SO30006  Theory and perspectives in Social Work, 7.5 credits
Teori och perspektiv i socialt arbete, 7,5 högskolepoäng

Third-cycle level / Forskarnivå

Confirmation
This syllabus was confirmed by the Department of Social Work on 2018-10-15, and is valid from Autumn semester 2018.

Responsible department/equivalent
Department of Social Work, Faculty of Social Sciences

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

Learning outcomes
Upon completing the course, students should be able to:

Knowledge and understanding
Give an in-depth explanation of the social science theories and concepts relevant to the course
Critically discuss and relate the addressed theories and concepts to each other and to knowledge relevant to social work.

Competence and skills
Show an in-depth ability to describe and analyse how social science theories and concepts can be used in research regarding social work
Suggest and show how the central theoretical perspectives for the course could be applied to their own dissertation/research area.

Judgment and approach
Evaluate the applicability of these theories and concepts in order to explain and understand
different aspects of social work and indicate their respective focus and limitations
Independently reflect on their own approach to theory and theoretical application in social work research, based on experiences documented in a research diary.

**Course content**

The course aims to present some leading theoretical trends in social work and is organised around six thematic blocks. A number of key analytical perspectives are highlighted on the course, focusing on how these perspectives may help to problematise contemporary social problems, social processes and social change in the field of social work. During the course, the focus is on how the chosen theory of the individual researcher is linked to both the traditions of the subject – or relevant related subjects – and is personally established through emotional processes. By giving the students tools to process these, the course also aims to stimulate analytical creativity and innovation.

The following thematic blocks will be addressed:

- Theorising, intertextuality and embodiment
- Colonialism and geopolitics of knowledge
- To construct social problems and social work as an area of knowledge
- Interactionism and the linguistic turn
- Social exclusion and control
- Boundary-thinking (which examines boundaries between perceived opposites, such as experience-based and sense-based knowing or poetic and academic writing, in relation to theorising and knowledge production).

**Types of instruction**

The course teaching consists of lectures, seminars and diary writing. The thematic blocks will be divided into two parts, in which the first consists of a lecture in which central theoretical perspectives are presented and discussed in relation to social work research. The second part consists of a literature seminar, in which the students reflect on and translate current theories and concepts in relation to their own research process. During the course, students will keep a diary in which intertextuality and embodiment in the meeting with different theoretical perspectives are central. At the end of the course, a seminar will be organised in which students are given the opportunity to exchange their experiences of keeping the diary and of the associated exercises. The course ends with an individual exam paper in which the six elements of the course are placed in relation to the student’s own dissertation/research area.

**Language of instruction**

The course is given in Swedish.

**Grades**

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

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Types of assessment
Examination on the course is done through oral examination during compulsory seminars and through an individual written examination paper. Passing the course requires preparation in the form of reading the prescribed course literature, as well as active participation in the seminars. In the event of absence, a written supplementary assignment is required.

Course evaluation
It is the course coordinator’s responsibility to ensure that course participants have an opportunity to submit a written course evaluation at the end of the course. The results will be provided to the participants on the following 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.