

# Instructions for Computational Social Science 2024/2025 Exam

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## Submission Deadlines:

- 13th June
- 1st July
- 8th September

## Paper Realization formats:

For **attending students**, the paper will result from a team effort, with groups consisting of 3 to 5 members.

For **non-attending students** and students unable to attend, the paper must be completed individually.

## Paper delivery:

All papers must be submitted via Moodle on the scheduled date of the final exam for the course using the delivery app at the bottom of the page. Just one upload is allowed per group/individual papers - i.e., *one* group member delivers for the whole group.

## Grading criteria and final grade:

All students (**attending**, **non-attending**, and those unable to attend) will receive a final evaluation on a scale from 0 to 30 (with a pass threshold of 18) based on the submission of a final paper. Papers will be graded in consideration of the following criteria:

- The coherence between the research questions and the choice of methods;
- the accuracy in data collection and analysis;
- the clarity in the development and presentation of the arguments.

Each criterion will be assessed individually, and the final grade will be calculated as the average of the individual scores.

The evaluation for each criterion will be as follows:

<b>Evaluation criteria</b>	<b>Parameters</b>	<b>Score</b>	<b>Rating</b>
6*C1 Coherence		30/30 27-29/30 24-26/30 21-23/30 18-20/30 ¡18/30	excellent very good good Satisfactory sufficient insufficient
6*C2 Accuracy		30/30 27-29/30 24-26/30 21-23/30 18-20/30 ¡18/30	excellent very good good Satisfactory sufficient insufficient
6*C3 Clarity		30/30 27-29/30 24-26/30 21-23/30 18-20/30 ¡18/30	excellent very good good Satisfactory sufficient insufficient

## Necessary preliminary steps:

To be formally evaluated, papers must be submitted only after registering in Esse3 for a specific exam session. All group members, as well as individual applicants, must enroll. Failure to register either individually or as a complete group for a designated exam slot will prevent the teaching team from conducting the evaluation. No exceptions are allowed in this respect, so make sure all necessary Esse3 registrations are successfully occurred before submitting a paper via Moodle.

## Grading Policy:

All members of a group will receive the same grade, which must be either accepted or rejected collectively—individual members cannot accept or reject the group's grade independently. Non-attending students, or those unable to attend, may accept or reject their individual grade on their own. If the final grade is insufficient or rejected, students may submit a new paper during the next exam session. While it is generally possible to revise and resubmit the original paper, this may not be allowed in certain cases—such as plagiarism, misuse of data, privacy or ethical violations, or extremely poor execution of the task. The decision to allow a revised submission rests solely with the teaching team. If your final grade is insufficient or you choose to reject it, please consult the teaching team before preparing a new submission.

## Proposed project topics by the teaching team:

Students are free to choose the topic they wish to research. However, if you're unsure about your topic, here are some ideas that you can further develop:

- Cannabis Transactions on Social Media – Analyzing the trade of cannabis products or services on social media platforms.
- Social Representations of Drugs on Social Media – Examining how drugs are portrayed and discussed on social media, and the impact these representations have on society.
- Social Representations of Medicine on Social Media – Exploring how medical topics, trends, or products are discussed in niche social media communities (e.g., how specific groups or forums talk about health-related issues).
- Illegal Transactions on Social Media – Researching the role of social media in facilitating illegal transactions, such as the sale of controlled substances or prohibited goods.
- Political debates on social media - researching public discussions that pertain to political issues whether these are initiated by parties/political leaders or social movement organizations - e.g., governmental policies, discussion triggered by statements of political leaders, controversies tied to polarizing topics (such as migration, environmental politics, LGBTQIA\* rights, vaccines, the war in Gaza or Kyiv) counter-discourses from the grassroots that develop for example through protest hashtags, etc.
- Social representation of gender, race, physical abilities, religious differences on social media - researching how any of these aspects are debated, the stereotypes that are put in circulation and, perhaps (hopefully!), contrasted in social media discussions

# Project Template – Computational Social Science Lab 2024/2025

## Title

Provide a concise and clear title that reflects the core focus of your project.

## Name and Surname

Enter your full name or the full name of all members of the group you belong to.

## Keywords

List 4–6 keywords that represent the main themes and subjects of your project.

## 1 Introduction

Clearly describe the social issue your research addresses. Discuss its causes, consequences, and broader implications. Provide context and explain its relevance in current societal debates.

## 2 Literature Review

Select at least four peer-reviewed articles that apply computational social science methods related to your topic. For each article, summarize the following:

- Research Design
- Computational Methods Used
- Strengths
- Limitations

This section should outline the state of the art in your area of project and identify any gaps your work aims to fill.

*Note:* All topics that are suggested above as possible choices for your paper have been addressed through computational social science approaches—that is, there are peer-reviewed articles out there that you can consider and relate to. If you don’t find at least four articles that apply CSS methods to your topic, try to find peer-reviewed publications that discuss empirically/theoretically the topic you have chosen. These articles can also be useful additions to the minimum of four peer-reviewed CSS articles we require here.

If methods used in these articles are not CSS, or if you are comparing/contrasting CSS and more “traditional” methods in the social sciences, you can always start from there and elaborate on what your CSS approach would add to existing analyses. If you’re including theoretical papers in your review, they can help you argue how your CSS approach translates those insights into empirical exploration.

## **2.1 Research Question**

Based on your literature review, formulate a clear and focused research question. Indicate the type of research question and outline your objectives and expected findings. Clearly state whether your research question is a “What,” “How,” or “Why” question. Explain what you aim to discover.

## **3 Project Design**

Describe your overall project design. Justify your methodological choices.

### **3.1 Data Collection Strategy**

Describe in detail how you will collect your data. If you use secondary data sources, include full citations and explain how the data was originally collected.

### **3.2 Methodology**

Explain how you will analyze the data and how this links to concepts and techniques discussed in the course.

## **4 Results**

Results should be presented and summarized using tables and graphical representations to enhance clarity and support.

## **5 Conclusions Based on Empirical Analysis**

Outline the conclusions you expect to derive from your data analysis. Ensure these are directly linked to your research question and supported by empirical evidence.

- Empirical Conclusions
- Connection to Research Question
- Evidence-Based Support

### **5.1 Critical Analysis of the Adopted Strategy**

Critically evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of your project design and methodology. Suggest potential improvements or alternative approaches.

- Strengths
- Weaknesses
- Potential Improvements

## 6 Reference

### **Final Note: Presentation and Formatting**

Ensure that your paper is clearly written and logically structured. Adhere to academic standards for referencing and citation.

- Clarity and Organization: Maintain a logical flow and coherent structure throughout.
- Academic Standards: Follow a consistent citation style (e.g., APA, MLA) and properly credit all sources.