



DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE

SK1113 Institutions and Actors in Political Systems, 15 credits

Institutioner och aktörer i demokratin, 15 högskolepoäng

First Cycle

Confirmation

This course syllabus was confirmed by Faculty of Social Sciences on 2006-11-14 and was last revised on 2019-05-17 by Department of Political Science 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 a compulsory course in the first semester in the Political Science Programme and is also offered as a freestanding course. The course is also given as an elective course in the European Studies Program and in the Program in Environmental Social Science. The course is a core course in political science.

The course can be part of the following programmes: 1) Program in Environmental Social Science (S1SML), 2) European Studies Program (S1EUR), 3) Program in Environmental Social Science (S1SMI) and 4) Program in Political Science (S1STV)

Main field of studies

Political Science

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 the kinds of political systems and forms of government, and their effects
- describe major institutions and actors within democracy
- explain the main essential features of how public policy is determined in Sweden, as well as in several other specifically chosen political systems
- explain the steps of a political decision-making process

Competence and skills

- discuss the different ways that public policy/political decision-making can be organized, and how these affect our everyday lives
- discuss the rules of democracy based on various theoretical perspectives
- compare different kinds of political systems and forms of government
- independently produce text in accordance with good academic practice, including proper citations technique and use of references
- communicate clearly and proficiently in Swedish both orally and in writing

Judgement and approach

- describe the terms for scientific knowledge at a basic level, as opposed to other kinds of knowledge
- actively and independently participate in discussions and complete written and oral presentations aimed at different societal groups

Course content

The course covers different ways to organise the distribution of power at different levels, how decisions are made and implemented, and the actors that are involved in these processes. The course is assessed as a whole but consists of four main components: An introduction to the study of political systems, an overview of different forms of government, administration policy, and a political role play.

Introduction

The course begins with an introduction of the political science prerequisites for studying institutions and actors from different political systems.

Forms of Government

During this component, different constitutional forms and their effects are focused on. These may include governing structure, power, or electoral systems. The EU's political system and constitutional policy are also discussed.

Administration Policy

This component includes a basic overview of the organisation of public administration and the judicial regulations at the local and national levels. One important element in this component is to gain an understanding of and be able to apply major political

science concepts and theories, such as implementation, power, and legitimacy, to analyses of public administration.

Political Role Plays

The course concludes with a role play/negotiation game in which students are expected to come up with a proposal for a future Swedish constitution.

Form of teaching

The course is mainly based on lectures and literature reviews, but also includes several different types of compulsory seminars and obligatory group work where students are expected to present both individually and in groups. A larger component consists of a negotiation game, where students are assigned certain roles to play, and then asked to discuss and come up with a proposal for the Swedish constitution.

Language of instruction: Swedish

The course is offered in Swedish but literature in English can occur.

Assessment

In general, this course aims to use examination as an educational tool. The goal is that the student should be able to demonstrate their proficiency during the actual examination. The examination formats vary, and students hone their skills in both written and oral presentations, individually as well as in groups.

The course is assessed during two written exams, an individual seminar assignment which should be presented both orally and in written form, as well as three group assignments. One group assignment is to be done in written form, one orally, and one both orally and in written form.

A student who is not able to attend a compulsory part of the course may complete an alternative assignment. The assignment should be described in the course guide.

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. If the student does not submit supplementary qualification in exposed time, the student can fail on the examination assignment. If the student fails both written exams, then the student should retake the exams.

A student who has taken two exams in a course or part of a course without obtaining a pass grade is entitled to the nomination of another examiner. The student needs to contact the department for a new examiner, preferably in writing, and this should be approved by the department unless there are special reasons to the contrary (Chapter 6 Section 22 of the Higher Education Ordinance).

At least five examination opportunities should be offered to the students to pass a course or part of a course. (Chapter 6, Section 21, 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, but no more than two years, after the course has ceased/been changed. In case a course has been discontinued or undergone major changes the student should be guaranteed access to at least three examination sessions (including the original examination session). This may not be in conflict with Chapter 6, Section 21, Higher Education Ordinance.

Grades

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

To obtain a Pass (G) for the entire course, the student must have passed (G) all required examination components. To obtain a Pass with Distinction (VG) for the entire course, the student must have received a Pass with Distinction (VG) on the two assignments where the grade Pass with Distinction (VG) can be achieved, i.e. on both of the written exams, and a Pass (G) on the other relevant assignments.

Course evaluation

The student will be given the opportunity to do a course evaluation. 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.