

# **FACULTY OF ARTS DOCTORAL COLLEGE: PLANNING PHD PROJECTS AND PURSUING OPPORTUNITIES**

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**Department of Historical, Philosophical and Religious Studies**

**2022-09-29**



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# OUTLINE

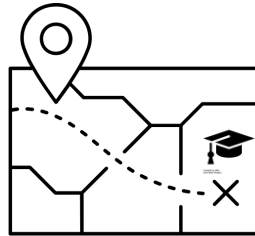
- 1) Planning the work
- 2) Finding opportunities
- 3) Making opportunities
- 4) Closing comments



# OUTLINE

## Take-Home Messages

- 1) Planning helps you **identify constraints** on your work. This helps to get things done, and to avoid doing too much at once unnecessarily.
- 2) Sometimes you stumble upon opportunities: **seize them**.
- 3) Other times, **things get in the way**. In this academic era, you might benefit from creating opportunities to help others, and yourself.



# 1. PLANNING THE WORK

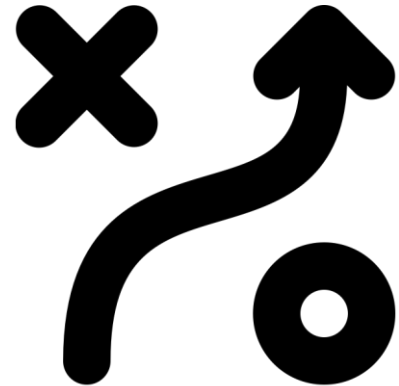


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# 1. PLANNING THE WORK

## Getting an overview

- Courses
- Research
- Teaching
- Administration



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# 1. PLANNING THE WORK

## Courses

- Do you want the courses over and done with?
  - This wish makes sense, but facing *slumps* and *writer's block* are real risks during a three-four-five year project.
  - It's useful to have a 200 hour (7.5 ECTS) **get-out-of-jail free card** to help you coast along during those times.



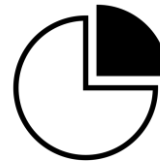
# 1. PLANNING THE WORK

## Courses

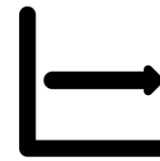
- How many credits do you need to take?
  - How do you want to space them out?
    - One-and-done?
    - Evenly throughout the project?
    - Reversed pyramid style?



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# 1. PLANNING THE WORK

## Courses

- Try to map out what you need to do. (See *Toolbox*)

Overview	
According to the general study plan	Comment ECTS Credits
Faculty of Arts Doctoral College	10
Pedagogy Courses	0
Mandatory Course 1	7,5
Mandatory Course 2	7,5
Mandatory Course 3	7,5
Mandatory Course 4	7,5
Optional Course 1	7,5
Optional Course 2	7,5
Optional Course 3	7,5
Optional Course 4	7,5
Research Seminars	7,5
Miscellaneous 1	
Miscellaneous 2	
Total	77,5





# 1. PLANNING THE WORK

Overview	
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Optional Course 2	7,5
Optional Course 3	7,5
Optional Course 4	7,5
Research Seminars	7,5
Miscellaneous 1	
Miscellaneous 2	
<b>Total</b>	<b>77,5</b>

YEAR 1 2022-23		YEAR 2 2023-24		YEAR 3 2024-25		YEAR 4 2025-26		YEAR 5 2026-27	
Courses	ECTS Credits	Courses	ECTS Credits	Courses	ECTS Credits	Courses	ECTS Credits	Courses	ECTS Credits
Mandatory Course 1	7,5	Mandatory Course 3	7,5	Optional Course 1	7,5	Optional Course 3	7,5		
Mandatory Course 2	7,5	Mandatory Course 4	7,5	Optional Course 2	7,5	Optional Course 4	7,5		
Faculty of Arts Doctoral College	5	Faculty of Arts Doctoral College	2,5	Faculty of Arts Doctoral College	2,5	Pedagogy Courses	0		
Research Seminars	3	Research Seminars	3	Research Seminars	1,5				
<b>Total (year 1)</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>Total (year 2)</b>	<b>20,5</b>	<b>Total (year 3)</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>Total (year 4)</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>Total (year 5)</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Accumulated</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>Accumulated</b>	<b>43,5</b>	<b>Accumulated</b>	<b>62,5</b>	<b>Accumulated</b>	<b>77,5</b>	<b>Accumulated</b>	<b>77,5</b>
<b>Remaining</b>	<b>54,5</b>	<b>Remaining</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>Remaining</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>Remaining</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>Remaining</b>	<b>0</b>



# 1. PLANNING THE WORK

## Research

- Try breaking down the work on a semester per semester basis.
- Prioritise your research.
  - I suggest that you both:  
(1) plan it first, and  
(2) perform it first.

