important to publish, and how one can achieve to publish one’s research. The second part of the course deals with the writing process itself – how should we present our findings so that they are convincing to our readership? We also discuss how to handle reviews and respond to reviewers’ comments.

The course is suited for PhD students in the first few years of their PhD project.

**When:** Spring semester, every other year (2021-2022, 2023-2024, etc.)

**#2 - Person-Environment Transactions**

(coordinator: Odilia Laceulle)

Child and adolescent development is typically the result of both individual characteristics (personality, self-regulation, genes, (neuro)biological factors etc.), and characteristics of the environment (parenting, life events, societal norms etc.). Whereas each factor may uniquely contribute to development, factors often work together and mutually drive both normal and abnormal development. Aim of this course is to increase knowledge about and competence in research on person-environment (PE) transactions. By the end of this course, you will:

1. Have developed a deeper understanding of PE transactions. Papers shall be discussed on topical theoretical frameworks and explore theoretical dimensions important to obtain a fine-grained understanding of PE interactions, such as the explanatory level of PE transactions and sensitive developmental periods.
2. Have knowledge of state-of-the-art research methods that are used to unveil PE transactions.
3. Be able to apply a PE transactional perspective to your own field of research. You will write and get feedback on a research or grant proposal. In this way, you can practice with the gained knowledge in a way that is directly relevant for your own research.

By combining group discussion with an individual goal, you can benefit from each individuals’ knowledge about and competence in research on PE transactions, while at the same time warranting a close connection to your own PhD thesis.

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1 The specialized courses can be followed also within other PhD training programs, either in Utrecht, or at another university. The only requirement for taking up a particular course as part of the PhD-curriculum is, that the pertinent course is part of either a PhD-program in a national Research School, part of a PhD-program or a graduate school at another university. Proposal for choice of courses will be registered in the Education and Supervision Agreement of the Graduate School, and will be in accordance with the criteria of the Graduate School.
When: The course consists of 4 meetings of two hours each. Each meeting included two parts: a theoretical and a more practical part.

# 3 - Conceptual and Methodological Issues in Intervention Research
(coordinator: Ina Koning)
The aim of this course is to develop a deeper understand of conducting intervention research. During this advanced course, which is primarily intended for PhDs who are themselves involved in the intervention research, issues that researchers may encounter will be addressed. These issues concern conceptual, methodological, and practical issues involved in planning and carrying out intervention research, such as: conceptualizing, designing, and testing behavioral/social interventions; implementing rigorous design in (clinical) practice (eligibility, recruitment, enrollment, assessment of intervention integrity); testing interventions for diverse populations; selecting measures; planning and conducting the data analysis (cost-effectiveness, moderator/mediator models); issues involved in reporting and publishing of intervention studies (what to report, in which journals; and ethical issues).

As all participants are some way or another involved in intervention research, the didactic concept of this course is grounded in elaborate group discussion and reflection. Each meeting, one or two group members will select an article and prepare a critical contribution, that is taken as the starting point for the meeting. This contribution can have different forms, such as discussing the results of one’s own analyses, strategies for adequate analyses, an upcoming press release, the tension between science and practice, and so on. In this way, a group-based effort can spur on each individual’s knowledge and skills relevant for conducting intervention research.

When: The meetings take places once in 8 weeks.

# 4 – Studying Development: Longitudinal Analyses
(coordinator: Stefanie Nelemans)
The aim of this prolonged course is to develop a deeper understanding of longitudinal analyses. Different types of longitudinal analyses will be discussed, depending on the interests of the participants, such as longitudinal measurement invariance models, cross-lagged path analyses (conventional and random-intercept), latent growth models, latent class growth and mixture models, latent transition models, dynamic structural equation modeling, etcetera. A deeper understanding of these analyses is developed by reflecting on and discussing the different types of longitudinal analyses that exist and the different developmental research questions they can answer, which types of analyses fit with different ideas about development, the complexities and common problems associated with these analyses, the interpretation of results, etcetera.

As many participants will at least have some basic knowledge of longitudinal analyses, the didactic concept of this course is grounded in elaborate group discussion and reflection. Each meeting, one or two group members will select an article and prepare a critical contribution, that is taken as the starting point for the meeting. This contribution can have different forms, such as discussing the results of longitudinal analyses of a recently published or seminal research paper, presenting data and/or results from one’s own longitudinal analyses, strategies for adequate analyses, and so on. In this way, a group-based effort can spur on each individual’s knowledge about and competence in longitudinal analyses.

When: The 8 sessions take place once every ±6 weeks, between October and June. Dates are set together with course participants.

# 5 – Tacit Academic Knowledge: Hidden Rules for Academic Success
(coordinator: Sander Thomaes)
In preparing for an academic career, PhD students spend much time and effort on gaining what may be called “formal” or declarative knowledge—knowledge of the subject matter and methods relevant to one’s field. They typically gain less “tacit knowledge”—knowledge of how one should deal with oneself, with one’s work, and with others. How do I decide what are important problems to work on? How do I write up my research findings in a way that interests and convinces others? How can I decide on the best potential outlets for my manuscripts? How can I be a productive scholar without neglecting other responsibilities? How do I wisely create opportunities for myself on the job market?

Tacit knowledge, and the ability to act upon it, is critically important at determining young scholars’ success in academia. The goal of this course is to teach tacit academic knowledge in a way that helps PhD students to make more informed work-related decisions, and in a way that supports PhD students in their building
gratifying, successful careers. The course will consist of three 4-hour sessions, in which the following questions will be addressed: (1) How to get your research published?, (2) How to get your proposals funded?, (3) How to optimize your productivity?, (4) How to deal with setbacks and experience gratification from your work?, (5) How to develop an own style of work?, and (6) How to avoid sloppy science and to ethical research? Students can attend all sessions, but alternatively they can also choose to attend those sessions that are of most interest to them.

