SO30002 Philosophy of science for Social Work, 5 credits

Vetenskapsteori för socialt arbete, 5 högskolepoäng

Third-cycle level / Forsknivå

Confirmation

This syllabus was confirmed by the Department of Social Work on 2019-09-25, and is valid from Autumn semester 2019.

Responsible Department

Department of Social Work, Faculty of Social Sciences

Entry requirements

In order to be eligible for the course, the applicant must be admitted to a third-cycle programme in social work or another related subject.

Learning outcomes

Upon completing the course, students should be able to:

Knowledge and understanding

- Account for and critically review differences and similarities between different philosophy of science traditions
- Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the relationship between modern philosophy of science and older knowledge traditions
- Account for the importance of knowledge's socially conditional and situated nature in social science contexts

Competence and skills

- Demonstrate an ability to discuss research ethical and methodological consequences of different philosophy of science traditions
- Demonstrate an ability to discuss their own position as a researcher and relate their own thesis project to a broader philosophy of science context
**Judgement and approach**

- Evaluate the relevance of different philosophy of science positions in relation to their own thesis work
- Critically discuss and reflect on the possibilities and limitations of science, its role in society and people’s responsibility for how it is used

**Course content**

The course provides knowledge about various realistic and relativistic philosophy of science traditions on different paradigms and ontological, epistemological assumptions, as well as how demands on knowledge are legitimised within the framework of different methodological approaches.

The course introduces theoretical tools that allow for systematic reflection on participants’ own research practices and the conditions for these practices through the course’s knowledge elements being continuously related to the doctoral students’ thesis projects.

**Types of instruction**

The course is largely based on the doctoral students’ own knowledge acquisition. Teaching takes the form of lectures and teacherless literature seminars which are reported on via a written report of the discussion held and a concluding paper seminar. Attendance at seminars is compulsory. Absence can be compensated for with a written task by agreement with the examiner.

**Language of instruction**

The course is given in Swedish.

**Grades**

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

**Types of assessment**

Examination takes place both on an ongoing basis through active participation in literature seminars and through a written individual paper in which participants analyse their own philosophy of science perspective/position and its relationship to and consequences for their own research problem formulation and questions, theory and method selection, and ethical considerations. Each participant will also act as a main commentator on another participant’s paper.

Resits will be offered shortly after the examination.

**Course evaluation**

It is the course coordinator’s responsibility to ensure that course participants have an opportunity to write a written course evaluation at the end of the course.

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Other information

If the number of applicants is less than five, the department reserves the right to provide the course in a reduced format, e.g. as a reading course, possibly with associated seminars.