

# CERES PhD Programme **2023-2024**

**September 2023**

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# INTRODUCTION

CERES is a research school in the field of International Development Studies (or Development Studies for short). Its members include academic staff and their PhD researchers in Development Studies or in associated disciplines or interdisciplinary fields in the social sciences, such as anthropology, sociology, political science, economics and geography. The School was founded in 1994 by academic institutions in the Netherlands and currently includes six member institutions, including one in Belgium (Flanders). It has established links with many other universities and research institutes in Europe and in the Global South.

CERES currently serves three main functions:

1

Provide educational opportunities specifically tailored to PhD researchers working in the interdisciplinary field of Development Studies or on issues of development (it is the only accredited research school in the Netherlands that offers such specifically tailored research training).

2

Organise and convene lectures and events to promote the field of Development Studies in the Netherlands and Belgium.

3

Provide researchers and research managers in Development Studies and allied fields with a tool to measure and evaluate research output performance in a plural and interdisciplinary manner, but also in a way that is conventionally recognised by formal research quality assessment exercises.



CERES 2022



Regarding the first function, CERES has been expanding its **PhD course offering** since 2019. We are currently offering **nine courses in the 2023-2024 academic year** (one offered twice). This has been in response to demand from many PhD researchers and member institutions for more PhD-level teaching tailored to Development Studies, which is the comparative advantage of CERES and where it adds value to its members.

CERES also allows the possibility for **PhD candidates from academic research institutions in the Global South that are associated with CERES members** to participate in these courses as members.



In addition to its longstanding **PhD Training Course** oriented towards first-year PhDs, CERES is offering an additional residential **Post-Fieldwork Course** oriented towards PhDs in the later stages of their degree, a course on **Safety and Security during Fieldwork** (offered twice, once online and once in person), a one-day **Workshop on Research Problems** for starting PhDs, and several **thematic/methodology** courses. The course calendar is as follows:

**October 2023**

First offering of three-day course on Safety and Security in Fieldwork (online)

**November 2023**

Five session course on Survey Methods and Data Analysis

**November - December 2023**

Seven session course on Decolonising scholarship

**November 2023**

One day workshop on research problems/questions for starting PhDs

**November 2023**

Three-day course on Global Commodity Chains

**February 2024**

Post-fieldwork course (residential)

**March 2024**

Ten-lecture course on Ontology

**March-June 2024**

The annual PhD Training Course (four residential modules of 4 days + 2 days)

**June 2024**

Second offering of three-day course on Safety and Security in Fieldwork (in-person)

The Post-Fieldwork Course and the PhD Training Course are residential and for this reason, they both have a tuition fee. **In general, institutions pay, not the individual PhD student.**

All the other courses are free for CERES members (and associated Global South institutions). There is also the possibility for PhD students from EADI member institutions to participate in these courses with a subsidy offered by EADI. Please contact [ceres@ceresresearchschool.nl](mailto:ceres@ceresresearchschool.nl) for further information.

## COURSES

### 1. Safety and Security for Fieldwork/In-situ Research

**Teachers:** Dr Rodrigo Mena, Prof Dr Dorothea Hilhorst, Lea Liekefedt and invited trainers

**ECs:** 1.5

**Two offerings:**

**Online version**

25-27 October 2023 (13h-18h00 each day)

Tuition: free for members; 300 euros for non-members

**In-person version** (priority is given to participants of the PhD Training Course)

26-28 June 2024 (9h30 – 18h00 on first two days, half-day in the morning of the third day)

Location: International Institute of Social Studies (ISS, The Hague)

Tuition: free for members; 400 euros for non-members

**Description**

When conducting in-situ research or fieldwork, researchers often operate within complex and dynamic social and political contexts. From criminality, illness, and engagement with authoritarian authorities, to cybersecurity threats and disasters, researchers, research participants and collaborators face a wide range of risks that might affect their safety and security and the quality of the research process itself.

This course is designed to assist researchers in conducting their research in complex, remote or hazardous environments as safely, securely and ethically as possible, both for those working within their home country and for foreigners.

The content is organised into three main groups: (a) The main frameworks and theories of research safety and security with a focus on risk assessment and research ethics; (b) a review of specific fieldwork-related risks and actions designed to prevent them from happening; and (c) on preparedness and contingency planning so the researcher knows what to do if the risks become manifest.

The course has a workshop format with a two-fold teaching-learning methodology: one, through lecture sessions; two, through personal and group exercises on fieldwork research methodologies and techniques, risk assessment and risk reduction and safety and security. The course will also feature input from guest experts on mental health and wellbeing and cybersecurity.

The course also provides tools and forms that the participants can use to prepare themselves before and during fieldwork. These tools combine safety and security considerations with research methodologies to inform and support knowledge production.

By the end of the course, participants are expected to understand the relevance of safety and security considerations in research, understand major risks related to fieldwork research, and have an enhanced understanding of key preparations before, during and after in-situ research.