Week	Calendar week	Dates	Research: Planned	Research: Performed	Research: Goals
Week 1		4			
Week 2		5			
Week 3		6			
Week 4		7			
Week 5		8			
Week 6		9			
Week 7		10			
Week 8		11			
Week 9		12			
Week 10		13			
Week 11		14			
Week 12		15			
Week 13		16			
Week 14		17			
Week 15		18			
Week 16		19			
Week 17		20			
Week 18		21			
Week 19		22			
Week 20		23			
Week 21		24			
Week 22		25			
Week 23		26			
Total planned vs performed			0 0 hours		
Goal and percentage reached			0% #DIV/0!		

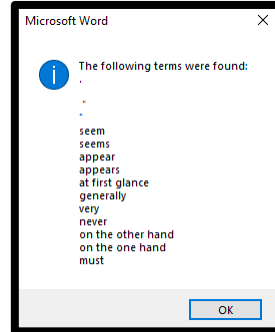


# 1. PLANNING THE WORK

## Research

- Some work is mechanical. Why not let a simple script do it?
  - Finding **liability words** (‘must’, ‘as well as’, ‘on the other hand’, etc.).

safe shelter (Noddings 2002, 446). Here, ‘personal advantage’ is defined as “those aspects of [a] person’s interests that matter (generally, or in a specific context)” (cf. Robeyns (2017, 25)).



# 1. PLANNING THE WORK

## Research

- Some work is mechanical. Why not let a simple script do it?
  - Marking **long/difficult to parse sentences**.

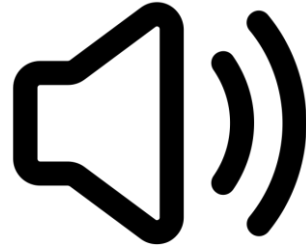
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# 1. PLANNING THE WORK

## Research

- Sitting by the computer all day can be taxing.
- **Going for a walk** to clear your head can help.
  - Instead of listening to a podcast, it's possible to convert articles and your own text to **audio files**.
  - They can improve your efficiency by letting you work on the go. Just bring something for note-taking.
  - Moreover, audio files are great for catching mistakes mistakes in your writing. Read and listen at once.



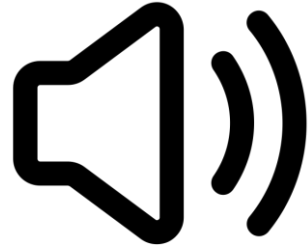
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# 1. PLANNING THE WORK

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# 1. PLANNING THE WORK

## Teaching

- 1) Figure out how much time you are given by the department to teach.
- 2) Estimate that it will take longer than this, but try to not overwork.
- 3) A tip: When teaching does take longer, **subsidise the extra time spent** by something other than your research time (*and spare time*).



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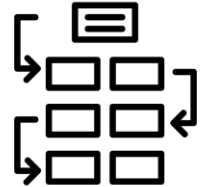
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# 1. PLANNING THE WORK

## Administration

- Sometimes plans and performance don't match up.
- Be **honest** with yourself about this. See what took more time (or effort), and what took less.
- This should help you figure out **if you can take on that extra exciting task**: a conference, a workshop, editorial work, research visits, and so on.



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# 1. PLANNING THE WORK

## Wrapping Up

- Get an overview of formal constraints.
- Prioritise your research within these formal constraints.
- You are *the person* to lead your project.
  - **But** you don't have to do it alone.
    - Discuss with supervisors and colleagues.



# 1. PLANNING THE WORK

## Wrapping Up

- Avoid doing too much at the same time.
  - Balance **quantity of effort** and **quality of results**.
  - The road to the PhD is long(-ish), and traversing it **should be fun!**



# **2. FINDING OPPORTUNITIES**



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## 2. FINDING OPPORTUNITIES

- A person has a genuine opportunity to be or do X when...
  - ... the person satisfies internal conditions such as having certain skills and wants, and...
  - ... the person satisfies external conditions such as having access to resources that...
  - are jointly sufficient to let the person be or do X.



