Faculty of Social Sciences

SIMM34, Social Sciences: Digital Media Research, 7.5 credits
Samhällsvetenskap: Digital medieforskning, 7,5 högskolepoäng
Second Cycle / Avancerad nivå

Details of approval

The syllabus was approved by Graduate School Board on 2016-09-19 and was last revised on 2023-06-09. The revised syllabus applies from 2023-08-28, autumn semester 2023.

General Information

The course is offered as an interdisciplinary single subject course in Social Science at the second-cycle level and as an optional course within the Master of Science Programmes. The course is also a requisite course in the Master of Science Program in Media and Communication Studies.

Language of instruction: English

Main field of studies	*Depth of study relative to the degree requirements*
Sociology of Law	A1N, Second cycle, has only first-cycle course/s as entry requirements
Education	A1N, Second cycle, has only first-cycle course/s as entry requirements
Media and Communication Studies	A1N, Second cycle, has only first-cycle course/s as entry requirements
Sociology	A1N, Second cycle, has only first-cycle course/s as entry requirements
Political Science	A1N, Second cycle, has only first-cycle course/s as entry requirements
Social Anthropology	A1N, Second cycle, has only first-cycle course/s as entry requirements
Social Work	A1N, Second cycle, has only first-cycle course/s as entry requirements
Gender Studies	A1N, Second cycle, has only first-cycle course/s as entry requirements
Development Studies	A1N, Second cycle, has only first-cycle course/s as entry requirements

Main field of studies	Depth of study relative to the degree requirements
Human Geography	A1N, Second cycle, has only first-cycle course/s as entry requirements

Learning outcomes

Upon completion of the course, the student shall be able to:

Knowledge and understanding
- demonstrate knowledge of qualitative methods and contexts for understanding digital media empirical research in the social sciences.
- demonstrate an understanding of selected research design and research methods to digital media research methods.

Competence and skills
- evaluate the empirical claims of selected qualitative methods for different research issues associated with digital media in society and culture.
- produce, analyse and present research methods information using various forms of verbal and written communication.

Judgement and approach
- demonstrate critical evaluation of the empirical qualitative approaches to digital media within the social sciences.
- demonstrate understanding of the importance of reliable, valid and situated research in a critical study of digital media, society and culture.
- demonstrate insights in the possibilities and limitations of qualitative research on digital media environments within the social sciences.
- demonstrate an understanding of the ethical concerns in research design and in empirical digital media studies.

Course content

The course is based on qualitative multi-methods within digital media research. It offers an introduction to digital media research methods, emphasising the significance of reliable, valid and situated research in a critical study of digital media in society and culture. Digital media is understood to include business, public service and non commercial digital spaces. The course focuses on combining empirical research with critical social and cultural theories in order to emphasise how the digital media researcher uses, adapts and critically reflects on methods and concepts to research problems or questions.

The course examines three methods: the first method includes production studies, specifically the method of production interviews. This method is useful for institutional analysis of professionals, amateurs and practitioners where one to one interviews are necessary for understanding inside a digital production culture. The second method includes aesthetics and communicative form of digital media content, specifically text, sound and image analysis. This method is useful for studying selected samples of digital texts and representations in a range of content. The third method includes

qualitative textual analysis. This method is useful to investigate production/representation and reception in social media platforms, such as posts, captions, threads as well as the comments underneath. These three methods are connected to key concepts of media industries and professional practices, systemic and symbolic power within digital media environments, and everyday routines of digital practices.

Course design

The teaching consists of lectures, seminars and workshops.

Attendance and participation at seminars and in workshops are compulsory unless there are special grounds. An alternative form or date for compulsory components is offered to students who are not able to complete a compulsory component owing to circumstances beyond their control, e.g. accident, sudden illness or similar. This also applies to students who have missed teaching because of activities as student representatives.

Assessment

Assessment is based on the following:

- a written essay related to the selected methods and literature as studied during the course. The essay involves evaluation of methods and concepts associated with digital media research.
- a group research project with an oral presentation.

Three opportunities for examination are offered in conjunction with the course: a first examination and two re-examinations. Within a year of the end of the course, two further re-examinations on the same course content are offered. After this, further re-examination opportunities are offered but in accordance with the current course syllabus.

The examiner, in consultation with Disability Support Services, may deviate from the regular form of examination in order to provide a permanently disabled student with a form of examination equivalent to that of a student without a disability.

Subcourses that are part of this course can be found in an appendix at the end of this document.

Grades

Marking scale: Fail, E, D, C, B, A.
The grade for a non-passing result is Fail. The student's performance is assessed with reference to the learning outcomes of the course. For the grade of E the student must show acceptable results. For the grade of D the student must show satisfactory results. For the grade of C the student must show good results. For the grade of B the student must show very good results. For the grade of A the student must show excellent results. For the grade of Fail the student must have shown unacceptable results.

The group research project and oral presentation are exempted from the grading scale above. The grades awarded for this component is Pass or Fail. For the grade of Pass, the student must show acceptable results. For the grade of Fail, the student must have shown unacceptable results.

For a grade of Pass on the entire course, the student must have been awarded at least E on all assessments for which the grading scale A–E+Fail applies, and the grade of Pass on all assessments for which the grading scale Pass – Fail applies. The student must also have participated in all compulsory components. At the start of the course, students are informed about the learning outcomes stated in the syllabus and about the grading scale and how it is applied on the course.

Entry requirements

For admission to the course, students must have passed at least 150 credits including a Bachelor's degree project in the social sciences, humanities or the equivalent.

Oral and written proficiency in English corresponding to a Pass in English 6/B from Swedish upper secondary school is a requirement. The assessment of corresponding qualifications is made with reference to national guidelines. International students are exempted from the general entry requirement of proficiency in Swedish.

Subcourses in SIMM34, Social Sciences: Digital Media Research

Applies from V24

2401   Digital Media Research, 7,5 hp
     Grading scale: Fail, E, D, C, B, A

Applies from V18

1801   Essay, 7,5 hp
     Grading scale: Fail, E, D, C, B, A