



SCHOOL OF GLOBAL STUDIES

SFGS316 Applied Theorizing, 7.5 credits

Tillämpad teoriutveckling, 7,5 högskolepoäng

Third-cycle level / Forskarnivå

Confirmation

This syllabus was confirmed by the Department of Global Studies on 2020-09-16, and is valid from Autumn semester 2020.

Responsible Department

School of Global Studies, Faculty of Social Sciences

Entry requirements

The course is open for students enrolled in a PhD program in Peace and Development Research, Environmental Social Science or other relevant fields of study, or equivalent.

Learning outcomes

On successful completion of the course, the third-cycle student is expected to be able to:

Knowledge and understanding

- understand key challenges, strategies and techniques for social science theory development;
- situate the research problem within a broader academic conversation and identify potential theoretical contributions to existing research;

Competence and skills

- practice and develop practical skills in theorizing;
- use different approaches to identifying and defining a social science research problem;

Judgement and approach

- assess how different theoretical frameworks set opportunities and constraints for addressing the research problem;
- critically evaluate and synthesize key theoretical approaches that are relevant to the research problem.

Course content

The chief aim of this course is to help PhD students identify and develop the theoretical contribution of their dissertation by engaging in creative theorizing and situating their own research project within theoretical debates relevant to the dissertation's emerging research aims. The focus of the course is on theorizing, i.e., how to come up with good ideas for research, and how to build a theoretical approach (rather than on substantive theories or meta-theories of the social sciences). Seeking to help students develop their theorizing skills through both critical reflection and hands-on exercises, the course covers issues such as the role of theory in a doctoral dissertation, how to generate new and interesting ideas, and how to identify the ideas worth pursuing, how to formulate a research problem, and how to situate a PhD project within a larger academic discourse.

Types of instruction

The course is taught with a mixture of lectures, individual study, seminar sessions, exercises, and written assignments.

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 examined on the basis of a final analytical paper (journal-article length) and the student's individual comprehensive literature list.

Course evaluation

A course evaluation is carried out after completion of the course.

Other information

Each student compiles their own literature list based on their own dissertation project in consultation with their supervisors. It should include recent articles and/or books (ca. 250-300 pages per week in total). In addition, the course also includes some common readings assigned by the course convener (ca. 400 pages).