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## 2. FINDING OPPORTUNITIES

- You all already have great internal sets of personal resources of different kinds.
  - **Datum:** You landed a really rare job as a doctoral researcher.



## 2. FINDING OPPORTUNITIES

- You will also need various external resources, however.
- Since the pandemic hit, we can consider two relevant kinds:
  - **Online** opportunities
  - **Offline** opportunities



## 2. FINDING OPPORTUNITIES

# Online Opportunities

- **E-mail lists:** [PHILOS-L], [Filosofen], [FILOS-NL]...
  - Sign up to the ones in your field.
  - Ask your supervisors for recommendations of resources.
  - Thousands of e-mails are difficult to parse, so **look for keywords.**



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^ Lists	
Blavatnik School Events	
FILOS-NL	5
Filosofen	6
IFFS	5
^ PHILOS-L	7283
^ Automatic sorting by keywords	1630
Don't pursue	
Recommend to others	
Seems interesting	13
^ CFP to consider	
Done	
^ Don't pursue	
Pursue	



## 2. FINDING OPPORTUNITIES

### Online Opportunities

- **Calls for Papers (CfPs) and Calls for Abstracts (CfAs)**, etc., all give you venues to test your academic work.
  - When you **find places and people you enjoy working with**: you can return, without reinventing the wheel each year.





## 2. FINDING OPPORTUNITIES

# Online Opportunities

- **Research Networks/Associations:**
  - I found one after my master's degree.
    - Interdisciplinary, with hundreds of researchers.
    - They were working on stuff I'd also worked on for *three years by then* (including my BA).
    - The ideas we've exchanged since have been *vital*.



## 2. FINDING OPPORTUNITIES

# Online Opportunities

- **Research Networks/Associations:**
  - This network has been one of the most **helpful** places for me to grow as a researcher. But finding it was a **fluke**.
    - I recommend taking a **proactive approach** about this, try to find networks in which you can grow.



## 2. FINDING OPPORTUNITIES

# Online Opportunities

- **Research Networks/Associations:**
  - Some such networks have mentorship programmes and thematic workgroups.



## 2. FINDING OPPORTUNITIES

# Online Opportunities

- **A Professional/Personal Website:**
  - Consider this as a portfolio showcasing your work.
  - Use whatever works. It's usually good to list e.g. **research areas, presentations, publications, teaching experience, and contact details.**
  - People can **find you** from there, and you can direct people to **resources** like slides at conferences, etc.



# 2. FINDING OPPORTUNITIES



The screenshot shows a personal website for Sebastian Östlund. At the top, there are social media icons for Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn. The name "Sebastian Östlund" is prominently displayed in a large, bold, serif font. Below the name is a horizontal navigation menu with the following items: ABOUT, TEACHING, TEXTS, CV, PRESENTATIONS, CONTACT, and BLOG. The main content area is divided into two columns. The left column is titled "About" and contains several paragraphs of text. The right column features a circular profile picture of Sebastian Östlund, followed by his name "Sebastian Östlund" and his title "PhD Student in Philosophy". Below this, his research interests are listed: axiology, political philosophy, well-being, agency, and the capability approach. At the bottom of the right column, there is a section titled "Recent Posts".

Sebastian Östlund

ABOUT TEACHING TEXTS CV PRESENTATIONS CONTACT BLOG

## About

My name is Sebastian Östlund and I read, write, study, and teach. I have a background in both practical philosophy and theoretical philosophy. I also have experience teaching undergraduates and graduate students in these subjects. The teaching mainly relates to the philosophy of science and political philosophy. For more information, follow [this link](#).

My current interests revolve around questions in the intersection of axiology and political philosophy. I am mainly interested in the value-space of well-being as it is analysed in the capability approach framework. Other research topics involve conversion factors, homelessness, and social justice. A selection of my presentations can be found [here](#).