When: Spring semester, every other year (2020-2021, 2022-2023, etc.)

#6 – Conducting a Meta-Analysis
(coordinator: Marlies Maes)
This course is primarily intended for researchers (DaSCA students/PhD students/CAS staff) who are involved in, or who will start conducting a meta-analysis. The aim is to go through all the steps of a meta-analysis, from defining the research question and designing a literature search strategy, to analyzing and writing down the results in a scientific article. Open science principles in the context of meta-analysis will also be discussed. The course consists of seven meetings (max. 2 hours each) that are each dedicated to a specific step of the meta-analysis: 1) research question & in- and exclusion criteria, 2) literature search, 3) writing the introduction, 4) coding system, 5) effect sizes & multilevel approach, 6) reporting results, 7) writing the discussion. Participants prepare for the meetings by reading literature on meta-analyses as well as high-quality examples of meta-analyses, and by bringing in drafts of sections of their own study. The meetings provide researchers with the opportunity to cooperate, to give and receive peer-feedback, and to share tips and tricks regarding best practices for meta-analyses.

When: between October and May. Dates will be set in consultation with the participants of the course.

#7 - Designing research using intensive longitudinal data
(Coordinator: Astrid Poorthuis)
In recent years, the use of intensive longitudinal data in both basic and intervention research in children and adolescents has increased tremendously. Intensive longitudinal data allow us to gain more insight in within-person, within-family, or within-classroom processes, in addition to between-person differences. Methods for intensive longitudinal data like daily diary studies, experience sampling, ecological momentary assessment, and ambulatory assessment can be used to answer different kinds of research questions. The challenge for researchers starting in the field of Child and Adolescent Studies is to connect their knowledge of theoretical mechanisms to the fitting method for intensive longitudinal design to answer their research questions in the best possible way. Furthermore, even when a specific method has been chosen, a myriad of decisions still have to be made with regard to the time scale, number of time points, etc.

The aim of this course is to introduce you to different methods to acquire intensive longitudinal data. At the end of the course you will be familiar with common intensive longitudinal data designs; you have acquired strategies to translate theory into fitting research designs; and you have developed ideas for your own (future) research project involving longitudinal data. Note that although analytic strategies can be part of the classroom discussions, the course does not focus on learning how to analyze intensive longitudinal data. We will study primers (explanatory articles) on different types of designs. You will be asked to search for inspiring example articles in your own field of research and share these with your peers. CAS-researchers who have used intensive longitudinal data designs will be invited to share their experiences and findings.

This course may be of interest to PhD-candidates at several stages of their project, including PhD-candidates who have already decided on the design of their PhD-research. The course may help this group to get a better idea of the research questions they can and cannot answer with the particular design of their research.

When: Six 2-hour meetings starting in November 2020 and taking place every 2 or 3 weeks. Dates will be set in consultation with the participants of the course.

#8 - Observational research
(coordinator: Sanne Geeraerts & Monika Donker)
This course is intended for researchers who are interested or involved in coding human behavior. The aim of this course is to support researchers with conducting behavioral observations and to provide a broad overview of possible approaches. The meetings (8 meetings of 2 hours each) are intended to address questions that can arise in various phases of observational research, such as: How do you select the right setting to observe the
behavior in which you are interested, how do you adopt or design a coding system, how can you train observers and determine inter-rater agreement, and what are the options for analyzing the obtained data? The meetings are intended to provide researchers opportunities to learn from each other. Before the start of the course, researchers are asked to provide topics that they would like to discuss and observation systems that they would like to explore. Researchers will also be asked to present their research or experience with observations, and to provide feedback on the presentations of other researchers. Depending upon the wishes of participating researchers, other researchers may also be invited to give a guest lecture.

**When:** The course will start in 2021.

#9 - Data collection for longitudinal youth research  
(coordinator: Natasha Koper)  
For many PhD candidates (and other early career researchers), data collection takes up a large part of their time. Properly preparing for data collection can eliminate a lot of stress and extra work later while collecting your data, analyzing the results, or writing papers. Yet, most researchers did not receive any formal training on how to coordinate data collection, which means we constantly keep reinventing the wheel. The goal of this course is to prepare you for your longitudinal data collection with youth, offering hands-on information and workshops so that at the end of each session, you have tools that you can directly apply to your own data collection. Each week we will dive into and work on a specific aspect of your data collection (such as method specification, participant communication, registration systems, and data anticipation). The course includes a combination of (1) live interactive lectures, where there is plenty of room for your questions and sharing the struggles on your project with the group, (2) knowledge clips, that you can watch back any time you need, and (3) workshops, where you can use templates and examples to work on aspects of your own data collection (such as flyers, information letters, and data management protocols).

This course is mainly directed at CAS PhD candidates who are involved in data collection but is open to all early career researchers who are involved in several stages of the design and execution of a data collection project (e.g., junior researchers, post docs, and (research) master students are also welcome). A requirement for this course is that you are currently or about to start preparing for longitudinal data collection in samples involving children and/or adolescents. If you’re already some time into your data collection, this course is not very well suited for you, as many of the topics will already be in the past. If this is the case for you, please contact us to discuss which parts of our course might be of specific help to your project.

**When:** This is an 8-week course, consisting of an introduction meeting and four bi-weekly sessions that consist of four hours each (2 hours lecture + 2 hours workgroup - with plenty of breaks in between). It will take place in October and November 2021. Exact dates and times will be scheduled later to accommodate participants’ agendas as best as possible.