

MKVN12, Media and Communication Studies: Popular Culture, 15 credits

Medie- och kommunikationsvetenskap: Populärkultur, 15 högskolepoäng
Second Cycle / Avancerad nivå

Details of approval

The syllabus was approved by the board of the Department of Communication and Media on 2019-02-28. The syllabus comes into effect 2019-09-02 and is valid from the autumn semester 2019.

General information

The course can be taken as a freestanding course or included as an elective specialisation course in the Master's programme in Media and Communication Studies (120 credits).

Language of instruction: English

Main field of study

Media and Communication Studies

Specialisation

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

Learning outcomes

Knowledge and understanding

On completion of the course, the student shall

- demonstrate specialised knowledge on key approaches to and theories on production, representation and reception of popular culture
- demonstrate an advanced understanding of critical approaches to mixed media production, distribution, storytelling and genre for popular culture

Competence and skills

On completion of the course, the student shall

- demonstrate the ability to critically analyse different theories, concepts, and methods for research in popular culture
- demonstrate the ability to present independent analyses of popular culture in speech and writing

Judgement and approach

On completion of the course, the student shall

- critically evaluate key approaches to industries, genre and representation, and cultural practices for popular culture
- critically assess the possibilities and limitations of research in the area of popular culture within media and communication studies.

Course content

The course addresses why popular culture matters in the study of media, culture and society. Popular culture highlights the significance of the imagination and storytelling in media representations, and it signals a sense of belonging for various individuals and communities. It also highlights the power relations between the cultural industries, producers and audiences, where meaning and symbolic power in popular culture is constantly in a state of iteration, as it is shaped and re-shaped by cultural institutions, producers and audiences.

The intellectual structure for the course is based on three areas of analysis in popular culture, media industries, genre and representation, and cultural citizenship. The course starts with histories of popular culture. It then goes on to address the three areas of analysis in relation to key concepts and specific case studies. The first area addresses theories and research on the cultural industries, with case studies of labour practices, and celebrity studies; the second area addresses the concept of genre work within producers and audiences practices in the co-creation of popular culture, with case studies of drama, documentary and hybrid genres; the third area addresses theories and research on cultural citizenship, with case studies of podcasting, political comedy and reality television. The course teaches the method of genre analysis as part of the way theories and concepts on popular culture work in practice with case study research.

Course design

Teaching consists of lectures, seminars, study visits and group workshops. Unless there are valid reasons to the contrary, compulsory participation is required at seminars and study visits. 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

The assessment is based on an individual essay, and active participation in seminars, and group workshops. The individual essay will be based on critical reflections on popular culture and the key concepts and methods studied on the course. Three opportunities for examination are offered in conjunction with the course: a first examination and two re-examinations. Please note that registration is required for the 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.

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.

Grades

Grading scale includes the grades: U=Fail, E=Sufficient, D=Satisfactory, C=Good, B=Very Good, A=Excellent

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 show unacceptable results.

The individual essay is awarded with a grade within the range of A to F. Course components such as active seminar participation, seminars and study visits 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 show unacceptable results.

Entry requirements

For admission to the course, students must have passed at least 150 credits including a Bachelor's degree project in the social sciences, humanities or the equivalent.

Oral and written proficiency in English corresponding to a Pass in English 6/B from Swedish upper secondary school is a requirement. The assessment of corresponding qualifications is made with reference to national guidelines. International students are exempted from the general entry requirement of proficiency in Swedish.