



SCHOOL OF GLOBAL STUDIES

HU1001 Inequalities and Climate Change, 7.5 credits

Ojämlighet och klimatförändring, 7,5 högskolepoäng

First Cycle

Confirmation

This course syllabus was confirmed by School of Global Studies on 2020-01-13 and was last revised on 2020-04-30 to be valid from 2020-06-29, spring semester of 2020.

Field of education: Social Sciences 100%

Department: School of Global Studies

Position in the educational system

The course is a single subject core course at first cycle level.

Main field of studies

Human Ecology

Specialization

G1N, First cycle, has only upper-secondary level entry requirements

Entry requirements

General entrance requirements

Learning outcomes

On successful completion of the course the student will be able to:

Knowledge and understanding

- Describe analytical perspectives of political ecology and development studies in relation to inequality and climate change.
- Define the following concepts: “inequality”, “climate justice”, “global commons”, “post-neoliberalism”, “indigeneity”, “vulnerability” and “resilience”.
- Explain how issues of climate change are connected to questions of inequality.

Competence and skills

- Summarize and analyze academic texts in inter-disciplinary fields connected to political ecology and development studies.
- Apply methods of academic writing, including independently formulate a well substantiated and adequately referenced line of argument.
- Formulate suggestions for concrete mitigation and/or adaptation strategies to tackle a climate change related problem.

Judgement and approach

- Assess and compare different conceptual lenses and apply them to contemporary challenges associated with climate change and inequality.
- Critically reflect on the interface between science and politics in the construction of knowledge about the causes and consequences of climate change.

The course is sustainability-focused, which means that at least one of the learning outcomes clearly shows that the course content meets at least one of the University of Gothenburg's confirmed sustainability criteria. The content also constitutes the course's main focus.

Course content

This course juxtaposes two important phenomena, and the interaction between them: inequality and climate change. The course is steeped in the combined conceptual foundation of political ecology and development studies. Our central point of departure is to recognize the inextricably interconnected character of humans and nature. Supposedly natural phenomena (like disasters) invariably have human dimensions; supposedly human phenomena (like urbanization or land tenure) invariably have ecological dimensions. To grapple with the question of climate change is therefore to confront the question of climate justice. It forces us to reflect on inequality, its various scales, its causes, and its consequences for climate change mitigation or adaptation.

The course will address some of the big questions and pertinent global debates, but it will also zoom in on specific thematic issues and localities. The themes covered include agrarian crisis, water management, and disasters. Our debates will cut across a whole range of SDGs, and we will set out to explore the interconnections between them. Our debates on each of these themes will comprise a triad of: problem analysis; conceptual approach and theoretical interpretation; and possible strategies for mitigation and adaptation. Cutting across these debates, we will reflect on the interaction between science and politics. We will review debates on risk, uncertainty and attribution, "evidence-based policy", as well as the use of data by activists and thinktanks and the struggles over knowledge in which these are embedded.

Form of teaching

The backbone of the course comprises a sequence of interactive lectures. There will be group work, exercises and debate throughout the course. The reading and assessments of the course will be integrated throughout the course period.

Language of instruction: English

Assessment

Examination in the course is carried out in the form of two interrelated elements:

- An academic paper, due in the first half of the lecture period (grading scale: Pass with Distinction (VG), Pass (G) and Fail (U)).
- An applied assignment, due towards the end of the lecture period (grading scale: Pass with Distinction (VG), Pass (G) and Fail (U)).

The number of examination occasions can for resource reasons be limited to a minimum of 5 occasions for each examination component. If a student, who has failed the same examined element on two occasions, wishes to change examiner before the next examination session, such a request is to be submitted to the department in writing and granted unless there are special reasons to the contrary (Chapter 6, Section 22 of Higher Education Ordinance).

In the event that a course has ceased or undergone major changes, students are to be guaranteed at least three examination sessions (including the ordinary examination session) over a period of at least one year, though at most two years after the course has ceased/been changed. The same applies to work experience and VFU, although this is restricted to just one additional examination session.

Grades

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

In order to receive the grade Pass (G) on the whole the course the student has to get a Pass grade on all assignments. In order to receive the grade Pass with distinction (VG) on the whole course the student has to get a Pass with distinction grade on the academic paper, in addition to the criteria for a Pass grade.

Course evaluation

The course coordinator is responsible for systematically and regularly collecting the students' views of the course, and for making sure that the results of the evaluations in

different forms are taken into consideration when developing the course. The results and possible changes to the course will be shared with the students who participated in the evaluation and the next class to take the course.