



DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WORK

SO30002 Philosophy of science for Social Work, 5 credits

Vetenskapsteori för socialt arbete, 5 högskolepoäng

Third-cycle level / Forskarnivå

Confirmation

This syllabus was confirmed by the Department of Social Work on 2019-09-25, and was last revised on 2021-08-17. The revised course syllabus is valid from Autumn semester 2021.

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 approaches and positions
- Demonstrate a knowledge and understanding of the development of philosophy of science, and the relationship between different approaches and positions
- Account for the importance of knowledge's socially conditional and situated nature in social science contexts

Competence and skills

- Demonstrate an ability to discuss the methodological research-ethical consequences of different approaches in philosophy of science
- Demonstrate an ability to discuss their own position as a researcher and relate their own thesis project to a philosophy of science context

Judgement and approach

- Evaluate the meanings and consequences of different philosophy of science approaches and positions in relation to their own thesis
- Critically discuss and reflect on the possibilities and limitations of science, its role in society and people's responsibility for choice of object of study and research design

Course content

The course addresses realistic and relativistic philosophy of science approaches, as well as the ontological and epistemological assumptions associated with each position. It also addresses how knowledge claims are justified within the scope of different philosophy of science approaches. The function of philosophy of science, as well as the consequences of different philosophy of science assumptions, are discussed and compared with their own research practices and planned thesis project.

Types of instruction

The course requires a considerable amount of reading in connection with each element, as well as preparation before the seminars. Teaching is conducted through lectures and seminars, as well as by electronically commenting on one another's unfinished examination papers. Attendance at seminars is compulsory. Absence can be compensated for with a written task upon 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 is conducted both as an ongoing process through active participation in seminars, as well as by writing a written individual paper, and also by electronically commenting on another participant's paper produced during the course.

The written examination assignment involves analysing their intended thesis project from two different philosophy of science approaches based on epistemological and ontological considerations, in accordance with the course's central themes (announced during the course), as well as discussing what the consequences of this will be for problem formulation, questions, any intended theoretical and methodological approaches, as well as ethical considerations.

Resits will be held shortly after the examination.

Course evaluation

The member of teaching staff who is responsible for the course is also responsible for course

participants being given the opportunity to complete a written course evaluation at the end of the course.

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.