



Faculty of Social Sciences

SIMP35, Social Sciences: Theories and Issues in Development, 15 credits

*Social Sciences: Theories and Issues in Development, 15
högskolepoäng*

Second Cycle / Avancerad nivå

Details of approval

The syllabus was approved by Graduate School Board on 2011-12-12 and was last revised on 2018-05-31. The revised syllabus applies from 2018-09-03, autumn semester 2018.

General Information

The course is offered as an interdisciplinary single subject course in Social Sciences and as a compulsory course within the Master of Science Programme in Development Studies.

Language of instruction: English

Main field of studies

Political Science

Education

Social Work

Sociology

Human Geography

Sociology of Law

Media and Communication Studies

Gender Studies

Depth of study relative to the degree requirements

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

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Development Studies

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

Social Anthropology

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

Learning outcomes

On completion of the course, students shall be able to

Knowledge and understanding

- understand development theories and issues relating to poverty, inequality, human development and sustainability
- identify and critically reflect upon theories and issues in development including causality, dynamics, interconnectivity, and possible solutions
- locate, understand, and critically review development theory and research within her/his discipline(s) and the interdisciplinary field of Development Studies

Competence and skills

- analyse development issues in a complex manner using key concepts and theories from the course
- formulate research questions in and for development
- give informative and profound oral presentations on development theories and issues
- communicate scientific knowledge and follow the development within her/his field of study

Judgement and approach

- act in accordance with the non-harm principle in development
- consider ethical aspects of knowledge production and actual practice in development
- reflect upon her/his role and position in knowledge production and in interaction with society in the context of development
- evaluate and review the work of peers

Course content

This interdisciplinary course focuses on problems of poverty, inequality, human development, and sustainability. It deals with theoretical perspectives and key issues that serve to increase our understanding of the preconditions for, origin and content of, and future prospect of development. A major question addressed throughout the course is why poverty still exists despite extensive scientific knowledge, development policies, international projects, and global goal setting.

The course offers an overview and critical scrutiny of development theory and discourse in a historical context. In parallel, students are given the opportunity to deepen their understanding of a broad range of current and more specific development issues and theoretical perspectives. These include the broad issues of climate and sustainability, food and agricultural production and distribution, health and demographic change, work and employment, poverty, diversity and inequality based on class, ethnicity, gender, race, sex etc.

The aim of the course is to give the students the opportunity to learn about and critically examine and evaluate current debates, issues, and theories in development. In this process students will gain knowledge to understand the history and conditions of development and acquire concrete skills to work directly in development related fields such as poverty reduction, health and well-being, and social and institutional development. This should prepare students for third cycle studies as well as for professional development work in consultancy, government agencies, NGOs, policy, or private firms.

Course design

The course starts with a series of lectures covering key issues in contemporary development studies and a historically situated overview of development theory. In parallel to lectures there are thematic seminars where students analyse and discuss the issues in more depth. The student shall read and use the course literature but also search for, evaluate, and apply material beyond the assigned literature.

Unless there are valid reasons to the contrary, compulsory participation in seminars is required. Students who have been unable to participate due to circumstances such as accidents or sudden illness will be offered the opportunity to compensate for or re-take compulsory components. This also applies to students who have been absent because of duties as an elected student representative.

Assessment

Assessment is based on the following:

- active participation in seminars and peer-review processes
- debates and group based posters, presentations, and literature reviews
- individually written assignments relating to course theories and issues
- an individually written final course paper in which the student selects a specific development issue and analyses it using one (or more) theoretical perspective(s)

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 then current course syllabus.

The examiner, in consultation with Disability Support Services, may deviate from the regular form of examination in order to provide a permanently disabled student with a form of examination equivalent to that of a student without a disability.

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 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.

Participation in seminars, group work in the form of presentations, reviews, posters, and smaller individually written assignments are exempt from the grading scale above. The grades for these 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 on the course.

Entry requirements

To be admitted to the course, students must have completed 150 credits including a Bachelor's degree project in Political Science, Sociology, Social Anthropology, Education, Social Work, Sociology of Law, Gender Studies, Human Geography, Development Studies, or the equivalent.

Oral and written proficiency in English equivalent to English 6/B (advanced) from Swedish upper secondary school is a requirement. International qualifications will be assessed in accordance with national guidelines.

Further information

The course cannot be included in a degree together with SIM301 Development Issues and Theories 15 credits, SIMP31 Development Issues and Theories 15 credits or SIMP33 Theories and Issues in Development 15 credits.

Subcourses in SIMP35, Social Sciences: Theories and Issues in Development

Applies from H12

1101 Theories and Issues in Development, 15,0 hp
Grading scale: Fail, E, D, C, B, A