



DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE

SK2211 The Performance of Democracies, 15 credits

Demokratiers prestationsförmåga, 15 högskolepoäng

Second Cycle

Confirmation

This course syllabus was confirmed by Department of Political Science on 2014-12-18 and was last revised on 2019-08-23 to be valid from 2019-09-02, autumn semester of 2019.

Field of education: Social Sciences 100%

Department: Department of Political Science

Position in the educational system

The course is an in-depth course in Political Science at the second cycle. The course is also offered as a single subject course.

The course can be part of the following programmes: 1) Master's Programme in Political Science (S2PSC) and 2) Master's Programme in International Administration and Global Governance (S2IAG)

Main field of studies

Political Science

Specialization

A1F, Second cycle, has second-cycle course/s as entry requirements

Entry requirements

Admission to the course requires a minimum of 30 credits at the second cycle in Political Science or a minimum of 30 credits from courses in one of the programmes Master's Programme in European Studies or Master's Programme in International Administration and Global Governance, or equivalent coursework. Applicants must prove their knowledge of English: English 6/English B from Swedish Upper Secondary School or the equivalent level of an internationally recognized test, for example TOEFL, IELTS.

Learning outcomes

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

Knowledge and understanding

- Demonstrate in-depth knowledge of the dimensions in institutional variation among democracies and how these are related to performance.
- Demonstrate in-depth knowledge of implications of democracies' performance for individual-level attitudes and regime support.

Competence and skills

- Identify the key strands in the relevant literature and organise its findings in a meaningful manner.
- Review and compare empirical findings from diverse sets of academic literature
- Critically appraise findings and identify contradictions or lacunae.
- Independently use existing theories to analyse cases.
- Independently produce text in accordance with good academic practice, including proper citation technique and use of references.
- Independently plan and propose a minor research project that answers questions pertaining to the course content.

Judgement and approach

- Systematize and integrate, as well as critically assess, different theories about the determinants of performance in democracies.

Course content

This course explores factors that explain cross country variation in democratic performance and their implications. More specifically, it is concerned with how institutional variation among democratic regimes is related to outcomes in general dimensions of performance, such as, human well-being, corruption and sound management of public finances, among others. It therefore takes a 'governance' perspective focusing less on issues that have to do with what democracy is, democratic transitions or democratic survival but rather with why and how democracies 'succeed or fail' in the aforementioned areas. It also reviews the implications that follow for citizen attitudes and democratic support.

Form of teaching

Teaching is conducted through lectures and seminars.

Language of instruction: English

Assessment

Student performance is assessed through two written assignments, one seminar presentation, and active participation in seminars. The written assignments are a) a memo focusing on a specific case(s); and b) a final paper in the form of a project proposal.

It is not allowed to discuss answers and / or formulate answers to the individual assignments in collaboration with others. The individual assignments are to be carried out individually and if you cooperate with another student in an unauthorized way, it will be considered cheating.

Students can be asked to re-work graded assignments and re-submit them. If the student does not re-submit the reworked assignment on time, the student will be failed on the assignment.

A student who is not able to attend a compulsory part of the course can do an alternative assignment. The assignment will be described in the course guide.

If a student, who has failed the same examined component twice, wishes to change examiner before the next examination, a written application shall be sent to the department responsible for the course and shall be granted unless there are special reasons to the contrary (Chapter 6, Section 22 of Higher Education Ordinance).

At least five occasions shall be offered the students to pass a course or part of a course (Chapter 6, Section 21 of Higher Education Ordinance).

In cases where a course has been discontinued or has undergone major changes, the student shall normally be guaranteed at least three examination occasions (including the ordinary examination) during a period of at least one year from the last time the course was given. This may not be in conflict with Chapter 6 Section 21 of Higher Education Ordinance.

Grades

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

To obtain the grade Pass for the entire course the student must have passed all assignments. To obtain the grade Pass with distinction on the whole course the grade Pass with distinction must have been achieved on the two written assignments.

Course evaluation

The course will be evaluated each time it is given. The results of these evaluations will be published in a report. All courses at the department are also quality assured in accordance with the quality assurance at the Department of Political Science.