

Models of Social Change and Social Stability

After completing this course students are expected to:

I. Knowledge and understanding

- Be able to account for the following concepts
 - Threshold values
 - Stable equilibria
 - Cyclic equilibria
 - Critical conditions
 - Chaotic conditions
 - Self-organising systems
 - Phases and phase transitions
 - Positive and negative feedback

II. Accomplishment and competence

Be able to identify social situations where above mentioned models could contribute to increased understanding of the social dynamics involved

- Be able to describe the models below and the dynamics they cause
 - The SI, SIS and SIR models
 - The Schillings segregation model
 - Cellular automats
 - Models of self-organising critical systems
 - Evolutionary models
 - Models for rational acting and their limitations
 - Neural networks
 - Agent-based models

- To be able to critically discuss whether a model is applicable to describe a social phenomenon

III. Values and evaluation

- Be able to critically discuss whether a model is applicable to describe a social phenomenon

Teaching

The teaching is provided in the form of 9 combined seminars/lectures and 2 compulsory laboratory exercises. The tasks are performed at any location. Students are welcome to help each other, but the reports must be submitted individually.

Examination

The exam consists of two mandatory laboratory exercises + a home exam consisting of

- A description of two different dynamic models in such a way that the expected learning objectives are achieved
- A short critical review (max 3 pages) on how one elective model in the course has been utilized in empirical research

The grading system

The four learning outcomes is separately given the grade

- Good
 - Passed (some insufficiencies)
 - Failed
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- A = 4 Good
 - B = 3 Good + 1 Passed
 - C = 2 Good + 2 Passed
 - D = 1 Good + 3 Passed
 - E = 4 Passed
 - Fx = 1 Failed
 - F > Failed

Students with the grade Fx or F are entitled to take further examination as long as the course is provided in order to achieve at least grade E. A student with the grade E or higher is not entitled to another examination to raise his/her degree. Students who received grade Fx or F on exams twice from the same examiner can request to be evaluated by another examiner. Such requests should be sent to the Director of Studies.

Litterature

Schelling, T. S. 1978. *Micromotives and Macrobehavior*. New York: Norton. (All editions works fine!)

Articles.