Stockholm University

# Syllabus

for course at advanced level

**Digital Anthropology**

**Digital antropologi**

**7.5 Higher Education Credits**

**7.5 ECTS credits**

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| **Course code:** | SAM215 |
| **Valid from:** | Spring 2011 |
| **Date of approval:** | 2011-09-13 |
| **Department** | Department of Social Anthropology |
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| **Main field:** | Social Anthropology |
| **Specialisation:** | A1N - Second cycle, has only first-cycle course/s as entry requirements |

**Decision**

Syllabus approved 2007-06-11.
Revised and re-approved 2008-06-23.
Revised and re-approved 2009-06-15.

**Prerequisites and special admittance requirements**

**Course structure**

| Examination code | Name | Higher Education Credits |
|---|---|---|
| M215 | Digital Anthropology | 7.5 |

**Course content**

The emergence of information and communication technology (ICT) has created new premises for social life, characterized by interactivity, communication, networks and translocality. In high tech societies, the Internet and mobile phones have become an integral part of daily life, but digital technology is of growing significance in developing countries as well, not least in relation to modernization and globalization.

This course examines the development and use of ICT in different social and cultural contexts, from an anthropological perspective. Digital technology is treated as a cultural construct, the characteristics and impact of which are analyzed through theories on the interplay between technology and society. Ethnographies of Internet and mobile phone use in different parts of the worlds and in virtual environments will be used to examine issues such as culture, power and identity. The course will also examine relevant ethnographic research methods, exemplified through empirical case studies.

**Learning outcomes**

On completion of the course students will be able to:

* Use anthropological theories and concepts to identify and explain the development and use of ICT
* Relate anthropological theories to empirical case studies investigated during the course
* Apply ethnographic research methods to studies of ICT

**Education**

Course instruction consists of lectures, seminars, project work and an electronic learning platform (Mondo)

Course requirements:
* At least 80% attendance. More than 20% absence has to be compensated, in consultation with the teacher
* Completion of all exercises and assignments, including take home exam
* Active participation in seminars
* Active participation in Mondo

The course evaluation will assess how well-related the implementation of the course was in regard to achieving the learning objectives.

The course is given in English.

### Forms of examination
Examination through written assignments, project work and a take home exam.

Exams and assignments may be written in Swedish or English.

In order to receive a grade for the course you must be formally registered for it and attend at least 50% of the scheduled classes.

Grades will be assigned according to a seven-step, goal-related grading scale (A-F). Students receiving the grades Fx or F (failing) have the possibility of supplementing their assignments or exams and improving their grades. Supplemented or late assignments or exams cannot receive a grade higher than a C (Exceptions may be made in certain situations after consultation with the Director of Studies).

Students receiving the grades Fx or F on an exam may take the exam at least four more times (as long as the course is being given) in order to attain a grade of at least E. In order to get a final grade for the course, all assignments and exams must be passed with at least a grade of at least E on the seven-step grading scale.

Students who have received at least an E may not take an exam again to attempt to get a higher grade.

Students who have received an Fx or and F on a course exam twice from the same examiner may request another examiner to grade the exam. Such requests should be directed to the Department Board.

Grading criteria will be distributed at the beginning of the course.

### Interim
Students may demand that examination according to this syllabus be provided no more than three times during a two-year period after the course has ceased to be given. Demand for examination should be directed to the Departmental Board. Other obligatory parts of the course are also included in this rule.

### Limitations
Students may demand that examination according to this syllabus be provided no more than three times during a two-year period after the course has ceased to be given. Demand for examination should be directed to the Departmental Board. Other obligatory parts of the course are also included in this rule.

### Required reading
Boellstorff, Tom. 2008. Coming of Age in Second Life. An Anthropologist Explores the Virtually Human. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Castells, Manuel (ed). 2004. The Network Society. A Cross-cultural Perspective. Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar.

Doostdar, Alireza . 2004. "The Vulgar Spirit of Blogging: On Language, Culture, and Power in Persian Weblogestan", in American Anthropologist 106(4):651–62.

Hannerz, Ulf. 1992. "The global ecumene as a network of networks," in Adam Kuper (ed) Conceptualizing Society. London: Routledge.

Hannerz, Ulf. 1980. "Chapter 5: Thinking with networks", in Exploring the City. Inquiries Toward an Urban Anthropology. New York: Columbia University Press

Horst, Heather A. and Daniel Miller. 2006. The Cell Phone: An Anthropology of Communication. Oxford: Berg

Ito, Mizuko et al. 2008. Living and Learning with New Media: Summary of Findings from the Digital Youth Project. Chicago: The MacArthur Foundation.
http://digitalyouth.ischool.berkeley.edu/files/report/digitalyouth-WhitePaper.pdf

Kelty, Christopher. 2008. Two Bits. The Cultural Significance of Free Software. Duke University Press.
http://twobits.net

Miller, Daniel and Don Slater. 2000. The Internet: An Ethnographic Approach. Oxford: Berg

Uimonen, Paula. 2009. Internet, Arts and Translocality in Tanzania, in Social Anthropology, 17:3.

Please note that there may be substitutions of course literature when necessary.