Course Specifications
Valid as from the academic year 2019-2020

Seminar on Social Demography and Health Sociology (K001313)

Course offerings and teaching methods in academic year 2019-2020
A (semester 1) Dutch, English lecture 20.0 h
PDE tutorial 25.0 h

Lecturers in academic year 2019-2020
Ceuterick, Melissa PS04 lecturer-in-charge
Bracke, Piet PS04 co-lecturer
Van de Putte, Bart PS04 co-lecturer

Offered in the following programmes in 2019-2020

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Programme</th>
<th>credits</th>
<th>offering</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Master of Science in Teaching in Social Sciences</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>A</td>
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<tr>
<td>(main subject Sociology)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Master of Science in Sociology</td>
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<tr>
<td>Exchange Programme in Political and Social Sciences</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>A</td>
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Teaching languages
Dutch, English

Keywords
Community service learning, social demography, demographic transition, social inequality, family and households, culture, empowerment, female emancipation, gender, wellbeing, social cohesion, integration, ethnic minorities, health organizations, cross-national comparative health and health care research, life course research, macro-level determinants on health, health inequality, social epidemiology, advanced data analyses...

Position of the course
This educational component is part of the module Social Demography & Health in the Master program in Sociology.

Students choose one of the following two options:
• Stream 1 is dedicated to developing, elaborating and conducting research on a sociological topic, from a macro-sociological perspective, based on existing datasets.
• Stream 2 is dedicated to developing, elaborating and implementing a policy-based sociological study in collaboration with civil society organizations.

Contents
• Stream 1:
This option focusses on testing a few research hypotheses by using secondary data. There are three central objectives: (a) to become acquainted with the main explanations and findings in the research field, (b) to construct a testable, explanatory model, and (c) to conduct an empirical test of the derived model using a variety of databases.
A few general problems are presented, such as work-family conflict experienced by working mothers, underemployment of ethnic minorities, romanticisation of marriage, educational heterogamy, social inequalities in mortality, demographic effects of female emancipation, migration patterns, gentrification, discrimination, access to preventive health care, (un)healthy life styles ... Students form groups of maximum three members and choose a theme. Students conduct a literature study and formulate (a) research question(s) that will be empirically tested. To that end, they can make use of multiple existing datasets. Students write a paper based on their analysis. In addition, an oral presentation will be prepared and

(Approved)
presented in class. In class, conclusions will be drawn from the presentation and paper regarding the presented topic. This is a gradual process. The initiative and the interpretation lies with the students (i.e. clarification of the research question, focus on a certain literature, choice of analysis technique, other technical/methodological choices, ...). The lecturers/tutors support the entire process. The students meet every two weeks with a tutor to discuss concrete problems. In addition, there is a quasi-fortnightly group meeting in class to discuss potential solutions to common problems. Input from the students is crucial: their questions and problems feed the interaction. The goal of this course is to experience how an applied research project is designed and managed in practice, and learn how to handle practical issues that are not necessarily discussed in methodological literature.

• **Stream 2:**
The second stream aims to teach students about society by inciting cooperation with organizations in the field. Sharing knowledge and reciprocity are central. Collaboration with these societal partners creates an experimental form of education in which students confront theoretical learning with a hands-on experience, characterized by social engagement. In addition, through reflection on this learning experience and social engagement, students’ academic learning is enriched with personal and societal learning. Three components are highlighted: (1) an academic component, with a reference frame within social demography and health sociology, (2) a practical component, with the social commitment that students engage in a particular social organization, (3) a reflexive component, which connects the academic and practical component and encourages personal and social skills, values and attitudes. In an introductory lecture the students are prepared for fieldwork in an organization. They are elaborately informed about the objectives and procedures of stream 2. Students receive practical training to prepare the them for the challenges ahead. The fieldwork takes place in a civil society organization, where students will focus on specific goals and problems. The needs of the organization form the basis of the fieldwork. Based on the specific needs and/or questions of the organization, a sociological, challenging problem is highlighted. Students need to delve into this issue on the basis of both the available academic literature, applied research and policy reports; as well as on their (uptake of) practical experience. The latter will be gained from partaking in the daily operation of a function designated by the organization. The structure of the seminar incites and demands active involvement of students in the operation of the organization. Therefore they are challenged to use their sociological imagination in real life contexts. This way, critical thinking and problem-solving abilities are stimulated, as well as the development of personal, professional and socially relevant skills. During and after the fieldwork, critical reflection will be stimulated in discussion sessions, supervised by a tutor and master students who follow the SLO ['Specifieke Leraren Opleiding'; Specific Teaching Course] training. These sessions address the functioning and performance of the students within the organization, the theoretical insights gained, the insights regarding the specific problem, the needs of the organization in question, and the place of sociologists in the field.

