

Syllabus

for course at advanced level

Independent Research Project in Political Science
Självständigt arbete i statsvetenskap

**30.0 Higher Education
Credits**
30.0 ECTS credits

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|--------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Course code: | SV7052 |
| Valid from: | Autumn 2013 |
| Date of approval: | 2012-04-18 |
| Changed: | 2013-06-04 |
| Department | Department of Political Science |
| Main field: | Political Science |
| Specialisation: | A2E - Second cycle, contains degree project for Master of Arts/Master of Science (120 credits) |

Decision

This syllabus has been approved by the Head of the Department of Political Science, Stockholm University, 2012-04-18.

Date of latest revision, 2013-06-04

Prerequisites and special admittance requirements

A Bachelor of Arts Degree, 180 credits or the equivalent, with a major in Political Science and enrolled on the Master's Programme in Political Science, 120 credits, at the Department of Political Science, Stockholm University.

Course structure

| Examination code | Name | Higher Education Credits |
|------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 7051 | Thesis seminar and discussant | 3 |
| 7052 | Master's Thesis | 27 |

Course content

The course aims to develop skills and abilities in the writing and defense of an independent research project. Central components are the formulation of a research problem, choice and application of method and theory, and the implementation of an investigation. The course results in the presentation of a Master's thesis as well

as in performing the role of discussant on another master's thesis.

Learning outcomes

Knowledge and insights

Upon completion of the course the student is expected to have:

- a deepened knowledge about a limited theoretical and/or empirical field including knowledge about the scientific frontline in the field, knowledge about applicable methods, and an overview of topical research questions in the field;
- a deepened insight in the analytical approaches in social science that are relevant to the problem area.

Skills and abilities

Upon completion of the course the student is expected to have:

- an ability to use methods and techniques in social science including the ability to seek, gather, evaluate and critically interpret relevant information in a presentation of a problem and to critically discuss the same;
- an ability to carry through and present an independent research project including the ability to independently identify, formulate and implement an inquiry, the ability to give an account for and to discuss the material that the investigation presupposes, and the ability to present, defend and critically evaluate one's own inquiry.

Evaluation and approach

Upon completion of the course the student is expected to be able to:

- evaluate research results in political science in the problem area of the independent research project, including the ability to make adequate judgments of research in political science on the basis of scientific and normative premises;
- relate the problem area of the independent research project to theories in social science, including the ability to apply theory in social science in an empirical analysis as well as to reflect upon the role of knowledge in research.

Education

The teaching consists of lectures, seminars and supervision. The seminars are compulsory. Information about how absences may be compensated will be distributed at the beginning of the course.

Forms of examination

The first course module, Thesis seminar and discussant, will be graded on the basis of a scale comprising pass and fail.

For the second course module, Master's thesis, a seven steps grading scale will be used for grading. A, B, C, D and E are degrees of a passed grade. F and Fx are degrees of a failed grade. It is possible for a student to supplement an examination if the obtained grade is Fx and information about this possibility is included in the provided course information. Upon being informed of the need for supplement by the examiner, the supplementary task must be submitted within ten working days. If the examination supplement is accepted and has the character of supplementing a lack of understanding, minor misunderstanding, minor errors or too limited discussions for some part, the grade E will be applied. If the supplementary task is accepted and has the character of simple formality corrections, the grades A-E will be applied.

Students who have failed the course twice have the right to request another examiner. This request should be addressed to the department unit that has appointed the examiner. A student who have passed an exam may not take part in a re-examination in order to obtain a higher grade.

If a student receives pass on the first course module the grade on the second course module, Master's thesis, will be the grade that is reported on the course as a whole.

The grading is based on criteria of assessment that will be distributed at the beginning of the course. Examination occurs continuously in conjunction with teaching and/or at the end of the course.

Interim

When this course is no longer offered or when its content has been significantly modified, the student has the right to be examined according to this syllabus once each semester during a period of three semesters

Limitations

Prerequisites and special admittance requirements:

A Bachelor of Arts Degree (180 ECTS credit points or the equivalent), with a major in political science and enrolled on the Master's Programme in Political Science at the department of Political Science, Stockholm University.

To be registered to the course the student must have completed the following courses:

SV7031/SV7054: Analytical Approaches in Social Science and the Study of Power
SV7035/SV7054: Institutions and governance
and one Method course

Misc

Language of instruction: Swedish and English.

The benchmark for supervision is 16 hours/student. These hours include individual supervision and the time it takes for the supervisor to read the texts that the student provides for these occasions, time for preparation, e-mail correspondence and other communication. Supervision will be provided the first semester the student is enrolled to the course and during that semester. If there are particular reasons, a student may change supervisors in consultation with the seminar leader. The supervisor is not the examiner. Further information will be provided at the beginning of the course.

The thesis shall be no longer than 50 pages, approximately 15 000-20 000 words (35-50 pages, spacing 1,5 in size 12), appendix not included

Plagiarism

To plagiarize is to imitate or copy another person's work, for instance a text, a picture or a chart, and to describe the material as one's own. Plagiarism is not accepted in the scientific community, the same applies on the Department of Political Science at Stockholm University.

It is therefore critical that you always specify the sources you use by way of citing and referring in a correct way. The master's thesis has the character of a degree project and its authenticity is therefore monitored particularly rigorously.

Required reading

Carroll, Jude and Carl-Mikael Zetterling. 2009. Guiding Students Away from Plagiarism. Stockholm: Kungliga tekniska högskolan. (83 s) <http://people.kth.se/~ambe/KTH/Guidingstudents.pdf>.

Kantola, Johanna. 2008. "“Why Do All the Women Disappear?” Gendering Processes in a Political Science Department,” *Gender, Work and Organization* 15 (2): 202-225. (23 s) Karolinska Institutet. Source Reliability (1 s). (Will be handed out at the seminar.)

Vedde, Anton and Robert Wachbroit. 2003. “Reliability of Information on the Internet: Some Distinctions,” *Ethics and Information Technology* 5: 211–215 (5 s).

Weinholtz, Donn and Charles P. Friedman. 1985. Conducting Qualitative Research: Conducting Qualitative Studies Using Theory and Previous Research: A Study Reexamined,” *Evaluation & the Health Professions* 8 (2): 149-176 (27 s).

Literature on plagiarism

Reference <http://www.plagiarism.org/>

<http://www.bridgewater.edu/WritingCenter/Workshops/PlagiarismCases.htm>