



DEPARTMENT OF JOURNALISM, MEDIA AND COMMUNICATION

SF30005 Communicating science, 7.5 credits

Att kommunicera vetenskap, 7,5 högskolepoäng

Third-cycle level / Forskarnivå

Confirmation

This syllabus was confirmed by the Department of Journalism, Media and Communication on 2018-08-16, and was last revised on 2020-12-15. The revised course syllabus is valid from Spring semester 2021.

Responsible Department

Department of Journalism, Media and Communication, Faculty of Social Sciences

Entry requirements

Admission to third-cycle studies within the Faculty of Social Sciences.

Selection is done in the following way:

1. Applicants from the Social Science Faculty, University of Gothenburg
2. Other applicants

Learning outcomes

On successful completion of the course the student will be able to:

Knowledge and understanding

Define the meaning of 'academic outreach' and the way in which it can be pursued within their own area of research.

Identify relevant social discussions to which their own and others' research initiatives may make a contribution.

Identify what external factors are important for the opportunities and limitations to communicate with society at large

Competence and skills

Account for their own or other relevant research in a popular scientific form and to relate this to issues that differ from the social issues in question.

Apply different writing and presentation techniques in a way that facilitates access to the media and public spheres.

Develop a communication strategy for research results.

Judgement and approach

Identify problems and take a position on issues relating to the role and ethical responsibilities of the researcher with respect to cooperation with society.

Course content

The course focusses on the communication of science as well as the preconditions for communicating research in a society with a rapidly changing media landscape. The course is divided into three thematic areas.

The first theme – the research community and the public sphere – concerns the role of the researcher and her/his relations with both the research community and with society at large. What does ‘academic outreach’ actually imply in the Swedish Higher Education Act? Which preconditions and expectations do researchers have to deal with in this respect? Which are the different interpretations of ‘academic outreach’; and what ethical considerations do such interpretations raise? Within this theme, issues relating to the production of academic knowledge and the points of departure for the production of scholarly knowledge are also dealt with. Furthermore, a basic orientation is provided of the terms and conditions applicable to the public sphere with regard to legislation, the role of the media, and its significance for society.

The second theme – analysis of the surrounding world and communication planning – focuses on communicating scholarly knowledge. How does a researcher go about gaining access to various kinds of media spheres and make an imprint on the public debate? Media logic in contrast to research community logic is central to this component, as is understanding external analysis as a tool to identify important factors, opportunities and limitations when communicating with the general public.

The third theme for the course – addressing and writing for the public sphere – concerns presentation techniques, in both theory and practice. This includes adapting texts for situations and target groups, adapting the text for the intended audience. Different text genres are discussed, such as op-eds, blogs, tweets, and reviews, etc. There is a particular focus on communication in social media. Visual communication and verbal presentation techniques are also important elements of this course component.

Types of instruction

Main teaching methods are lectures, workshops and seminars.

Language of instruction

The course is given in English.

Grades

The grade Pass (G) or Fail (U) is given in this course.

Types of assessment

The course is assessed both in writing and verbally, individually and in groups. The examination comprises shorter written assignments, verbal presentations together with a longer piece of work in the form of a strategic document concerning communication.

Course evaluation

The entire course is evaluated, both verbally and in writing, at the end of the course. The course director will deal with any quality shortcomings in their ongoing development work for the course and also feedback information about the quality development work to future student groups.