Advanced methodology course: Social Media and Digital Methods

About the course

subject	Global Studies / Internationale udviklingsstudier / International Public Administration and Politics / Politik / Politik og forvaltning
activitytype	master course
Teaching language	English
Registration	You register for activities through stads selvbetjening during the announced registration period, which you can see on the Study administration homepage. When registering for courses, please be aware of the potential conflicts and overlaps between course and exam time and dates. The planning of course activities at Roskilde University is based on the recommended study programmes, which should not overlap. However, if you choose optional courses and/or study plans that goes beyond the recommended study programmes, an overlap of lectures or exam dates may occur depending on which courses you choose. In case of too few registrations, the course will be cancelled.
Detailed description of content	The rise of new types of digital data, the varieties of social life taking place on social media platforms and the integration of social media interactions in our daily life, not only enable new relations between quantitative and qualitative methods of inquiry, but also provides students and researchers with immense data to work with. The aim of the course is to familiarize students with social media and digital methods, enable them to apply complimentary mixed methods approaches on retrieved data. The course will be structured around a mini research project, which takes students through several stages: from Problem formulation, research design, data collection to data analysis. Methodologically, students will learn a wide range of methods and skills for conducting social media analysis. As part of the Global Studies program, we will discuss the role of social media in global politics, and how digital methods can help explore and expand the understanding of online culture, communication, politics, and activism. Though this course is mainly related to the extraction and analysis of digital data, we also discuss this data in relation to other types of media and institutional relations in order to connect this communication to a wider political system. Course Format The course is a combination of lectures, group work exercises and individual tasks. Each class will have reading tasks, video guides and instructions, which are highly suggested to be read and watched before coming to class. Students are expected to bring laptops and participate actively in class. It is highly suggested that students show up in class or attend classes online (in case of online teaching), without following the progression of each step and completing in time and in class or online, students might not be able to proceed to next step or even might not pass the final exam. Exercises follow a natural progression from identifying a case study, to data collection and finally analysis and potentially visualization. The students are expected to bring their laptops and participate actively in the exercises that are the basis of the portfolio exam. The exercises are based on group work and submissions during the course can be done in the groups that are working together, however, students are required to hand in the final INDIVIDUAL written assignment for the course exam in a written form that is clearly individually formulated and distinguishable. First Exercise: ● Problem formulation: o Defining a real life problem that is part of social media debates and arguing for its research relevance o Preparing a tentative research question and working questions Second Exercise ● Data collection

o Identifying relevant hashtags

o Starting data inquiry on API's (students will be guided on how to do this)

Third exercise

● Analysis I

o Making sense of data

o Analyzing the collected data (mostly quantitative)

o Preparing visualizations using (Excel and Gephi)

Forth Exercise

● Analysis II

o Combining methods (qualitative and quantitative)

o In-depth analysis

o Preliminary conclusions

o Individual reflections on findings

Knowledge

Knowledge about the technical and practical aspects of data collection and analysis through social media platforms Knowledge about various relevant tools for digital methods in relation to collecting and analyzing social media data

Skills

Skills to collect data through the available tools for data collection on Facebook and Twitter Skills to analyze and present digital data based on quantitative and qualitative criteria

Competencies

Competencies to design a study based on digital data from social media platforms Competencies to assess the quality of contemporary digital data studies based on a technical knowledge of the infrastructure and available tools Competencies to analyze, contextualize, and relate a specific online case to broader global issues and trends.

NB *The course adopts the newest tools and methods for social media analysis, but currently the course focuses primarily on collection and analysis of social media data from Twitter, because it is the most accessible platform for teaching purposes.*

| Expected work effort (ECTS-declaration) | The course runs once a week, with five course days in total Each course day is based on two modules = 3 hours and 30 minuttes. |
| | Home and peerreview is = 27,5 hours Preparation time = 50 hours Exam work = 40 hours Total hours = 135 hours |

Course material and Reading list

Books:

● Sloan, L. and Quan-Haase, A. (2017) The SAGE Handbook of Social Media Research Methods, The SAGE Handbook of Social Media Research Methods. doi: 10.4135/9781473983847.

● Weller, K., Bruns, A., Burgess, J., Mahrt, M., & Puschmann, C. (Red.). (2013). Twitter and Society (2nd ed. edition). New York: Peter Lang Inc., International Academic Publishers.

Articles:

● Snelson, C. L. (2016) 'Qualitative and mixed methods social media research: A review of the literature', International Journal of Qualitative Methods. doi: 10.1177/1609406915624574.

