Faculty of Social Sciences

# SIMP55, The Process of Social Research, 15 credits

*Den samhällsvetenskapliga forskningsprocessen, 15 högskolepoäng*

**Second Cycle / Avancerad nivå**

## Details of approval

The syllabus was approved by Graduate School Board on 2021-02-25 (STYR 2021/634) and was last revised on 2026-05-06. The revised syllabus comes into effect 2026-05-06 and is valid from the autumn semester 2026.

## General information

The course is offered as an interdisciplinary single subject course in Social Sciences at the second-cycle level, as a mandatory course within the Master Programme in Social Scientific Data Analysis.

*Language of instruction:* English

| *Main field of study* | *Specialisation* |
|---|---|
| Sociology of Law | 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 |
| 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 |
| 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 |
| 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 and understanding the steps of the social scientific research process and how they are integrated;
- demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the definitions of key concepts within social scientific research, to especially include: theory, methods, and methodology;
- demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the connection between theory and empirical data, in particular the concepts of induction, deduction, abduction, and retroduction;
- demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the roles of publication and communication of research results.

### Competence and skills

- independently and with proficiency, demonstrate the ability to operationalise diverse theoretical concepts;
- independently and with proficiency, demonstrate the ability to design a variety of social scientific research projects;
- both independently and as part of a group, demonstrate the ability to write a convincing social scientific research proposal;
- independently and with proficiency, demonstrate the ability to provide constructive critique to other students' social scientific research proposals through peer review;
- demonstrate the ability to design a convincing mixed-methods research project;
- independently and with proficiency, demonstrate the ability to be able to conceptualise and plan how to locate, obtain, or gather relevant data in relation to a given research problem.

### Judgement and approach

- independently and critically reflect on methodological debates about research paradigms;
- independently and critically reflect on and respond to the ethical issues involved in a given research project;
- independently and critically apply knowledge about diverse social scientific paradigms in order to enhance understanding of and planning of scientific research.

## Course content

This course aims to teach the student about the overall research process and social scientific research design. It begins by grounding the student with a common language and the key concepts that are used in social scientific research. The student learns about the logic of research itself, including applied theory of science, research

designs (including mixed-methods designs), and gains practice in designing contrasting research proposals.
This course also introduces discipline-specific theory of science, paradigms, research design, and data. Students also learn about research management, publication and communication, peer review, and ethics.

## Course design

The teaching consists of lectures, seminars, and workshops. The course is teaching-intensive and requires a high degree of participation. Participation in seminars is mandatory. Failure to participate in seminars will be compensated for with written make-up assignments during the course.

## Assessment

The assessment of the course consists of three written assignments: two home assignments (one group assignment and one individual) and one individual in-class assignment.

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 reexamination 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.

## Grades

Grading scale includes the grades: U=Fail, E=Sufficient, D=Satisfactory, C=Good, B=Very Good, A=Excellent
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 overall grade for the course is based on the following components:

- Written group home assignment I: 50% of final course grade
- Written individual home assignment II: 50% of final course grade

The in-class written assignment is exempt from the grading scale above. The grades 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. The student's overall grade on the course will be determined by Written home assignments I and II.

The grade for the entire course consists of a weighted average of the graded components for which A = 5, B = 4, C = 3, D = 2, E = 1. In cases where the average yielded has a decimal of 0.5 or highter, the value should be rounded up to the nearest whole number. 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.

The student must also have participated in all compulsory components.

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 have been awarded pass on all assessments for which the grading scale Pass/Fail applies. The student must have also participated in all compulsory components or have submitted the required make-up assignments for those missed.

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 in the course.

## Entry requirements

To be eligible for the course students must have a Bachelor's degree with a major (i.e. at least 90 ECTS credits) in Development Studies, Gender Studies, Human Geography, Political Science, Social Anthropology, Social Work, Sociology or Sociology of Law, or the equivalent.

Oral and written proficiency in English equivalent to English 6/B (advanced) from Swedish upper secondary school is a requirement. International qualifications will be assessed in accordance with national guidelines.

## Further information

The course cannot be included in a degree together with the course SIMM51 *The Social Scientific Research Design and Process*, 15 credits.