Faculty of Social Sciences

SIMM56, Process Tracing, 7.5 credits
Process-spårning, 7,5 högskolepoäng
Second Cycle / Avancerad nivå

Details of approval

The syllabus was approved by Graduate School Board on 2021-11-29 to be valid from 2022-01-17, spring semester 2022.

General Information

The course is offered as an interdisciplinary single subject course in the Social Sciences at the second-cycle level, and as an optional course within the Master Programmes in Social Scientific Data Analysis, Global Studies, Middle Eastern Studies, Social Studies of Gender and Development Studies.

Language of instruction: English

Main field of studies	*Depth of study relative to the degree requirements*
Gender Studies	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
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
Sociology of Law	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
Social Work	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

Learning outcomes

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

Knowledge and understanding
- Describe process tracing as a methodological tool, using the appropriate terms and concepts.
- Identify and discuss the position of process tracing in the methodological field, based on its underlying ontological and epistemological assumptions.
- Explain how process tracing can be applied in cases of actual research in Social Sciences.

Competence and skills
- Apply process tracing to assigned research areas.
- Concretely and precisely analyse and communicate the essence of process tracing based studies to others.

Judgement and approach
- With academic precision, critically discuss and evaluate research based on process tracing.
- With academic precision, critically discuss and assess the implications of design choices in planning a process tracing study.

Course content

Process tracing is a research method which is increasingly used in the social sciences and in policy evaluation. Process tracing is about unpacking a causal process in a case and tracing how it worked empirically, which enables strong with-in case inferences about causal processes.

The course situates process tracing in the methodological field, relating it to other small-N analysis as well as large-N analysis. It provides an understanding of the ontological and epistemological underpinnings of the method.

The course explores the core elements of process tracing, by focusing on both the theory side of what we are tracing (the causal processes or mechanisms) and the empirics (evidence of the operation of the causal mechanism). The course aims to provide the students with the necessary tools, enabling them to apply process tracing in their own research.

Course design

The course consists of lectures and seminars. Unless there are valid reasons to the contrary, compulsory participation is required in seminars. Group discussions and group work make up important parts of the learning activities.

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 individual reflection paper on own area of research, related to seminar discussion and course literature (20%).
- A group reflection paper related to seminar discussion and course literature (30%).
- An individually written project design paper related to the course content and the course literature (50%).

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. 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.

The overall course grade is based on the following distribution:

- An individual reflection paper on own area of research, related to seminar discussion and course literature (20%).
- A group reflection paper related to seminar discussion and course literature (30%).
- An individually written project design paper related to the course content and the course literature (50%).

The grade for the entire course consists of the average weighted grade of all assessed assignments (A=5, B=4, C=3, D=2, E=1) based on each component's percentage value. For a grade of Pass on the entire course, the student must have been awarded at least an E on all assessments for which the for which the grading scale A-E+Fail applies. The student must also have participated in all compulsory components.

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.

Subcourses in SIMM56, Process Tracing

Applies from V22

2201   Process Tracing, 7,5 hp
      Grading scale: Fail, E, D, C, B, A