The course is equivalent to 1.5 ECs of course work towards those required for a PhD degree. To be awarded credit, full-time attendance of the course is compulsory, as is the study of the prescribed preparatory reading. The course requires the active participation of the students.



## 2. Survey Methods and Data Collection

### November 2023:

6 November from 11:00-13:00 and 14:00-16:00

7 November from 14:00-16:00

8 November from 11:00-13:00 and 14:00-16:00

**Teacher :** Prof Dr Arjun Bedi

**Location:** In-person at the International Institute of Social Studies (ISS, The Hague)

**Tuition:** free for members; 250 euros for non-members

**ECs:** 2.5

### Description:

This course responds to the increasing demand for primary (micro-) data collection. Typically, courses on statistics and econometrics focus on estimation and model specification and do not pay much attention to issues such as how the data used for the analysis have been collected, and/or the quality (coverage, accuracy) of the data. This course is designed to deal with such blind spots and addresses three main issues: 1) survey design and sampling strategies and implications of the survey design for data analysis; 2) sample size and power calculations; 3) dealing with non-response and measurement error. The course is practice-oriented and will rely on numerous examples to illustrate key ideas and approaches to data collection and discuss implementation issues such as questionnaire design and different methods of data collection (online, face to-face).

Even if you are not interested in collecting your own data but plan to use secondary data, the course will encourage you to interrogate the features of the data set and to evaluate how the data were collected and the consequences of the data collection strategy for your analysis. Although quantitative in orientation, it is also open to students interested in conducting qualitative surveys given that many of the principles apply and help to improve survey quality.



### 3. Decolonizing scholarship: writing against epistemicides

Every Thursday from 2 November to 14 December 2023, 10:00-13:00 (seven sessions)

**Teacher:** Dr. Nadira Omarjee

**Location:** 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> sessions at ISS, the rest online

**Tuition:** free for members; 400 euros for non-members.

**ECs:** 3.5

#### **Description:**

The course will address alternative, critical and social justice pedagogies together with research methodologies that speak to the scholarly project of critical and decolonial feminist perspectives. The pedagogical approach is based on Freirian perspectives of criticality and learning through sharing; with participating scholars developing the weekly sessions through consultations based on group requirements. As such, the course is part of developing a decolonial feminist pedagogical praxis through rethinking research methodologies in the project of engaged scholarship. It hopes to disrupt rigid notions of authoritative scholarship in which researchers, teachers and texts remain authorities on knowledge; and to re-value and re-centre scholar/activist/artist whilst continuing to challenge fixed binarisms that reify normative practices in scholarship.

However, a course outline is offered to the group with a comprehensive reading list which which is a collective ongoing archival process open to further readings. Furthermore, the course sessions will rely on blurring the lines between art/activism/scholarship in order to address the importance of intersecting ontology and epistemology. The success of the course is heavily reliant on scholarly participation for making this an inclusive process whilst disrupting colonial praxis.





## 4. One-day workshop on developing research problems and questions

**Tuesday 14 November 2023, 10:30-12:00 and 14:00-15:30**

**Teachers:** Prof Dr Andrew M Fischer

**Location:** Online via Zoom

**Tuition:** free for members; 50 euros for non-members

### **Description:**

This workshop focuses on the art of asking social scientific research questions by rooting these in the identification and specification of research problems. It is designed for PhDs who have recently started the degrees and as a primer for the full PhD Training Course (see below).



## 5. Global Commodity Chains

**20-22 November 2023, 11:00-13:00 and 14:30-16:30**

**Teacher:** Dr Ben Radley

**Location:** In person, International Institute of Social Studies (ISS, The Hague)

**Tuition:** free for members; 400 euros for non-members

**ECs:** 3

### **Description:**

The organization and governance of production within global commodity chains holds critical implications for local, national, and international processes of social and economic development. The 1980s to the 2010s was characterized by the offshoring of production from the global North to the global South. In recent years, supply chain disruptions caused by COVID-19 and the Russo-Ukrainian war have led to calls in certain quarters of the global North for the reshoring of production in the interests of national and regional security.

Located in this shifting context, this course will: 1) equip students with a critical and theoretically-informed understanding of the various approaches that have emerged over the last three decades to study and understand labour, firm, and state dynamics within and between commodity chains; 2) provide detailed empirical case studies of Southern efforts to integrate into and develop productive employment and capabilities within global commodity chains; 3) familiarize students with different methodological approaches to researching global commodity chains, and the associated ethical considerations and implementation challenges. For this, the course teacher will draw extensively (but not exclusively) on his decade of experience researching global mining and renewable energy commodity chains in Central Africa.



## 6. Post-fieldwork PhD course

**12-16 February 2024**

**Teacher:** Dr Raúl Pacheco-Vega (see <http://www.raulpacheco.org>)

**Location:** In person, residential

**Tuition:** members: 650 euros; non-members: 1000 euros (includes food and accommodation)  
**ECs:** 4

### **Description:**

This course is designed for post-fieldwork PhDs who are in the writing-up phase of their degrees, including the processing and analysing of data. It was offered last year for the first time by popular demand – the idea came from consultation with PhDs, who noted that they generally do not have any courses offered for this later phase of their degree

The course focuses on topics such as: 1) moving from proposing research to presenting what you researched; 2) Writing up fieldwork results (writing analytically, linking theory with evidence, and triangulating results); 3) Presenting qualitative and quantitative data in written output; and 4) developing a writing practice.



