

STVA14, Political Science: Level 1, 30 credits

Statsvetenskap: Grundkurs, 30 högskolepoäng

First Cycle / Grundnivå

Details of approval

The syllabus was approved by the board of the Department of Political Science on 2022-03-16 and was last revised on 2023-10-18. The revised syllabus comes into effect 2024-01-15 and is valid from the spring semester 2024.

General information

The course comprises the first semester in the main field of studies political science. The course can be taken as a freestanding course or within a study programme according to the programme syllabus.

Language of instruction: Swedish

*Main field of
study*

Specialisation

Political Science

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

Learning outcomes

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

Knowledge and understanding

- demonstrate understanding of the implication of politics and its boundaries, actors, structures and processes
- demonstrate knowledge of central political science issues and basic methods and techniques

Competence and skills

- demonstrate the ability to select and use relevant tools to solve provided analytical problems
- demonstrate the ability to compile and communicate the results of a learning process in both written and oral form in the time and space allotted

- demonstrate the ability to carry out basic information searches and to carry out simple reference management

Judgement and approach

- demonstrate the ability to take responsibility for and plan their own work and learning process
- demonstrate the ability to cooperate with others in order to realise common goals.

Course content

The aim of the course is to introduce the scientific study of politics. The course includes four modules.

Module 1 Political Science Introduction (7.5 credits)

The module starts with a presentation of political science as the scientific study of politics. Emphasis is placed on the implication of this approach and on the development and current nature of the discipline in view of the basic elements of the research process: problem, theory, method, materials and results. Thereafter the module is devoted to political philosophy, i.e. theories that investigate fundamental values related to politics. This includes analysis of political ideas, democratic theory and analysis of central political philosophy concepts such power, liberty and justice.

Module 2 Political Systems (7.5 credits)

The module focuses on basic concepts and theories in Swedish and comparative politics i.e. the study of the political systems in different countries and their functioning, with emphasis on the Swedish political system and Swedish political history. The aim of the module is for students, upon completion of the course, to be familiar with the fundamental features of Sweden's modern political history, understand and be able to analyse the central problems related to constitutional politics that arise from Sweden's constitutional law, be familiar with and able to apply the fundamental concepts of comparative politics and be able to identify the most important similarities and differences between the political systems in modern states. The module primarily focuses on democratic systems, but recurrent comparisons are also made with non-democratic governance.

Module 3 Political Organisation and Implementation (7.5 credits)

In the module, the organisation of politics and the implementation of political decisions are analysed in an interplay between politics, public administration, market and citizens. The legislative process is presented and problematised from the perspective of democracy. Central concepts that are introduced are governance, control, implementation and public administration ethics. These concepts are used inter alia to study public administration policy reforms. Examples of issues that are addressed: What should the state do? What characterises democratic public administration? How can politicians govern and control bureaucracy? What determines on which political/public administration level decisions are made? How is the production of welfare services such as healthcare, education and care organised and directed? Focus is on Swedish political processes and Swedish public administration, but international comparisons and analysis of the relationship between the EU, the nation state and the subnational level are also included.

Module 4 International Politics (7.5 credits)

The module introduces political science research related to international policy. The module has three basic components:

- (1) Theoretical perspectives

(2) Analysis of central problems in international politics

(3) Discussion on contemporary debates in the study of international politics

The overview of theoretical perspectives includes classical theories such as realism, liberalism and Marxism as well as newer theories concerning feminism, postcolonialism, poststructuralism, constructivism and green theory.

The analysis of problems in international politics focuses on conflict and security, international cooperation, international political economy and sustainable development.

The component on contemporary debates concerning international politics covers inter alia the interdependence among states and transnational actors with regard to global security, economics, development and ecology, as well as the discussion on the organisation and control of the multilateral system and the discussion on the role of human rights in international politics.

Course design

Teaching consists of lectures and seminars. Participation in module introductions and seminars is compulsory unless special circumstances apply. Students who have been unable to participate due to circumstances beyond their control such as accidents, sudden illness or similar will be offered the opportunity to compensate for or resit compulsory components. This also applies to students who have missed classes due to activities as an elected student representative.

All teaching is based on the students' active participation. Ahead of lectures and seminars, the students are to prepare review and analytical assignments according to the instructions.

Assessment

All modules are assessed through seminar participation and a written examination at the end of each module.

The course includes opportunities for assessment at the first examination, a re-sit close to the first examination and a second re-sit for courses that have ended during that academic year (catch-up exam). At least two further re-examinations on the same course content are offered within a year of the course undergoing a major revamp or being discontinued. 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: Fail, E, D, C, B, A

One of the grades A, B, C, D, E or Fail will be awarded. The highest grade is A and the lowest passing grade is E. The grade for a result that does not pass 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 will have shown unacceptable results.

The grade for each module is determined by the grade on the take-home exam. The grade on the whole course is determined through an aggregation of the grades on the four modules that are included in the course. The grades A-E are converted to numerical values that are divided by the number of modules and then rounded off according to mathematical principles.

Entry requirements

General and courses corresponding to the following Swedish Upper Secondary School Programs: Civics 1b/1a1+1a2, English 6.

Further information

This course replaces STVA13, Political science: Level 1, 30 credits.