Course Information

Critical methodologies in ethnic and migration studies, 7,5 credits
Course Code: 742A24 & 742A45
Spring Semester 2019

Course Coordinator: Zoran Slavnic,
e-mail: zoran.slavnic@liu.se
Aim of the course

After successful completion of the course the student shall be able to:
- display an in-depth knowledge of various methodological perspectives and practical research methods in the field of research Ethnicity and migration;
- critically reflect on the interconnections of theory and method;
- critically reflect on ethical dilemmas, possibilities and limitations of different methodological approaches.
- design and present an outline of an independent scientific investigation.

Contents

This course provides an introduction to methodology and research methods in the social sciences and humanities as applied in studies on ethnic relations, ethnic diversity, migration, discrimination, racism and social inclusion/exclusion. The course focuses, on the one hand on the methodological heterogeneity of the field. Four major methodological dichotomies are going to be presented – Objectivism vs relativism, Historical vs Positivist/Empirical methods, Engagement vs Neutrality, and Quantitative vs Qualitative research methods. On the other hand, focus is going to be on developing a basic method skills, through in-depth specialization in one or a few research methods in ethnic and migration studies, such as: text analysis, narrative analysis and ethnographic method.

Teaching

The course offers a combination of lectures, seminars and workshops. Language of instruction is English. The course comprises of two 5 weeks (7,5 credits) blocks of full time studies.

Lectures are complementary to the literature. Seminars and workshops are important aspects of the learning process and provide opportunities for mutual, critical discussions which develop attitudes and skills.

Students are expected to be well prepared for lectures and to have completed assigned preparations for seminars. Students are expected to read and take in the literature independently and/or in self-organized reading groups. Activities which constitute elements of examination are mandatory

Schedule

For updated schedule always see link to Timeedit.
Attendance

Students are welcome and encouraged to attend and audit open events in the REMESO research community, such as the REMESO seminars, PhD defenses, guest lectures and open workshops. They are also kindly asked to show courtesy in case seating at such events is limited.

Unless otherwise noted, attendance at scheduled master’s advanced seminars, tutorials and group work is expected.

Students who due to illness or other personal or private circumstances are unable to attend for substantial periods (two consecutive days/seminars or more) should notify the course director.

Class Room Culture

Students and teachers will collectively set rules concerning class room culture. However, teachers may always ask students to turn off and store away equipment that causes disturbances.

Examination

The course is examined through seminar participation (20 percent), oral presentations based on a written assignments (40 percent) and a course paper (40 percent).

The instructions for the oral presentations based on a written assignments are going to be handed out during the first week of the course.

The course paper should have the form of PM for design of an independent scientific investigation (6-8 pages, excl. the list of references, Times New Roman 12, 1.5 spacing and 2,5 cm margins).

The language of examination is English. Students failing an exam covering either the entire course or part of the course twice are entitled to have a new examiner appointed for the reexamination. Students who have passed an examination may not retake it in order to improve their grades.

Examination codes: SEM1 Seminar participation 1.5 hp EC
SEM2 Seminar presentation 3 hp EC
EXAM Examination 3 hp EC

Grading Criteria

In grading the examinations, the programme uses the Erasmus Credit Transfer System, or ECTS. It contains the following grades: A (excellent), B (very good), C (good), D (satisfactory), E (sufficient), FX (fail – some more work required) and F (fail).
Written papers are graded by assessing the quality of the paper in three separate respects.

1) Presentation, organisation and formalia.
Teachers look at the presentation and the general ability of the student to make clear and intelligible formulations. We look at the general structure and disposition of the paper. We inquire whether the fundamental questions are formulated clearly, whether there is a correspondence between the purpose, contents and conclusions of the paper, or, in case of a less academic and more essayistic approach, whether the form is adequate to the content and message. Whenever relevant to the assignment, this also includes traditional formalia respects (e.g. how references, footnotes, literature are handled).

2) Knowledge and understanding.
Teachers assess whether the student shows real insight into the problem chosen. Has she/he understood relevant theories and concepts? Does the paper show that the student is familiar with the relevant literature? We ask questions about correctness (or appropriateness) of terminology and the relevance and correctness of facts, presentations of theories and theses described in the paper. We look at the argumentation. Is anything important missing?

