



SCHOOL OF GLOBAL STUDIES

US1221 Inequality, crisis and natural disasters, 15 credits

Ojämlighet, kris och naturkatastrofer, 15 högskolepoäng

First Cycle

Confirmation

This course syllabus was confirmed by School of Global Studies on 2023-02-06 to be valid from 2023-08-28, autumn semester of 2023.

Field of education: Social Sciences 100%

Department: School of Global Studies

Position in the educational system

The course is given as an in-depth course at the bachelors level.

The course can be part of the following programmes: 1) Bachelors' programme in Sustainable Development, Societal Change, and Climate Transformation (S1HSK) and 2) Bachelors' programme in Global Studies (S1GLS)

Main field of studies

Development Studies

Specialization

G1F, First cycle, has less than 60 credits in first-cycle course/s as entry requirements

Entry requirements

Admission to the course requires passed core course of 15 credits in Global development studies.

Learning outcomes

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

Knowledge and understanding

- Define inequality based on different theoretical approaches, including an intersectional perspective;

- Explain how inequality is actualised in crises and natural disasters;

Competence and skills

- Analyse crises and natural disasters based on theories of inequality, vulnerability and resilience;
- Critically examine and evaluate disaster interventions based on theories of inequality, vulnerability and resilience;

Judgement and approach

- Reflect on issues of environmental justice in the context of natural disasters;
- Problematiser structural and practical obstacles and opportunities in the work of preventing crises and natural disasters.

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

Understanding inequality is central to understanding processes of change. The course provides an overview of different perspectives on inequality: how we understand and define inequality, how inequality is reproduced, and what actions can be taken to address inequality. More specifically, the course explores how societal inequality manifests itself by studying crises and disasters as such emergencies expose inequality of various kinds. The course addresses questions of what can be done to prevent crises and disasters. We pay particular attention to crises triggered by climate-related natural disasters such as floods, droughts and storms. These are often presented as purely natural phenomena when in fact their causes are strongly related to human and social factors. These events are characterised by uncertainty where decisions have to be made quickly. In relation to these disasters, issues of vulnerability and resilience take centre stage, which in turn are related to issues of inequality; anyone can be affected by a disaster, but some people live in more vulnerable conditions (and are more severely affected) than others. In other words, disasters, which are increasingly important to understand and address because they are the result of unsustainable forms of development and climate change and lack of adaptation, are events that can teach us something about social inequality, its intersectional composition and how we can work on prevention. The students practice conducting applied research by writing an evaluation of a disaster response.

Form of teaching

Teaching consists mainly of lectures, seminars, individual writing exercises and group work.

Language of instruction: English

Assessment

Examination takes place through an individual written submission (6 credits), 1 group exercise (3 credits) and an individual written assignment consisting of evaluating a disaster response (6 credits). The course also includes compulsory elements in the form of seminars in connection with these assignments. In case of absence from a compulsory part, a written supplementary assignment is carried out.

If a student, who has failed the same examined component twice, wants to change examiner before the next examination, they should submit a written request to the department responsible for the course. The request shall be granted unless there are special reasons to the contrary (Chapter 6, Section 22 of 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. The above is also applicable to internships and on-the-job-trainings, with the exception that examination is given on only one occasion.

Grades

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

The written individual written assignments will be graded on the basis of a 12-grade scale there 7 are Pass (G) and 10 is Pass with distinction (VG).

In order to receive a Pass on the course, the student must actively participate in seminars and group assignments and receive at least the grade Pass on the individual written assignments. To receive the grade Pass with distinction in the course, it been in addition required that the student may on an average 10 credits (rounded up) on the two written individual assignments.

Course evaluation

The course coordinator is responsible for systematically and regularly collecting the students' views of the course, and for making sure that the results of the evaluations in

different forms are taken into consideration when developing the course. The result and possible changes in the course structure shall be communicated both to the students who carried out the evaluation and to the students who will soon start the course.