

SASH98, Conflicts over Truth: Conspiracy Theory and Disinformation Studies from a Humanities Perspective, 7.5 credits

*Conflicts over Truth: Conspiracy Theory and Disinformation Studies from a
Humanities Perspective, 7,5 högskolepoäng*
First Cycle / Grundnivå

Details of approval

The syllabus was approved by The Pro Dean of First and Second Cycle Studies at The Joint Faculties of Humanities and Theology on 2025-05-26 (U 2025/501). The syllabus comes into effect 2025-05-26 and is valid from the spring semester 2026.

General information

Subject: Ethnology

The course is offered as a freestanding course. It can normally be included in a first cycle degree.

Language of instruction: English

The course can be taught in Swedish if an agreement is reached by both the lecturer and the students. Such an agreement requires that all lecturers and all students are proficient in Swedish.

*Main field of
study*

Specialisation

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G1N, First cycle, has only upper-secondary level entry requirements

Learning outcomes

On completion of the course, the students shall be able to

Knowledge and understanding

- identify and explain key concepts, theoretical frameworks, and terminology related to conspiracy theories and disinformation from a humanities perspective,

Competence and skills

- present arguments about the social functions and implications of conspiracy thinking and disinformation in contemporary societies,
- present theories about why people engage with conspiracy theories,

Judgement and approach

- critically reflect on the role of disinformation and conspiracy theories in shaping public opinion and societal dynamics, considering how these phenomena both reveal and reshape social alliances and tensions in different societies.

Course content

At the time when conspiracy theories seem to be a contemporary lingua franca, when disinformation is widespread what can humanities contribute to the analysis of this phenomena? In this course, we will contextualise contemporary and historical conflicts over truth in the wider debates about knowledge, expertise, doubt, trust, power, modernity and so on. Through this course, we will explore a wide spectrum of examples of conspiracy theories, rumours and gossips that influence the worlds of politics, health, religion, economy, that impact human relations at the international, local but also individual – family – level. The course will consider examples from Europe, Africa, Americas and Asia. This approach will facilitate a comparative analysis and allow to examine both universal and culturally specific characteristics of the phenomenon. Overall, the course will also offer an opportunity to explore wider questions: what conflicts over truth reveal about fears, disappointments and concerns that people have about the current world? What social and political, national and international conflicts do they expose, but also what new forms of social alliances do they facilitate?

Course design

The teaching consists of group assignments, lectures and seminars. The seminars (approximately two) are compulsory.

Failure to participate in a compulsory activity will be compensated with a substitute assignment later in the course.

Assessment

Examination takes the form of a final written home assignment.

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

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Entry requirements

General requirements

Further information

- The course is offered at the Department of Arts and Cultural Sciences, Division of Ethnology, Lund University
- The credits allocated for course content that in whole or in part is commensurate with another course can only be credited once for a degree.
- For further details see the current application information and other relevant documentation