● danah boyd & Kate Crawford (2012) CRITICAL QUESTIONS FOR BIG DATA. Information, Communication & Society, 15:5, 662-679

● Driscoll, K., & Walker, S. (2014). Big Data, Big Questions| Working Within a Black Box: Transparency in the Collection and Production of Big Twitter Data. International Journal of Communication, 8(0), 20. http://ijoc.org/index.php/ijoc/article/view/2171

● Lomborg, S., & Bechmann, A. (2014). Using APIs for Data Collection on Social Media. The Information Society, 30(4), 256–265. https://doi.org/10.1080/01972243.2014.915276

● Rieder, B., Abdulla, R., Poell, T., Woltering, R., & Zack, L. (2015). Data critique and analytical opportunities for very large Facebook Pages: Lessons learned from exploring "We are all Khaled Said". Big Data & Society, 2(2), 205395171561498. https://doi.org/10.1177/2053951715614980

● Rogers, R. (2015). Digital Methods for Web Research. In Robert A. Scott & S. M. Kosslyn (Eds.), Emerging Trends in the Behavioral and Social Sciences. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley. doi:10.1002/9781118900772

Please note that the final curriculum might change and will be available on Moodle before the first day of the course.

Evaluation- and feedback forms	The students will receive collective feedback throughout the course based on coursework and exercises. Finally the students will receive one piece of generalized feedback on the quality of the exam projects as a whole after the exam.
Administration of exams	ISE Studyadministration (ise-studyadministration@ruc.dk)
Responsible for the activity	Ahmad Wesal Zaman (awz@ruc.dk)
ECTS	5
Learning outcomes and assessment criteria	● Knowledge and understanding: Knowledge and understanding of academic and/or scientifically based practice-oriented methods and their application and relevance on an advanced level ● Being able to communicate and discuss academic and/or scientifically based practice-oriented studies in a type of language that is correct, clear, professionally accurate, well-structured and well-argued ● Skills: Carrying out studies and analyses with the aid of academic and/or scientifically based practice-oriented methods ● Evaluating and selecting methods from research-related and professional practices ● Competences: Co-operation with colleagues in the application of various academic and/or scientifically based practice-oriented methods and forms of analysis in relation to relevant issues in research-related and professional contexts ● Reflection on one's own learning and taking responsibility for one's own professional development
Overall content	● Research and professional premises for academic and scientifically based practice-oriented analyses ● Approaches to the use of academic and/or scientifically based practice-oriented tools in research and professional contexts, respectively
Teaching and working methods	Lectures, exercises, student presentations, peer feedback and discussions. The course requires that the students contribute and participate actively.
Type of activity	Elective course
Form of examination (p1)	Individual written take-home assignment given by the lecturer. The character limit of the assignment is: maximum 14,400 characters, including spaces. The character limit includes the cover, table of contents, bibliography, figures and other illustrations, but exclude any appendices. The duration of the take-home assignment is 48 hours and may include weekends and public holidays. Assessment: 7-point grading scale.
Form of Re-examination (p1)	Samme som ordinær eksamen
Exam code(s)	Exam code(s) : U41137

Course days:

Hold: 1

Social Media and Digital Methods (GS, IDS, IPAP, PF, POL)

time	13-09-2021 10:15 til 13-09-2021 14:00
forberedelsesnorm	ikke valgt
forberedelsesnorm D-VIP	ikke valgt
location	25.3-005 - teorirum 25.3 (80)
Teacher	Ahmad Wesal Zaman (awz@ruc.dk)

Social Media and Digital Methods (GS, IDS, IPAP, PF, POL)

time	27-09-2021 10:15 til 27-09-2021 14:00
forberedelsesnorm	ikke valgt
forberedelsesnorm D-VIP	ikke valgt
location	25.3-005 - teorirum 25.3 (80)
Teacher	Ahmad Wesal Zaman (awz@ruc.dk)

Social Media and Digital Methods (GS, IDS, IPAP, PF, POL)

time	04-10-2021 10:15 til 04-10-2021 14:00
forberedelsesnorm	ikke valgt
forberedelsesnorm D-VIP	ikke valgt
location	25.3-005 - teorirum 25.3 (80)
Teacher	Ahmad Wesal Zaman (awz@ruc.dk)

Social Media and Digital Methods (GS, IDS, IPAP, PF, POL)

time	11-10-2021 10:15 til 11-10-2021 14:00
forberedelsesnorm	ikke valgt
forberedelsesnorm D-VIP	ikke valgt
location	25.3-005 - teorirum 25.3 (80)
Teacher	Ahmad Wesal Zaman (awz@ruc.dk)

Social Media and Digital Methods (GS, IDS, IPAP, PF, POL)

time	18-10-2021 10:15 til 18-10-2021 14:00
forberedelsesnorm	ikke valgt
forberedelsesnorm D-VIP	ikke valgt
location	25.3-005 - teorirum 25.3 (80)
Teacher	Ahmad Wesal Zaman (awz@ruc.dk)

Social Media and Digital Methods - Exam (GS, IDS, IPAP, PF, POL)

time	10-01-2022 10:00 til 12-01-2022 10:00
forberedelsesnorm	ikke valgt
forberedelsesnorm D-VIP	ikke valgt

Social Media and Digital Methods - Reexam (GS, IDS, IPAP, PF, POL)

time	14-02-2022 10:00 til 16-02-2022 10:00
forberedelsesnorm	ikke valgt
forberedelsesnorm D-VIP	ikke valgt