



DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE

SK2111 Perspectives on Politics, 15 higher education credits

Statsvetenskapliga perspektiv, 15 högskolepoäng

Second Cycle

Confirmation

This course syllabus was confirmed by Faculty of Social Sciences on 2007-06-18 and was last revised on 2015-09-10 by Department of Political Science to be valid from 2015-09-11, autumn semester of 2015.

Field of education: Social Sciences 100%

Department: Department of Political Science

Position in the educational system

The course is a compulsory course in the Master's Programme in Political Science. The course is also given as a single subject course.

The course is a core course.

The course can be part of the following programmes: 1) Master's Programme in Political Science (S2PSC) and 2) Masterprogram Political Science (S2STV)

Main field of studies

Political Science

Specialization

A1N, Second cycle, has only first-cycle course/s as entry requirements

Entry requirements

A minimum of 60 hec in first cycle Political Science (or equivalent) of which at least 30 hec from in depth courses in the first cycle (or equivalent). Language requirements is English B grade pass, or corresponding.

Learning outcomes

A student who has passed the course will be able to:

Knowledge and understanding

- describe and understand key analytical perspectives in political science.
- conduct in-depth analysis of a wide range of politico-scientific phenomena on the basis of these perspectives.

Skills and abilities

- independently apply the analytical perspectives on politico-scientific problems, including problems the student himself or herself has identified.
- independently write good academic text, with appropriate referencing.
- clearly state ideas and arguments in English, both orally and in text.

Judgement and approach

- understand and critically evaluate, in an in-depth way, social scientific research based on the various analytical perspectives.

Course content

Contemporary empirical political science is dominated by three analytical perspectives: rational choice theory, institutional theory, and constructivism. These three perspectives are ubiquitous in basically all sub disciplines of the field (e.g., comparative politics, public administration, political behavior, and international relations). The course gives the student a deep understanding of these theories in terms of their epistemological and ontological foundations, and how they shape analysis and explanation within political science. In addition, the course also teaches normative theory, with a special focus on the justificatory strategies that are most influential in modern political theory. In short, the course sets out to make the students fully literate in the theoretical underpinnings of contemporary political science, not only making them understand political science at a deeper level, but also more prepared to conduct their own studies and make their own arguments.

Form of teaching

The course contains lectures, group exercises and seminars.

Language of instruction: English

Assessment

The course is examined through written and oral assignments. There is a take-home exam as well as a longer course paper where the student is expected independently to apply the course content on a politico-scientific problem of his or her own choosing.

A student who has failed twice on the same assignment has the right to be graded by a different instructor, if this option is available. The request of a new instructor must be made in writing and submitted to the department.

In cases where a course has been discontinued or major changes have been made a student should be guaranteed at least three examination occasions (including the ordinary examination occasion) during a time of at least one year from the last time the course was given.

Grades

The grading scale comprises: Pass with Distinction (VG), Pass (G) and Fail (U).

To obtain the Pass grade the student must fulfill all the learning outcomes.

To obtain the grade Pass with Distinction, the student must either achieve a Pass with Distinction on the take-home exam or at least two-thirds of the points on the take-home exam combined with a Pass with Distinction on the course paper.

Course evaluation

A written, anonymous course evaluation will be distributed to the students at the end of the course. The results of the evaluation will be communicated both to previous and incoming students.