



DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE

SK2221 Environmental politics and institutions, 15 credits

Miljöpolitik och institutioner, 15 högskolepoäng

Second Cycle

Confirmation

This course syllabus was confirmed by Department of Political Science on 2014-06-19 and was last revised on 2019-09-06 to be valid from 2020-03-26, spring semester of 2020.

Field of education: Social Sciences 100%

Department: Department of Political Science

Position in the educational system

The course is an elective course for the students in any of the Master's Programme in the second semester at the department of Political Science. The course is also given as a single subject course. The course is an in-depth course in Political Science in the second cycle.

The course can be part of the following programmes: 1) Master's Programme in Political Science (S2PSC), 2) Master's Programme in European Studies (S2EUS) and 3) 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 the successful completion of the course SK2121 Political Science Analysis (15 credits) or completion of a minimum of 15 credits from the courses given in one of the programmes, Master's Programme in European Studies or Master's Programme in International Administration and Global Governance, or equivalent. 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

- Show in-depth knowledge about different conceptualisation of environmental problems, and environmental politics in a comparative perspective.
- Show in-depth knowledge about collective action and social dilemma theory, including factors generating collective action such as values, attitudes, norms, beliefs, uncertainty, trust, media and various policy instruments available to create collective action as well as the challenges associated with the implementation of these policy instruments.

Competence and skills

- Compare and critically assess advanced institutional theories and frameworks
- Use institutional theory to explain the genesis of environmental problems and lack of collective action, as well as how institutions simultaneously can promote environmental collective action.
- Through independent work, plan and conduct a minor research project addressing central aspects of environmental collective action and effectively communicate this plan.
- Independently produce text in accordance with good academic practice, including proper citation technique, use of reference, and within the given time frame.

Judgement and approach

- Systematize and integrate different theories about formal and informal institutions' impact on collective action and environmental behavior.

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

Through the course, the students will acquire in-depth knowledge about the political attempts to cope with several environmental problems related to, e.g., the marine environment, water, land-use, biodiversity, and various airborne environmental problems including climate change. Theoretically, the course is primarily founded in social dilemma theory, theories about public opinion and behaviour, and institutional theory. However, also political theory (principally distributional theory) and game

theory have central roles throughout the course.

Form of teaching

The teaching consists of lectures, seminars, supervision (when writing the course paper) and additional pedagogical approaches.

Language of instruction: English

Assessment

Student performance is assessed through five written assignments: four individually written seminar memos where various aspects of collective action theory are to be discussed (1 credit each), and an individual final course paper, (11 credits).

Completion of examined assignments are permitted. If the student does not submit the completion 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.

It is not allowed to discuss answers and/or design answers to the assignments in collaboration with other people. The assignments are individual examination assignment and if you in an unauthorized way cooperate with another student this is to be considered cheating.

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 Pass grade for the course as a whole, students must achieve a pass grade for all four individual seminar memos and for the final course paper.

In order to get the grade Pass with Distinction for the course as a whole, students must achieve pass grade for all four individual seminar memos and pass with distinction for the final written course paper, and to obtain Pass with Distinction on the final course paper the student must demonstrate the ability to undertake the task within a predetermined time frame.

Course evaluation

The students will be given the opportunity evaluate the course. The results of evaluation will be communicated both to previous and incoming students. A summary of the course evaluation and reflections made by the course coordinator must be made available to the students within a reasonable period of time following completion of the course. The summary and any adjustments made in response to the evaluation shall be presented the next time the course is offered.