

Behavioural Mechanisms in the Social Sciences

Beteendemekanismer i samhällsvetenskapen

7.5 credits

Single subject course

771A14

Valid from: 2018 Autumn semester

Determined by	Main field of study	
The Quality Board at the Faculty of Arts and Sciences	Computational Social Science	
Date determined	Course level	Progressive specialisation
2017-10-20	Second cycle	A1N
Revised by	Disciplinary domain	
	Social sciences	
Revision date	Subject group	
	Other Subjects within Social Science	
Offered first time	Offered for the last time	
Autumn semester 2018		
Department	Replaced by	
Institutionen för ekonomisk och industriell utveckling		

Entry requirements

- 180 ECTS credits passed including 90 ECTS credits within one of the following areas humanities, social-, cultural-, behavioural-, natural-, computer-, or engineering-sciences.
- English corresponding to the level of English in Swedish upper secondary education (Engelska 6 or Engelska nivå 2).
Exemption from Swedish.

Intended learning outcomes

After completion of the course, the student should at an advanced level be able to:

- formulate explanations of behavior based on the underlying cognitive mechanisms;
- evaluate compatibilities and incompatibilities between various mechanistic explanations of behavior;
- generalize specific behaviors into larger theoretical frameworks to explain social action;
- draw from various theoretical approaches to hypothesize specific behaviors under various social conditions;
- construct theoretical models that link micro-level behaviors to macro-level outcomes.

Course content

This course will explore a broad range of mechanisms to explain human behavior at the individual level. It covers rational choice explanations of action, heuristic decision-making, such as satisficing, and cognitive biases that influence behavior. The material is interdisciplinary and may draw from fields such as sociology, economics, psychology, and neuroscience. The focus is placed on the micro foundations of behavior, but presented within the context of linking the micro-actions of social actors to macro-social outcomes.

Teaching and working methods

The teaching consists of lectures, readings, and seminars. Homework and independent studies are a necessary complement to the course.
Language of instruction: English.

Examination

The course is examined through written assignments, active participation in seminars, and a written individual final assignment. Detailed information about the examination can be found in the course's study guide.

If special circumstances prevail, and if it is possible with consideration of the nature of the compulsory component, the examiner may decide to replace the compulsory component with another equivalent component.

If the LiU coordinator for students with disabilities has granted a student the right to an adapted examination for a written examination in an examination hall, the student has the right to it.

If the coordinator has recommended for the student an adapted examination or alternative form of examination, the examiner may grant this if the examiner assesses that it is possible, based on consideration of the course objectives.

An examiner may also decide that an adapted examination or alternative form of examination if the examiner assessed that special circumstances prevail, and the examiner assesses that it is possible while maintaining the objectives of the course.

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.

Grades

ECTS, EC

Other information

Planning and implementation of a course must take its starting point in the wording of the syllabus. The course evaluation included in each course must therefore take up the question how well the course agrees with the syllabus.

The course is conducted in such a way that there are equal opportunities with regard to sex, transgender identity or expression, ethnicity, religion or other belief, disability, sexual orientation and age.

If special circumstances prevail, the vice-chancellor may in a special decision specify the preconditions for temporary deviations from this course syllabus, and delegate the right to take such decisions.

About teaching and examination language

The teaching language is presented in the Overview tab for each course. The examination language relates to the teaching language as follows:

- If teaching language is “Swedish”, the course as a whole could be given in Swedish, or partly, or as a whole, in English. Examination language is Swedish, but parts of the examination can be in English.
- If teaching language is “English”, the course as a whole is taught in English. Examination language is English.
- If teaching language is “Swedish/English”, the course as a whole will be taught in English if students without prior knowledge of the Swedish language participate. Examination language is Swedish or English depending on teaching language.