3) Creativity and critical approach.
Teachers assess the originality and independence reflected in the student’s discussion, argumentation and conclusion. Does the student approach the subject matter, methodology and theory in a critical manner? Are there things that are really the student’s own inventions? A new original argument? An innovative conclusion? Or a new distinction (which really can be an important thing) or a new theoretical approach?

In each respect, a student can fulfil these criteria to a (i) high degree, to an (ii) acceptable degree, or (iii) to an unacceptable degree.

After assessing the examination paper as fulfilling to a high, acceptable or unacceptable degree the criteria for each of the three respects (1. Language, organisation and formalia; 2. Knowledge and understanding; 3. Creativity and critical approach), the examiner grades the paper in correspondence with the ECTS grading scale, as follows:

A = High degree in all three respects
B = High degree in two respects and acceptable in the third
C = High degree in one respect and acceptable in the other two.
D = Acceptable in all three respects.
E = Acceptable or high degree in “Language, organisation and formalia” as well as “Knowledge and understanding”) but lacking in “Creativity and critical approach”.
FX = Lacking in either “Language, organisation and formalia” or “Knowledge and understanding”.
F = Lacking in both “Language, organisation and formalia” and “Knowledge and understanding”.

Course Schedule

1) WEEK 1

Course Introduction

**Tue 22 January 10-12 - Modes of social inquiry - Zoran Slavnic, REMESO**

Required reading:

- Bishop, R.C. (2007) The Philosophy of Social Sciences, London and NY, Continuum (Ch. 3 pp.45-80)

**Tue 22 January 15-17 - The dilemma of ethnic/racial categorization in quantitative research – Olav Nygård, REMESO**

Required reading:


Suggested reading:


Thu 24 January 10-12 – Hermeneutical method, silence and the ethics of representation - Patricia Lorenzoni, REMESO

Taking as a starting point hermeneutical methods of understanding across temporal and cultural differences, as well as histories of transatlantic slavery and insurgencies, this lecture/seminar will discuss archival absences, production of silences and the ethics of representation when working with suffering and trauma.

Required reading:


Mon 28 January 10-12 – Seminar

Ethnography

2) WEEK 2 - Historical (multidimensional) vs positivist/empirical (static slices) methods in study of social/institutional reality

Wed 30 January 09-10 - Tutorials

Thu 31 January 10-12 - Decolonial approaches to methodology - Xolani Tshabalala, REMESO

This lecture invites students of migration and ethnicity to reflect on dominant ideologies that shape social science research. By approaching methodology from a decolonial perspective, the aim is to encourage critical thinking on how processes of knowledge production are always mediated by structural power dynamics that configure the contemporary world system.
Required reading:


Suggested reading:


Mon 4 February 10-12 – Seminar

Narrative analysis

3) WEEK 3 - Engagement vs neutrality - view from nowhere objectivity vs stand point methodology

Tue 05 February 10-12 - Feminist methodology: embodied and situated knowledges – Mona Livholts, Division Social Work

This lecture invites you as a student to reflect on the contribution from feminist- and intersectionality studies to promote embodied and situated knowledge(s). The lecture actualizes a politics of location and translation, researcher accountability, ways of seeing, and diffractive story-telling. It brings forth the transformative role of textual representation through diverse writing genres in feminist- and ethnic studies as a methodological tool to de-colonise and de-hegemonise knowledge.

Required reading


Suggested reading:
Connell, Raewyn (2007) *Southern Theory. The Global Dynamics of Knowledge in Social Science* (choose chapters out of interest)

**Thu 07 February 10-12** - *Engagement and a search for a historical subject – reflections on critical and public sociology* - **Anders Neergaard** – REMESO

**Required reading:**


**Mon 11 February 10-12** – Seminar

Text analysis

4) **WEEK 4 - Qualitative research vs Quantitative research**

**Tue 12 February 13-15** – Discourse Analysis in Ethnic and Migrations Studies – **Peo Hansen**, REMESO

**Required reading:**


Suggested reading:


**Wed 13 February 09-10 – Tutorials**

**Thu 14 February 10-12 - Research Policy - ethical, regulatory and legal aspects - Zoran Slavnic, REMESO**

Required reading (ca 100 sider)


Suggested reading:

5) WEEK 5 (Mon 18 February – Fri 22 February) - EXAMINATION PERIOD

Required reading list


Suggested reading list


