UNIVERSITY OF GOTHENBURG

DEPARTMENT OF APPLIED INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

IT00012, Introduction to Research Ethics and Good Research Practice, 3 credits

Introduktion till forskningsetik och god forskningssed, 3 högskolepoäng

Third-cycle level / Forskarnivå

Confirmation

This syllabus was confirmed by the Department of Applied Information Technology on 2021-11-26, and was last revised on 2026-06-10. The revised course syllabus is valid from Autumn semester 2026.

Responsible Department

Department of Applied Information Technology, Faculty of Science and Technology

Entry requirements

Admitted to postgraduate studies at the Department of Applied Information Technology at the University of Gothenburg or at the Department of Computer Science and Engineering at the University of Gothenburg or Chalmers University of Technology.

Learning outcomes

On successful completion of the course the doctoral student will be able to:

Knowledge and understanding

- describe basic ethical principles, laws and regulations concerning research;
- demonstrate in-depth knowledge and understanding of how research ethics can be considered in relation to the use of Internet and other digital systems and tools;
- make informed considerations of principles of research ethics in relation to publishing practices;

Competence and skills

- critically consider their own dissertation work in relation to ethical principles, laws and regulations;

- identify and solve problems of research ethics in relation to their own research;

Judgement and approach

- demonstrate insight into ways ethical approaches are associated with methodological decisions;
- demonstrate the ability to engage in ongoing and reflexive ethical reasoning throughout the research process;
- make well-balanced ethical assessments in line with research ethics guidelines and regulations;
- critically assess ethical implications of emerging technologies, including AI and data-driven research methods;
- demonstrate a scientific approach to considering research ethics issues;
- evaluate and argue for good research practice.

Course content

The aim of this course is to provide knowledge of key theoretical concepts in research ethics and related laws and regulations. The course will also provide criteria for good research ethics and practice in relation to IT research in both national and international contexts. The course deals with different ethical perspectives, guidelines and laws of relevance to research ethics and the management of various types of data including data of a personal nature, as well as ethical challenges related to digital and AI-driven research across the research process. The course gives participants the opportunity to reflect on ethical considerations in relation to academic research in general and to their own dissertation work specifically.

The course consists of three modules:

1. *Introduction to research ethics and key theoretical concepts* provides a basic introduction to research ethics, and current legislation concerning ethical review, principles and approaches.
2. *Research ethics in the IT area* includes a number of cases and dilemmas in the area of scientific research in information technology and discusses how such issues can be handled in practice.
3. *Good research practice in relation to one's own work* involves discussion of research ethics principles and issues associated with ongoing dissertation work.

Types of instruction

Lectures, seminars, and interactive workshops including participants' own research cases.

Language of instruction

The course is given in English

Grades

The grade Pass (G) or Fail (U) is given in this course.

Types of assessment

The course participants are expected to actively participate in all parts of the course. The course is examined through seminar discussions in connection to each module and through a written assignment. Through the written assignment, students shall describe and problematize aspects of research ethics linked to their own dissertation area and describe how research ethics issues can be handled in their own work. The assignment is completed individually and is presented at a seminar at the end of the course.

Course participants must show that they have achieved the stated learning objectives by:

- active participation in the course seminars (1 credit)
- completion of an independent written assignment that is presented orally at a seminar at the end of the course (2 credits)

Course evaluation

Course participants are given the opportunity to give a written evaluation at the end of the course.