## 7. Social Ontology and Political Economy

5 March – 2 April 2024 (two lectures every Tuesday for five weeks: 11:00-13:00 and 15:00-17:00)

**Teacher:** Dr Karim Knio

**Location:** In person, International Institute of Social Studies (ISS, The Hague)

**Tuition:** free for members; 500 euros for non-members

**ECs:** 4

### **Description:**

This course aims to emphasize the necessity and desirability of embedding thematic and empirical research within ontological debates to produce rigorous scholarly research. It introduces students to fundamental debates in social ontology and highlights their subsequent implications on political economy analysis. Namely, the course focuses on two important ontological debates in their own right before it develops a cartography which charts their intersection, then this cartography is subsequently situated within the classic debate on neoliberalism in critical political economy literatures. In so doing, the course not only demonstrates how different approaches interpret and articulate neoliberalism, but it also reflects on the making of theoretical approaches in their own right. This should provide doctoral students with various analytical skills to help them in appropriately navigating through various academic literatures as well as situating their own research.



## 8. The CERES PhD Training Course

March – June 2024 (precise dates to be confirmed)

**Course leaders:** Prof Dr Andrew M Fischer and Prof Dr Tom de Herdt

**Teachers:** to be confirmed

**Location:** In-person and residential ( The Hague, Antwerp and Delft)

**ECs:** 16 (full course)

### **Tuition:**

Full Tuition

PhDs from member institutions: € 2500

PhDs from non-member institutions: € 5000

### **Description**

The PhD Training Course is the classic centrepiece of the CERES offering, designed for PhDs in their first year from member institutions across the Netherlands and Belgium (Flanders), although PhDs from non-member institutions are also welcome. The course provides them with a unique learning experience and is specifically tailored to support PhDs in preparation for the defence of their research proposals at the end of their first year, or for Research Masters students who wish to gain insight into this stage of doing a PhD or to prepare a research proposal for a PhD application. A range of issues is considered, relating to epistemology and ontology, positionality and subjectivity, philosophy of science, and an overview of the spectrum of interdisciplinary methodologies and methods that researchers commonly draw from in Development Studies, both quantitative and qualitative.



Two additional objectives of the course are to cultivate a general and shared understanding about what it means to do a PhD degree in the field of Development Studies, from the perspective of both theory as well as empirical research, and to cultivate a support network among the annual cohort of first-year PhD peers, which participants can continue to rely on throughout their PhD trajectory. The course also provides a safe space for PhDs, where they can discuss their research openly and creatively with their peers and senior researchers who are not (necessarily) in their supervision team.

The course begins in the beginning of March with an opening day at the Institute of Social Studies (ISS) in The Hague, followed by four modules of four days, ending in June. . Participants are also advised to take the June Safety and Security course for a complete first-year training.

Participants are expected to be resident during these modules. The first and fourth modules will be in a resident retreat setting, one will be at IOB in Antwerp, and another at the ISS. At the fourth and last module, PhDs present their proposals and receive feedback from their peers and teachers.

Participants are also expected to attend all four modules, in addition to the opening day at ISS and one ‘come-back’ day at the end of May.

Member institutions recognise the Training Course as contributing 16 ECTs towards those required for a PhD degree.

Module	Topic	Date
Introduction Day		1 March
1st Module	Proposing Research in Development Studies	11-14 March
2nd Module	Moving from Questions to Methodology	9-12 April
3rd Module	Methods clinic for development studies research	14-17 May
‘Come-back’ Day		30 May
4th Module	Presentation Tutorials	10-13 June

A detailed programme will be released in November

# Registration

**For registration, use the Google Form link below.** When registering, please be careful to fill in all the required details, including updated contact information and institutional affiliation. PhD researchers should also check the protocols of their own institutes in order to have their course credits recognized or to have eventual course costs covered by their institutions (For example, please verify if you need to include these courses in your Training and Supervision Plan, if you need approval from your research department/PhD Office before or after registering)

[https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1DbeOGZytOd0l2ptNi5AYuL6br\\_Jn-0m0dvTOZfy2qu4/edit](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1DbeOGZytOd0l2ptNi5AYuL6br_Jn-0m0dvTOZfy2qu4/edit)

Possibility of registration usually closes one week before the start of each course. For further questions and information not found on this programme, you can reach out to the CERES email:

[ceres@ceresresearchschool.nl](mailto:ceres@ceresresearchschool.nl)

**If you have registered and can no longer attend the course, please send a cancellation email to the CERES mail address above.** If you do not cancel in time, you may still be obliged to pay the course fee.



CERES 2019