SADE001, Digital Ethnography, 7.5 credits, third cycle

The course was adopted by the Board of the Lund University Faculty of Social Sciences 23 November 2017 and the syllabus approved by the Board of the Faculty of Social Sciences 13 December 2017.

The syllabus is valid from the spring semester 2018.

A. General information
The course is an interdisciplinary third-cycle course offered at the Faculty of Social Sciences.

The language of instruction is English.

B. Learning outcomes
On completion of the course, the student shall be able to

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.

C. 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.
The course 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. Furthermore, an important point of departure is that the digital is understood as an expansion of spaces where everyday lives are played out – as well as something affecting the way the ethnographer conduct research. In other words, digital ethnography highlights not only what we study (expanded spaces of everyday life), but how we study it (the usage of the digital).

The first part of the course is devoted to basic ethnographical practices, such as observation, participation and interviewing which are related to digital media forms. From this starting point follows fieldwork and analyses, loosely structured in three parts: 1) social actors; 2) socialities and participatory collectivities; and 3) material things. A focus on social actors implies analytical attention to how social media platforms changes the conditions for social interaction, presentation of selves and the renegotiated boundaries between private and public. A subsequent focus on socialities and participatory collectivities highlights how social media have become vital for different kinds of mobilization, including political, public and popular culture events. The third aspect, material things, focuses such things as mobile media and what they mean for the constitution of everyday life spaces. 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.

D. **Course design**
The teaching consists of lectures, seminars and workshops. Attendance at seminars is 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.

E. **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.
F. Grades
The grades awarded are Pass or Fail. To be awarded a grade of Pass, students must have attained the learning outcomes stated for the course, and 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 in the course.

G. Admission requirements
To be admitted to the course, the student must be admitted to research studies. If a selection of participants is necessary, doctoral students at the Faculty of Social Sciences have priority.