[Here is some of my recent research about integrating democratic and philosophical considerations in urgent well-being policy-making.](#)

[Here is some of my recent research about homelessness, disadvantage, and ill-being.](#)

Edit

**Sebastian Östlund**

PhD Student in Philosophy

**Research interests:**  
axiology, political philosophy, well-being, agency, the capability approach

**Recent Posts**

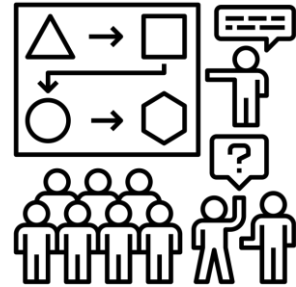


## 2. FINDING OPPORTUNITIES

### Offline Opportunities

- **Conferences:**

- General Conferences
  - Help you network...
- Specialised Conferences
  - Help you content wise...
- Graduate Conferences
  - Can be of use, depending on your needs...



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## 2. FINDING OPPORTUNITIES

# Offline Opportunities

- **Workshops:**

- Typically highly specialised.
- Offer a good amount of feedback per contribution.
- Often, people in a research network will meet at workshops, and they can be useful to find peers.
- And remember how much you can bring to others.



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# 3. MAKING OPPORTUNITIES

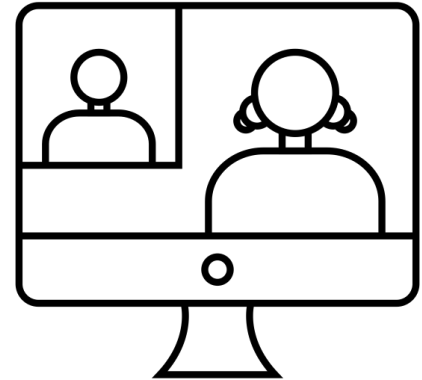


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# 3. MAKING OPPORTUNITIES

- Since the COVID-19 era, opportunities to...
  - ... present one's work...
  - ... meet other researchers in one's field...
  - ... learn from others...
- ... have changed substantially.



# 3. MAKING OPPORTUNITIES

- It's rewarding to **organise events**, especially with collaborative people.
  - This could be something like:
    - a standalone **webinar**,
    - a form of **workshop**,
    - a series of **online discussions**, or
    - a **reading group**.



# 3. MAKING OPPORTUNITIES

## Academic events

**Date:** 9 October 2019

**Time:** 09:00 - 17:00

**Location:** Utrecht, The Netherlands

### Workshop on the philosophy of the capability approach

One-day workshop on the philosophy of the capability approach on Wednesday October 9<sup>th</sup>, from 9.00–17.00. The workshop is aimed at scholars and graduate students in philosophy, and other scholars and graduate students working on foundational issues in the capability approach. Participation is free but places are limited, and lunch and coffee will be provided (registration details below).

#### Speakers and program:

Sebastian Østlund (Umeå University) *Capabilities, Value-Neutrality, and Disagreements*

Rutger Claassen (Utrecht University) *Agency and the capabilities for Empowerment and Inclusion*

Wei Fei (Beijing Normal University), *From Poetic Justice to Capability Justice – Martha Nussbaum's Theory of Justice as a way to complement and solve the Rawls' Three Unsolved problems*

Naomi Jacobs (TUEindhoven) *Capability Sensitive Design for Health and Wellbeing technologies*

Matthias Kramm (Utrecht University), *When a River Becomes a Person*

Ingrid Robeyns (Utrecht University) *Value Pluralism in the Capability Approach*

## THEORIES OF JUSTICE AND VULNERABLE GROUPS A WORKSHOP IN POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY

This is a political philosophy webinar, aiming to bring young scholars from different parts of the globe to contribute to contemporary debates on vulnerable groups' place in society, and how theories of justice (ought to) relate to them.

MONDAY 17<sup>TH</sup> OF AUGUST

#### PROGRAMME

13:30 - **Katarina Pitasse Fragoso (São Paulo University)** - Opening and Introduction

13:45 - **Shierwin Cabunilas (KU Leuven)** - Political Representation and the Bangsamoro Case. Insights from Democratic Theory

14:45 - Break

15:00 - **Sebastian Östlund (Umeå University)** - Identifying Ill-Being for People Who Are Homeless

16:00 - Break

16:15 - **Viktor Ivanković (Zagreb University)** - Market Nudges and Autonomy

17:15 - Break

18:30 - **Marie-Pier Lerhay (University of Guelph)** - Researching in and on Solidarity: The Romance of Solidarity

