**QUALITATIVE RESEARCH IN PSYCHOLOGY (5 EC)**

**Course Description**

In this course, students are introduced to the basics of qualitative research and its merits for psychological research and practice. The course is built up on three pillars: thinking/understanding, learning, and doing. First, we discuss in-depth how paradigms (post-positivism, critical theory, constructivism) are connected to quantitative and qualitative methods, and how to choose between methods in a purpose- and goal-oriented way. In this, we take a **pluralist** perspective to methods, and a **reflexive** stance to developing research questions and designs and conducting and interpreting research.

Next, students follow a series of recorded and live lectures to learn the basics of qualitative and mixed-methods research, with an emphasis on designing and conducting interview studies and thematic analysis. Concurrently, students choose a topic relevant to their own field of interest/master specialization and work together on exploring and applying steps in qualitative research into their own project. This project-based set-up allows students to learn and practice to conduct qualitative research as a team, as well as to understand the impact of their own and others’ perspectives/positionality in doing research.

Practically, the course consists of 8 2-hours lectures and 8 2-hours practical workshops (flipped classroom principle). In the workshops, students work in team-based set-up on their project, in which they can focus on a research question of interest in their field. This topic continues throughout the course and allows to learn qualitative research in a relevant, goal-oriented/purposive, and sensitive way.

**Learning Goals**

After this course, students are able to:

1. Become aware of one’s own methodological predispositions (reflexivity/positionality)
2. Understand different paradigms and their implications for designing, conducting, and interpreting research
3. Explain the merit of pluralism for psychological science and research
4. Practice empirical cycle in qualitative research, including developing and conducting an interview, using thematic analysis to analyse qualitative data, interpreting findings while applying quality control criteria, and reporting findings in a coherent, rigorous, and trustworthy way
5. Explain the methodological choices throughout their project in function of the research goal/purpose