CAS PhD program

Program coordinator:
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CAS Board:
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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 workshop 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: 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: 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: 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 

**IV. Specialized courses offered by CAS staff**

**#1 - Publishing in Social Science**

(coordinator: Thomas) 

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*: Fall semester, every other year (2019, 2021, etc.) 

**#2 - Person-Environment Transactions**

(coordinator: 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. 

*When*: The course consists of 4 meetings of two hours each. Each meeting included two parts: a theoretical and a more practical part. 

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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.
# 3 - Conceptual and Methodological Issues in Intervention Research
(coordinator: Nelemans)
The aim of this course is to develop a deeper understand of conducting intervention research. During this advanced course, which is primarily intended for Ph.D.s 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 place once in 8 weeks.

# 4 – Studying Development: Longitudinal Analyses
(coordinator: 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: Thomaes)
In preparing for an academic career, Ph.D. 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 Ph.D. students to make more informed work-related decisions, and in a way that supports Ph.D. 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, 2022, etc.)

#6 – Conducting a Meta-Analysis
(coordinator: Endendijk)
This course is primarily intended for researchers (DaSCA students/PhD students/CAS staff) who are involved in, or who start doing 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 writing down the results in a scientific article. 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 & coding system, 3) writing the introduction, 4) effect sizes & multilevel approach, 5) heterogeneity & publication bias, 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, by bringing in drafts of sections of their own study, and by preparing short presentations. The meetings provide researchers with the opportunity to cooperate, to give and receive peer-feedback, and to share tips and tricks regarding best practice for meta-analyses. An expert on meta-analysis will join several of the meetings to give a theoretical introduction on the topic and to answer questions.

When: This course will not be offered in the academic year 2019-2020.