



## DEPARTMENT OF LITERATURE, HISTORY OF IDEAS, AND RELIGION

### **RT2417 Contemporary Esotericism, 7.5 credits**

Samtida esoterism, 7,5 högskolepoäng

*Second Cycle*

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#### **Confirmation**

This course syllabus was confirmed by Department of Literature, History of Ideas, and Religion on 2022-06-15 to be valid from 2023-01-16, spring semester of 2023.

*Field of education:* Arts 100%

*Department:* Department of Literature, History of Ideas, and Religion

#### **Position in the educational system**

The course is offered as a freestanding course.

*Main field of studies*

Religious Studies and Theology

*Specialization*

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

#### **Entry requirements**

Degree of Bachelor or completed courses of at least 180 credits at first cycle level, of which at least 90 credits with progression in some main field of study where it is included a bachelor's thesis of at least 15 credits. Qualified are also those that have equivalent foreign education or that have equivalent prior knowledge according to earlier study regulation. Furthermore, knowledge corresponding to English A/English 5 is required.

#### **Learning outcomes**

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

*Knowledge and understanding*

- independently account for the most central issues and theories in the field of religious studies and contemporary esotericism

- account for a selection of scholarly texts written based on methods in the study of esotericism

#### *Competence and skills*

- independently and critically compare different religious theories about contemporary esotericism
- independently identify and discuss the central problems and issues in the field of contemporary esotericism
- identify, collect and analyze material relevant to the formulated questions and present it in the form of a written research report

#### *Judgement and approach*

- critically assess and evaluate different theories and methods in the study of contemporary esotericism
- critically interpret and evaluate discourses on contemporary esotericism

### **Course content**

A major part of the research conducted in the field of religious studies with a focus on esotericism has a historical focus, but at the same time, esotericism is a living part of the contemporary religious landscape. Some researchers argue that esotericism permeates contemporary popular culture to the extent that we today can talk about an "occulture", in which esoteric ideas and symbols linked to, for example, magic, alchemy and astrology, can be found in everything from TV series, movies, music, art, and literature to computer games, and, not least, on social media. At the same time, it is evident that more traditional forms of esotericism, such as initiatory societies and the practice of magic and alchemy, are still important elements in contemporary esotericism. In this course, contemporary, "lived" esotericism is identified, discussed and analyzed, with the focus on how esotericism is practised and expressed today. Central theories and methods relevant to the field of esotericism are discussed continuously during the course. The students are given the opportunity to immerse themselves in a specific aspect of contemporary esotericism through an individual paper (research report).

### **Form of teaching**

The teaching consists of lectures and compulsory seminars.

*Language of instruction:* English

### **Assessment**

The course is assessed through seminars and an individual, written report.

The student is required to retain a copy of home assignments until they are graded and

returned. The one who submits a home assignment after the stipulated time has not the right to have it assessed, but must submit it at the next reexamination or obtain a re-examination at another occasion.

For a student who has failed examination, possibility for new test at no more than four occasions is given.

If a student who has twice received a failing grade for the same examination component wishes to change examiner ahead of the next examination session, such a request should be made to the department in writing and should be approved by the department unless there are special reasons to the contrary (Chapter 6 Section 22 of the Higher Education Ordinance).

If a student has received a recommendation from the University of Gothenburg for study support for students with disabilities, the examiner may, where it is compatible with the learning outcomes of the course and provided that no unreasonable resources are required, decide to allow the student to sit an adjusted exam or alternative form of assessment.

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, but no more than two years after the course has ceased/been changed.

### **Grades**

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

For the grade Pass, active participation in compulsory seminars is required, as well as passed individual, written report.

For the final grade Pass with distinction, it is required that a student, in a particularly productive, critical, and reflective way, has shown knowledge and proficiency in accordance with the intended learning outcomes of the course.

The grade Pass cannot be changed to Failed on the student's request.

A student who has passed an examination may not participate in a re-examination for higher grades. The person concerned has neither the right to revoke a submitted examination to avoid grading.

The examiner has the possibility to request in supplementary qualifications of examination for the grade Pass. The supplementary assignment should in such cases be communicated the student in writing and be handed in within the teacher's stipulated time.

### **Course evaluation**

The department is responsible for carrying out course evaluations systematically and regularly and for seeing to it that they are compiled in accordance with the regulations

for course evaluations at The Department of Literature, History of Ideas and Religion. The results of and possible changes to the course will be shared with students who participated in the evaluation and students who are starting the course.

**Additional information**

In addition to stated expected learning outcomes, the student in the course should, when relevant, be encouraged to make assessments with regard to gender equality and equality aspects, as well as to be attentive to ecologically, economically, and socially sustainable development.