

JXHA01, Human Rights and the Environment, 5 credits

Mänskliga rättigheter och miljön, 5 högskolepoäng

First Cycle / Grundnivå

Details of approval

The syllabus was approved by Faculty of Law Board of education at undergraduate and postgraduate levels on 2025-03-05. The syllabus comes into effect 2025-03-05 and is valid from the spring semester 2025.

General information

The course Human Rights and the Environment is a freestanding course at first cycle level.

Language of instruction: English

Main field of study Specialisation

- GXX, First cycle, in-depth level of the course cannot be classified

Learning outcomes

The aim of the course is to provide students with an understanding of human rights and sustainability, as well as how these concepts interact with each other. The students will gain insight on how these concepts can be applied in regard to environmental degradation, disasters and climate change. These consequences will be understood both in a national and international context. The students will acquire knowledge about relevant core principles, conventions and rules, but also important discussions and perspectives surrounding this field of law. With this knowledge, the students will be able to adopt an analytical and reflective approach on the course material. The course further aims to enable participants to develop their writing skills.

Knowledge and understanding

After the course the student shall be able to:

- understand core principles concerning human rights and the environment in the context of environmental degradation, disasters and climate change, as reflected in international human rights law instruments and other authoritative documents, as well as academic and more practically oriented texts,

- understand the wider political, historical, and social context within which the concepts of human rights and sustainability developed and continues to develop,
- understand the key legal frameworks and instruments of environmental governance, and
- identify key issues in relation to the areas of law taught during the course and formulate coherent legal argument.

Competence and skills

After the course the student shall be able to:

- apply core principles concerning human rights and sustainability in practical contexts of environmental degradation, disasters and climate change,
- identify the conceptual components of the system surrounding human rights and the environment in a modern and diverse world,
- apply the discussed principles and international law instruments related to human rights and the environment to real and hypothetical scenarios, and
- perform independent research and take responsibility for the development of their own knowledge.

Judgement and approach

After the course the student shall be able to

- distinguish between binding international legal obligations, persuasive authority and voluntary agreements as they relate to sustainability in the context of environmental degradation, disasters and climate change,
- communicate, defend and reconsider their own views about human rights and sustainability,
- relate and weigh different approaches to human rights and the environment, and
- explain and discuss the content of the course in reflective papers while applying critical perspectives.

Course content

The course is divided into several modules. The course provides an accessible introduction to how human rights law applies in contexts relating to environmental degradation, disasters and climate change. The students will study authoritative texts produced by UN treaty bodies articulating how core human rights obligations apply in this context. This will enable the students understanding of valid law and principles and its applicability. The students will also get familiar with decisions from national and international judicial bodies that address the issues in focus for the course. A curated catalogue of digital materials will also form part of the course content.

Course design

The course is scheduled to require ten (10) weeks of half-time studies.

The course is a distance course which means that the lectures are web-based. The web-based lectures are paired with quizzes and reflective assignments. Each module contains one (1) mandatory quiz and one (1) mandatory reflective assignment. In total the course contains five (5) mandatory quizzes and five (5) mandatory reflective assignments.

Assessment

The student's performance will be assessed by five (5) reflective papers. The reflective papers are worth one (1) credit each.

The final grade is based on the student's achieved result on the reflective papers.

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.

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Grades

Grading scale includes the grades: Fail, Pass

G – Pass

To obtain the grade G, the student must show basic:

- understanding in the theoretical and practical applications of legal issues regarding human rights and the environment,
- knowledge and ability to analyse fundamental principles within the field of study and selected topics,
- understanding and ability to analyse selected topics in human rights and the environment, and
- legal argumentation skills as well as basic ability to interpret different legal norms and case law within international law.

Entry requirements

General requirements and studies equivalent of courses Social Studies 1b or 1a1+1a2 from Swedish Upper Secondary School.

Further information

The course is scheduled to require ten (10) weeks of study at half-time study pace. During the course, the students will have the opportunity to talk to the course examiner online.

The University views plagiarism as a very serious academic offence and will take disciplinary actions against students for any kind of attempted malpractice in connection with examinations and assessments. The penalty that may be imposed for this, and other unfair practice in examinations or assessments, includes suspension from the University.