



ACES51, Asian Studies: Discourse Analysis and Cultural Theory: Theory and Concepts for Qualitative Analyses in Asian Studies, 7.5 credits

Asienstudier: Diskursanalys och kulturteori: Kvalitativa teori- och konceptanalyser i Asienstudier, 7,5 högskolepoäng
Second Cycle / Avancerad nivå

Details of approval

The syllabus was approved by Faculty Board of Social Sciences on 2014-05-15 to be valid from 2014-09-01, autumn semester 2014.

General Information

The course is offered as an elective course in the third semester of the Master of Science Programme (120 credits) in Asian Studies.

Language of instruction: English

Main field of studies

Asian Studies

Depth of study relative to the degree requirements

A1N, Second cycle, has only first-cycle course/s as entry requirements

Learning outcomes

On completion of the course, the student shall:

Knowledge and understanding

- demonstrate an understanding of and ability to describe how social, political, and cultural phenomena are created through language;
- demonstrate an understanding of the ways theory, analytical concepts, and empirical sources are interconnected in Asian Studies research;
- demonstrate an awareness of the complexities and challenges inherent in the application of western theory on Asian sources and social phenomena;

Competence and skills

- demonstrate an ability to detect, adequately analyze and theoretically contextualize discursive themes and problems;
- demonstrate an ability to approach original and complex theoretical texts and apply abstract methods of theoretical conceptualization to specific Asian phenomena;
- demonstrate an ability to make systematic observations in primary sources of various kinds and align such observations with adequate theoretical investments;

Judgement and approach

- demonstrate the ability to critically and independently evaluate analytical reasoning both verbally and in writing.

Course content

The purpose of this course is to enable students to read and discuss original theoretical works that have had and continue to have a major influence on approaches, conceptualizations, and abstract reasoning in the field of Asian studies and the study of contemporary Asian societies. Typically, such theory was originally developed by western thinkers primarily in order to analyse the West, and a major obstacle for master-level students of Asian Studies is to both adequately grasp the suppositions and circumstances that originally gave rise to such theories as well as to achieve a sound understanding of the ways western theory has been and can be fruitfully and successfully applied to Asian realities. This course aims to thoroughly address both these aspects by, on the one hand, requiring students to read and discuss influential original texts, and, on the other, introducing them to a variety of published research in Asian Studies successfully applying and/or challenging the same theoretical texts and concepts in relation to different types of Asian sources. Thus, the primary concerns of this course will be to introduce and familiarize students with the nature and applicability of major theories of discourse and knowledge production, social organization, mass mediation, representation, and discursive realities (ethnicity, gender, nationhood, postcolonialism, culture, globalization, multiculturalism, etc.).

The course offers training in addressing and contextualizing individual descriptive and particularistic findings on a more abstract level of concepts and theoretical discussion to students doing qualitative analyses of different aspects of Asian discourse or practice. The course will engage the students on the basis of a very concrete and practical effort to enable them to reflect and creatively address the question of how to integrate theory, systematic observation, conceptual characterization and abstraction into their own work, both for this course and in preparation for individual thesis work later. Rather than reading about theory, students will study it directly, and rather than taking an instrumental approach to theory and formal arguments as a "necessary evil" to explore different qualitative and discursive topics, students will practice the skill of asking theoretically informed, focused and practically answerable questions to primary sources, enabling more informed critical discussion in properly academic, and not just topical, terms.

Course design

The teaching takes the form of lectures, seminars, group work and independent reading. Attendance is mandatory in seminars and active participation is required unless there are special grounds. An alternative form or date for compulsory components is offered to students who are not able to complete a compulsory component owing to circumstances beyond their control, e.g. accident, sudden illness or similar. This also applies to students who have missed teaching because of activities as a student representative.

Students are expected to read, reflect, and actively take part in group work to discuss approaches, notions, and implications of the different theoretical approaches presented in this course; prepare presentations for seminar discussions rooted in the course literature and other material; as well as apply and evaluate various theories and methods in relation to the studied literature. Seminar presentations are peer-reviewed in oral form.

Assessment

Assessment is based on:

- individual seminar presentations and assignments;
- group work with oral presentations;
- active participation in seminars, discussions, peer-reviewing, and group work.
- a final exam paper elaborating on the theoretical possibilities and implications of students' individual thesis questions and topics.

Three opportunities for examination are offered in conjunction with the course: a first examination and two re-examinations. Within a year of the end of the course, two further re-examinations on the same course content are offered. After this, further re-examination opportunities are offered but in accordance with the current course syllabus.

Subcourses that are part of this course can be found in an appendix at the end of this document.

Grades

Marking scale: Fail, E, D, C, B, A.

The highest grade is A—and the lowest passing grade is E. The grade for a non-passing result is Fail.

The student's performance is assessed with reference to the learning outcomes of the course. For the grade of E the student must show acceptable results. For the grade of D the student must show satisfactory results. For the grade of C the student must show good results. For the grade of B the student must show very good results. For the grade of A the student must show excellent results. For the grade of Fail the student must have shown unacceptable results.

Course components such as active participation in seminars, discussions and group work are exempted from the grading scale above. The grades awarded for such components are Pass or Fail. For the grade of Pass the student must show acceptable results. For the grade of Fail the student must have shown unacceptable results.

At the start of the course students are informed about the learning outcomes stated in the syllabus and about the grading scale and how it is applied in the course.

Entry requirements

Admitted to the Master of Science Programme in Asian Studies, 120 ECTS.

A good command of English language both spoken and written, equivalent to English 6/B (advanced) proficiency in the Swedish secondary system, is required. Equivalence assessments will be made according to national guidelines.

Further information

The syllabus was approved by the Centre for East and South-East Asian Studies Board of Directors on May 19:th 2014.

Subcourses in ACES51, Asian Studies: Discourse Analysis and Cultural
Theory: Theory and Concepts for Qualitative Analyses in Asian Studies

Applies from H14

1401 Theory and Concepts for Qual. Analyses in Asian Studies, 7,5 hp
Grading scale: Fail, E, D, C, B, A