



DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE

SK2222 Varieties of Democracy and Democratization, 15 credits

Varianter på demokrati och demokratisering, 15 högskolepoäng

Second Cycle

Confirmation

This course syllabus was confirmed by Department of Political Science on 2014-06-19 and was last revised on 2023-11-09 to be valid from 2024-01-15, spring semester of 2024.

Field of education: Social Sciences 100%

Department: Department of Political Science

Position in the educational system

The course is an elective course in the Master's Programme in Political Science, Master's Programme in European Studies and Master's Programme in International Administration and Global Governance. The course is also offered 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 15 credits at the second cycle from the course SK2121 'Political Science Analysis' or a minimum of 15 credits from courses the first semester in the Master's Programme in European Studies or Master's Programme in International Administration and Global Governance. 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:

- demonstrate in-depth knowledge about different theories and approaches to measurement of democracy and autocracy; theories of democratization and autocratization; and empirical realities of both with a focus on the last few decades.
- independently compare and critically assess difference found in various conceptions of democracy and autocracy, and how these can and should be measured and be able to demonstrate this understanding orally as well as in writing;
- independently understand and use appropriately existing theories to analyze democratization, autocratization, and autocratic stability, as well as assess existing empirical work in this area;
- independently plan and within a given time frame conduct a small-scale research project in the area of democratization, autocratization, or autocratic stability, and to use appropriate methods in the analysis;
- independently produce text in accordance with good academic practice, including proper citation technique and use of references.

Course content

This course discusses theories of democracy and autocracy, and confronts these theories with different approaches to measuring such phenomena across time and space.

Students are exposed to a range of theories of democratization, autocratization, and autocratic stability, and they are trained in how to systematically analyze and evaluate such theories.

The course thus addresses the two interlinked topics of conceptualizing and measuring democracy and autocracy; and explaining of democratization and autocratization, as well as autocratic stability. It approaches these topics in a theoretically guided manner and with an emphasis on methodological challenges. It makes extensive use of both qualitative and quantitative data, including the Varieties of Democracy (V-Dem) database (<https://v-dem.net>).

Form of teaching

The course lasts 10 weeks and consists of four parts that partially overlap in time:

1. Lectures and seminars on the conceptualization and measurement of democracy and autocracy
2. Lectures and seminars to explain democratization, autocratization, and autocratic stability
3. Seminars
4. The student's final course paper

Language of instruction: English

Assessment

The first assessment is a multiple-choice exam on parts of the course literature. It is worth 3 credits.

A second assessment of students' command of the literature, understanding of content covered by lectures, and ability to independently understand and use appropriately existing theories, is done by seminars where (groups of) students present on a topic provided by the teacher. The seminars are compulsory and absence is associated with a make-up, written assignment. Seminar participation is worth 3 credits.

A third assessment is based on a short paper where students are asked to evaluate an hypothesis from the literature using data from a minimum of two countries. This short paper is worth 3 credits.

Finally, the students also write a course paper on a topic decided together with the final course paper teacher. The final course paper is worth 6 credits.

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).

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

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 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).

To obtain the Pass grade for the course as a whole, students must achieve at least a Pass grade on all assignments.

To qualify for Pass with Distinction, students must achieve Pass on the multiple choice test and the seminar participation, and Pass with Distinction on the short paper as well as on the final course paper.

Pass with Distinction on the course paper requires that the student demonstrates excellent knowledge on the main themes covered by the course; very good skills to

connect theory and data through independent analyses; fulfill high academic standards in terms of structure and language; as well as demonstrate the ability to undertake the task within a predetermined time frame, i.e. to hand it in by the deadline on the first time of submission.

Course evaluation

The students will be given the opportunity evaluate the course.

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.