19:30 - Break

19:40: **Nico Brando (Queen's University Belfast)** - Closing Remarks

19:45 - Beers

#### REGISTRATION:

[https://boos.uu.nl/events/1144400\\_00000000\\_00000000\\_00000000\\_00000000\\_00000000\\_00000000\\_00000000\\_00000000\\_00000000](https://boos.uu.nl/events/1144400_00000000_00000000_00000000_00000000_00000000_00000000_00000000_00000000_00000000)



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# 3. MAKING OPPORTUNITIES

## April - August 2021 Webinar Series

### Multidimensional Well-Being: Concepts, Measurement, & Applications

Questions/Suggestions? E-mail us at:

The webinar series brings together and into conversation established scholars, junior researchers, and practitioners working to conceptualise, measure, and improve multidimensional well-being. It addresses and allows for discussion regarding both long-standing and contemporary issues regarding the conceptualization and measurement of well-being, with a special focus on applications related to the Capability Approach.

General themes running through the series include concepts of well-being, philosophies of well-being measurement, methodological issues including formal procedures for multidimensional measurement, the role of participation and deliberation, empirical applications and challenges, policy uses and implications, and current research frontiers.

The series is hosted by a group of junior HDCA scholars and aims at providing a forum for exchanges and discussions between junior and senior researchers and practitioners, and in combining their competencies. All are welcome.



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# 3. MAKING OPPORTUNITIES

## Welcome to WPSA Virtual Communities

WPSA Virtual Communities is a new initiative spearheaded by the WPSA Climate Action Committee to bring WPSA members and other academics together in virtual meeting rooms at regular intervals throughout the year. The program for the 2020-2021 academic year is an experimental pilot meant to inform decisions for a possible permanent initiative. We received 18 proposals to chair communities for the pilot program. More than 28 Co-Chairs are now collaborating to offer 10 independent Virtual Communities focused on the following areas:



# 3. MAKING OPPORTUNITIES

- Now that some stability has returned, you may wish to plan/do a research visit.
  - These can be long-ish: around a semester.
  - Alternatively, you can aim for a few weeks.
- There is (sometimes) **funding** available both at the faculty, and from external sources.
  - Apply for the money, spend it wisely.



# 3. MAKING OPPORTUNITIES

- Try to ask senior scholars and target research environments that will benefit you down the line:
  - By increasing your knowledge of your subject.
  - By developing your networks and resources.
  - By offering others opportunities to collaborate.



# 4. CLOSING COMMENTS



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## 4. CLOSING COMMENTS

- Planning helps identify constraints that your PhD journey will have to respect (**to some extent**).
  - Look at the *Toolbox* and see what works for you.
  - Modify and adapt your planning as you go.
  - Do things with a result-oriented focus, but also ensure that you enjoy your work conditions.



## 4. CLOSING COMMENTS

- Opportunities can be found online and offline, through e-mail lists, Facebook groups, and word of mouth.
  - Your network can be continuously built upon through these opportunities and will **facilitate future opportunities**.
    - A network isn't impersonal, but what you make of it.



## 4. CLOSING COMMENTS

- Other opportunities are such that *you* have to create them.
  - Consider working with 2-3 others to **distribute the workload.**
    - People are often one's greatest assets, and you can be one for others, too.



## 4. CLOSING COMMENTS

- **Questions? Comments?**
  - Let's chat about them.



# LINKS

## Page:

[www.sebastianostlund.se/planning-phd-projects-and-pursuing-opportunities-2022/](http://www.sebastianostlund.se/planning-phd-projects-and-pursuing-opportunities-2022/)

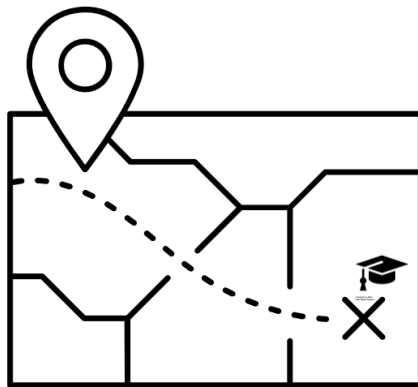
## Slides:

[www.sebastianostlund.se/files/PhDProjectSlides.pdf](http://www.sebastianostlund.se/files/PhDProjectSlides.pdf)

## Toolbox:

[www.sebastianostlund.se/files/PhDProjectToolbox.zip](http://www.sebastianostlund.se/files/PhDProjectToolbox.zip)





**Enjoy your journey to the PhD degree!**



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