

Call for a new course “Advanced Survey Methods for Population Health” in the course program of the SSPH+ Inter-university Graduate Campus (IGC)

Basic idea

Surveys are common tools for collecting data from a target population in health-related research fields such as epidemiology, social sciences, and economics. They are also used for population health monitoring and evaluating public health programs and interventions. The validity and generalizability of findings based on questionnaire data depend heavily on the study design, the sampling and recruitment strategy, and the development and administration of the questionnaire.

The SSPH+ inter-University Graduate campus offers the introductory course “Designing and Using Questionnaires for Research” which is intended to familiarize PhD students with the basic terminology and concepts related to designing and using electronic and paper administered questionnaires, providing practical insights and highlighting key challenges (see general description [here](#), and please contact awalser@ssphplus.ch for a more detailed version of the introductory course content).

Building on this foundation, the IGC is now launching a call for a new course on **Advanced Survey Methods for Population Health**, which will cover more complex and specialized topics in survey research. This advanced course is intended for PhD students who already have a basic understanding of survey design and some practical experience. Completion of the introductory course is recommended but not mandatory.

Prerequisites

Students should be familiar with epidemiology methods. Students are invited to take one or more of the following IGC courses:

- Epidemiological Concepts, Principles, and Methods: A Practice-Oriented Introduction
- Epidemiological Data Analysis Strategy
- Designing and Using Questionnaires for Research

Objectives

The main objective of the course should be to equip students with advanced conceptual frameworks and practical tools for the design, implementation, and analysis of population health surveys. It should introduce students to the fundamentals of the science that can be conducted using surveys, highlighting the potential and limitations of survey-based research. While this call is intentionally flexible to encourage diverse approaches, we suggest the following topics as potential areas for inclusion or deeper exploration:

- Principles of sampling theory and application
- Recruitment strategies
- Representativeness, validity, transportability, and biases
- Modes of data collection
- Specialized survey tools and experimental methods
- Digital tools and technologies
- Ethical, legal, and data protection issues

We encourage course leaders to actively involve field partners with hands-on experience in survey design, data collection, and analysis. Possible collaborations could include:

- Swiss Federal Statistical Office (FSO) – Swiss Health Survey
- Addiction Suisse – Health Behaviour in School-aged Children (HBSC)
- FORS – Swiss Household Panel and data archive services
- Swiss Health Observatory (OBSAN)

Planned date

2026/2027

Planned duration

4-5 days (2 ECTS)

Teaching formats

Possible teaching modalities may include pre-course readings and preparation, e-learning, blended learning, in-person classes and lectures, practical exercises, group work. Hands-on work: students may apply course principles to their own survey ideas or instruments.

Submission date

Proposals should be submitted by **31 October 2025**

General information

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| Send the course proposal by email to the IGC manager | awalser@ssphplus.ch |
| Calls for new IGC courses | Calls are addressed to all SSPH+ Faculty Members |
| Budget for course development | 3000 CHF for selected candidate for a full course concept |

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| Budget for course: Remuneration including honoraria and expenses of all lecturers, course material, room costs, coffee breaks, local organization | 5000 CHF per ECTS (independant of number of lecturers) | |
| | Additional travel and hotel allowance per in-class course day (independent of number of lecturers): | |
| | Course with: | |
| | Lecturer(s) from SSPH+ partner universities | 0 CHF |
| | Guest lecturer(s) from Switzerland | 100 CHF |
| | Guest lecturer(s) from Europe | 300 CHF |
| | Guest lecturer(s) from overseas | 600 CHF |