



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 is an old version, approved by Graduate School Board on 2011-12-12 and was last revised on 2016-04-25. . The revised syllabus applied from 2016-08-29, autumn semester 2016.

General Information

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

Language of instruction: English

Main field of studies

Social Work

Education

Media and Communication Studies

Political Science

Development Studies

Sociology of Law

Social Anthropology

Sociology

Depth of study relative to the degree requirements

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

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Human Geography

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

Gender Studies

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

Learning outcomes

Knowledge and understanding

On completion of the course, students shall be able to

- locate, understand, and critically review development theories and research within their respective disciplines and within the interdisciplinary field of Development Studies

Competence and skills

On completion of the course, students shall be able to

- formulate complex research questions regarding development
- give informative oral presentations on development issues
- communicate scientific issues and follow the development of knowledge within their field of study

Judgement and approach

On completion of the course, students shall be able to

- identify and critically reflect upon issues and theories of poverty and human development: causes, interrelation, feedback, and possible solutions
- analyse relevant development phenomena in a complex manner using key concepts and theories studied during the course

Course content

The overall aim for students, of this interdisciplinary course in development studies, is to acquire knowledge and skills to critically examine, assess and understand theories, current issues and long-term debates in development.

The course focuses on poverty, human development and sustainability. It deals with persistent problems, new challenges, and theories that have emerged over time to explain preconditions for, intents of, and outcomes of development. A major question addressed throughout the course is why poverty and inequality exist in the midst of plenty – despite increasing development research, policies and initiatives.

The course provides a brief historical overview and a critical scrutiny of development theory and practice. It offers analyses of key issues, policies and concepts pertaining to the broad themes of: poverty; population growth and public health; food production and distribution; climate change and sustainability; democracy and institutional setup and power and inequality at the intersections of gender, class, ethnicity, space, etc. Informed by theory, students will explore aspects of the themes and their interconnections in further detail. This will promote self-directed and inquiry-based learning, and thus enhance the understanding of development.

The course prepares students for research, and for professional development work in government agencies, private firms, NGOs, etc. A critical social science approach should prepare students not only for third cycle studies but also for contributions to human development and sustainability, be it as a researcher or as a policymaker, trainer or practitioner.

Course design

Lectures and seminars will cover theory and key issues in contemporary development studies. Lectures are thematically linked to seminars where students will present, discuss and assess relevant, interesting and significant development issues, theories and current debates, also relating to sustainability. To broaden the basis for seminar discussions and written assignments, students will be encouraged to search for data, information and material beyond the course literature. The seminar format is varied. It includes prepared debates, group presentations with comments, discussions, and generally also concluding remarks from students and teachers. The course ends with a series of seminars where the final individual course paper is planned, discussed and reviewed by students and examined by teachers.

Assessment

Assessment is based on

- individual reflective reports on the student's learning process, written throughout the course
- group presentations and active participation in seminars
- an individually written course paper in which the student chooses a specific development issue and analyses it using one (or more) theoretical perspectives

Re-examination is offered after the end of the course. If necessary, a second re-examination is arranged at a later date.

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 grades awarded are A, B, C, D, E or Fail. 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.

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

To be eligible for the course the student must have 150 credits including a graded thesis for the degree of Bachelor, or a completed major, in the Social Sciences, or another equivalent subject.

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 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