SIMM35, Social Sciences: Digital Ethnography, 7.5 credits

Samhällsvetenskap: Digital Etnografi, 7,5 högskolepoäng

Second Cycle / Avancerad nivå

Details of approval

The syllabus was approved by Graduate School Board on 2017-11-21 and was last revised on 2018-11-26. The revised syllabus applies from 2018-12-13, spring semester 2019.

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 in Development Studies, Global Studies and Social Studies of Gender.

Language of instruction: English

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

Human Geography   A1N, Second cycle, has only first-cycle
                                   course/s as entry requirements

Learning outcomes

On completion of the course, the student shall:

Knowledge and understanding
- demonstrate understanding of the particular characteristics of online and offline environments – including the intersection, and their implications for ethnographical methods.
- demonstrate knowledge of the digital ethnographical practices and an understanding of their epistemological background.

Competence and skills
- produce, analyse and present digital ethnographies using various forms of verbal and written communication.
- evaluate the empirical claims of digital ethnographies for different research issues, especially associated with the intersection of online and offline.

Judgement and approach
- demonstrate critical evaluation, including the potentials and limits, of digital ethnographical approaches to online and offline environments within the social sciences.
- assess empirical research in terms of how reliable, valid and situated it is in relation to critical studies of digital media, culture and society.

Course content

The course is based on a digital ethnographical approach in order to study how social interaction and social worlds today are played out in online and offline environments. Thereby traditional social scientific concepts and distinctions are articulated in new ways. It follows the inductive and iterative principle of ethnographical methods, which means that it starts off in the concrete methodological practices, and will thereafter move the focus to theoretical aspects, necessary for the analytical craft. Essential here is that the course is practice-led, meaning that the critical social and cultural theories will be approached through digital ethnographical practice. The course is loosely structured in four parts. The aim of the introductory part is to define and outline digital ethnography as a method and as a research field. The second part focuses on socialities; how they are expressed and how they can be studied across online and offline contexts. In the third part we will use particular digital ethnographical tools to study selves and social interaction. The, 'thick description and poetic writing', is about the craft of observation and the aesthetic aspects of presentation. Overall, the course critically examines how digital ethnography offers a reflexive knowledge about the intersections between online and offline realms, subjective and material relations, the interplay between the private and the public, as well as socio-cultural differences due to gender, ethnicity and class.

Course design

The teaching consists of lectures, seminars and workshops.

Unless there are valid reasons to the contrary, compulsory participation in seminars and workshops is required. Students who have been unable to participate due to circumstances such as accidents or sudden illness will be offered the opportunity to compensate for or re- take compulsory components. This also applies to students who have been absent because of duties as an elected student representative.

Assessment

Assessment is based on the following:

- an empirically based, individual written, essay related to a selected method, literature and area as studied during the course. The essay has a focus on methodological reflection and evaluation as well as analytical depth,
- group based oral presentations on course literature for seminars,
- group based assignments for seminars and workshops.

The course includes opportunities for assessment at a first examination, a re-sit close to the first examination and a second re-sit for courses that have ended during that school year. Two further re-examinations on the same course content are offered within a year of the end of the course. 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 final grade is based the individually written essay. The oral presentation, group assignments, and active participation are exempt from the grading scale above. The grades for these components are 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.In order to pass the course, the student has to be awarded at least an E on the graded assignment and a "pass" on the ungraded assignments.

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

To be admitted to the course, students must have completed 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 SIMM35, Social Sciences: Digital Ethnography

Applies from V18

1801   Individual course paper, 7,5 hp
       Grading scale: Fail, E, D, C, B, A