

Ontologies, epistemologies and methodologies of interdisciplinary studies, 7.5 credits

Ontologier, epistemologier och metodologier i tvärvetenskapliga studier, 7.5 hp

Third-cycle education course

7FTEM10

The Tema Institute

Valid from: Second half-year 2023

Approved by
The Board of PhD Studies

Approved
2023-11-29

Registration number
Tema-2023-00348

Entry requirements

Entry requirement for studies on third-cycle education courses

- second-cycle degree,
- 240 credits in required courses, including at least 60 second-cycle credits,
or
- acquisition of equivalent knowledge in some other manner

This course also requires

- English skills equivalent to English 6/B at Swedish upper secondary school level.

Specific information

The course includes two modules. The first module (2 credits) aims to give the students an overall picture of the subject. It is aimed at doctoral students at all faculties and departments. The target group for the second module (5.5 credits) is mainly PhD students at the department at Tema and the Department of Behavioral Sciences and Learning (IBL), but it is also open to other PhD students at LiU.

Learning outcomes

By the end of the course the students will be able to:

- Reflect on the origin, role and function of the academic disciplines
- Explain different interdisciplinary ontologies, epistemologies and methodologies
- Critically examine similarities and differences between disciplinary, interdisciplinary, transdisciplinary and post-disciplinary studies
- Problematize research policy contexts for interdisciplinary studies
- Critically reflect on and situate your dissertation work in relation to various interdisciplinary research environments

Contents

The course offers a critical introduction to the history, philosophy, sociology and practice of interdisciplinary studies. Interdisciplinarity is considered in historical contexts and in relation to traditional academic disciplines. We discuss how disciplinary norms and epistemic models organize academic research, and to what extent and how are they challenged by interdisciplinary approaches.

The course also addresses ontological assumptions upon which different interdisciplinary traditions rest and that they project, and examines interdisciplinarity as a particular type of cognition. We focus on interdisciplinary interpretations of truth and objectivity, address issues of communicative rationality and social studies of science and technology.

The course proceeds to compare different kinds and forms of interdisciplinary research, its relational dynamics, and methodological premises. We critically analyze differences in interdisciplinary collaborations between the humanities, social sciences, hard and natural sciences, etc.

The course also tackles the relations between interdisciplinarity, transdisciplinarity, postdisciplinarity and antidisciplinarity both within and outside the Western-centric knowledge production paradigm.

Finally, we touch upon the research policy milieus for interdisciplinary studies and possible career paths for interdisciplinary researchers.

Educational methods

Teaching and working methods in this course are lectures and seminars in the first module and seminars and a workshop in the second module.

Module 1 consists of lectures and seminars and is examined through an individual course presentation (graded pass/fail). Module 2 consists of seminars and a course conference (workshop). It is examined through a final course paper (graded ECTS). The course can be offered both online and offline depending on the current government and university regulations.

Language of the course and examination – English

Examination

The first module (2 credits) is examined through an individual oral presentation. The second module (5.5 credits) is examined through a written individual assignment.

A pass grade is required for the examination of the first module and a pass grade (A-E) for the examination of the second module.

Students who have not achieved a passing result are offered an opportunity for re-examination in connection with the course. After that, participation in an examination is offered at a later time in the course. The scope for re-examination must be the same as for ordinary examination.

Grading

Two-grade scale

Course literature

A list of recommended literature will be provided by the course coordinator before the start of the course.

General information

Planning and implementation of the course must be based on the wording of the course syllabus. Course evaluation as well as analysis and proposals relating to general development and improvement of the course are fed back to the Research and Postgraduate Education Board by the teacher responsible for the course. If the course ends or undergoes a major change, examinations are normally offered according to this syllabus on a total of three occasions within/in connection with the two semesters that follow.