



## DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE

### **SK2532 Master Thesis, 30 credits**

Masteruppsats i statsvetenskap, 30 högskolepoäng

*Second Cycle*

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#### **Confirmation**

This course syllabus was confirmed by Faculty of Social Sciences on 2006-11-14 and was last revised on 2023-06-20 by Department of Political Science to be valid from 2023-08-28, autumn semester of 2023.

*Field of education:* Social Sciences 100%

*Department:* Department of Political Science

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

The course Master's Thesis is an in-depth course in Political Science. The course is compulsory within the Master's Programme in Political Science and Master's Programme in Political Science: Environmental Governance and Behavior. The course is also offered as a single subject course. The thesis is intended as a degree project for a Master's degree in Political Science.

The course can be part of the following programmes: 1) Master's Programme in Political Science (S2PSC), 2) Master's Programme in Political Science: Environmental Governance and Behavior (S2SPE) and 3) Masterprogram Political Science (S2STV)

*Main field of studies*

Political Science

*Specialization*

A2E, Second cycle, contains degree project for Master of Arts/Master of Science (120 credits)

#### **Entry requirements**

Entry requirements for the course are the completion of the courses SK2121 Political Science Analysis (15 credits), an in-depth course in the second cycle (15 credits) and either the course SF2321 Applied Statistical Analysis (15 credits) or SF2322 Applied Quantitative Research Methods (15 credits) or SF2323 Applied Qualitative Research

Methods, problems and design (15 credits) or SF2324 Introduction to Applied Research Design and Quantitative Research Methods for Social Scientists (15 credits) as well as a Bachelor's degree. 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, or equivalent.

### **Learning outcomes**

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

#### *Knowledge and understanding*

- Understand and independently apply scientific theoretical perspectives and methods in order to complete an original research project relevant to Political Science.

#### *Competence and skills*

- Creatively, critically and independently identify, formulate and delimit an original scientific question of relevance to Political Science.
- Creatively and independently select an appropriate methodological approach to answer a specified scientific question.
- Systematically gather and compile empirical data and/or identify and evaluate existing empirical data, sources or secondary literature.
- Produce a written report and orally present and defend it.
- Publicly discuss another student's degree project as well as participate in discussions regarding other students' degree projects.
- Independently produce text in accordance with good academic practice, including proper citation technique and use of references.
- Communicate clearly and proficiently in English both orally and in writing.

#### *Judgement and approach*

- Critically evaluate the reliability of conclusions and findings of academic research and policy evaluations.
- Identify and critically assess ethical issues related to research on human behaviour.

### **Course content**

During this course you will learn to write and defend an independent, in-depth scientific thesis. You will learn how to plan, carry out and present scientific research which incorporates all stages of the scientific process: from problem formulation to theory, scientific questions of relevance, method, presentation of results, and conclusions. You will defend your conclusions orally at a mandatory seminar, where you will also critically, constructively and pedagogically examine other students' theses in the same scientific manner. You should display a critical and scientific approach in all these

elements as well as use a clear and precise language when making your arguments.

### **Form of teaching**

The teaching on the course consists mainly of individual supervision. There are also introductory lectures, voluntary feedback seminars and mandatory examination seminars.

*Language of instruction:* English

### **Assessment**

Progress on the learning outcomes will be evaluated through the Master's thesis as well as performance at the final seminar, in which students present and defend their own work, and thoroughly and constructively evaluate and comment on another student's thesis. In addition to this the student is expected to participate actively in the discussions and evaluation of other students' theses.

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.

In addition to the ordinary examination occasion, there will be a renewed examination date at the middle and end of each semester, if needed.

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 the student must fulfill all the learning outcomes.

To obtain Pass with Distinction the thesis should also be characterized by excellent theoretical, methodological and analytical qualities.

**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.

**Additional information**

Additional costs in relation to the course are the responsibility of the student.

The Department of Political Science follows the Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs (UD) travel recommendations for travelling abroad. This means that if the Ministry of Foreign Affairs advises against (all or unnecessary trips) travel to a specific country, region or city, that advice applies to all study-related trips. Hence, a student's thesis will not be examined if the student proceeds with data-collection or writing his/her thesis in a country/region/city that the Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs advice against travel to, at the start of the course.