**Initial competences**
Stream 1 and 2:
To have succeeded the courses ‘Sociology’ and ‘Methods of social-scientific research’. To attend or have successfully completed the educational components ‘Migration and Integration’ and ‘Sociology of Health and Illness’ (Master of Arts in Sociology)

Stream 1:
To have succeeded the courses ‘Statistics and quantitative research techniques’ (or equivalent courses).

Stream 2:
We expect a strong motivation of each participating student with regard to his/her willingness to take on a concrete social commitment, adopt an open, tolerant and professional attitude and readiness for critical self-reflection. The students must express their motivation to partake in stream 2 through a personal interview with (one of) the lecturer(s).

**Final competences**
1. To be able to formulate and corroborate a scientific research question.
2. To be able to employ a social-demographic perspective on society, including to be able to design social-demographic or health sociological indicators (stream 1) or to apply sociological frameworks to the real experience of an organization (stream 2).
3. To be able to use in a creative and original way a considerably differentiated set of sources on which a scientific study can be based
4. To be able to choose an adequate, advanced research technique
5. To be able to discuss and substantiate the limitations of an adequate, advanced research technique
6. To be able to design in a sound manner, and to be able to carry out advanced...
(statistical and/or qualitative) analyses of social-scientific data correctly
7 To be able to interpret the conducted scientific research, and to be able to present a written and oral report on this research
8 To be able to communicate and to analyse and think critically and policy-oriented (stream 2).

Conditions for credit contract

Access to this course unit via a credit contract is determined after successful competences assessment

Conditions for exam contract

This course unit cannot be taken via an exam contract

Teaching methods

Lecture, PDE tutorial, fieldwork

Extra information on the teaching methods

**Stream 1:** PDE tutorial / lecture

**Stream 2:**
- Training on reflection as a tool for critical evaluation and describing the organization, will be addressed in the introductory lecture
- The students will participate in the organization during the fieldwork.
- During the PDE tutorial, the students will reflect on the processes in the organization. This reflection moments are supervised by a tutor and master students who follow the SLO training.

Learning materials and price

Scientific articles, to be personally borrowed, copied and downloaded by the students. Short summaries of the lectures will be made available on Minerva.

References

Course content-related study coaching
- Individual (group) contact with tutor every other week.
- Classical contact with lecturer and all groups every other week.
- Classical feedback on draft version of presentation.

Evaluation methods

end-of-term evaluation and continuous assessment

Examination methods in case of periodic evaluation during the first examination period

Oral examination

Examination methods in case of periodic evaluation during the second examination period

Oral examination

Examination methods in case of permanent evaluation

Oral examination, participation, assignment

Possibilities of retake in case of permanent evaluation

examination during the second examination period is possible in modified form

Extra information on the examination methods

**Stream 1 and 2:** Continuous assessment: active participation in meetings with tutor and class discussions

**Stream 1:**
- Writing a scientific paper
- Oral exam: presenting the paper

**Stream 2:**
- A portfolio, which includes (1) a policy supporting or preliminary report (presented) as a final report for the organization and (2) an essay in which the student reflects on his/her own role as a sociologist, and his/her contribution to the organization.
- Assessment of performance at the workplace: analytical and problem solving skills, professional attitudes, discussion techniques and or knowledge of procedures which are relevant for professional activities.

Calculation of the examination mark

**Stream 1 and 2:** A combination of continuous (80%) and periodic assessment (20%)