

Modern Classics and Theoretical Debates in Technology and Social Change, 10.0 credits

Moderna klassiker och teoretiska debatter i Teknik och social förändring, 10.0 hp

Third-cycle education course

7FTEM20

Department of Thematic Studies

Valid from: Second half-year 2025

Approved by
The Board of PhD Studies

Approved
2024-04-11

Registration number
TEMA-2025-00141

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

Specific entry requirements for this course: Participation in the course requires that the participant is currently accepted in a PhD programme that is relevant for the course.

Learning outcomes

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

Knowledge and understanding

- Describe key theoretical positions, concepts and foci in the study of technology, science, and medicine from within disciplinary and/or interdisciplinary humanities and social sciences approaches.

Competence and skills

- Critically reflect upon how these different theoretical positions can be understood as reactions and responses to previous thinking – as reactions and responses that build on, develop or break with previous thinking.

Judgement and approach

- Assess the strengths and weaknesses of the key theoretical perspectives.
- Reflect on the relevance of these different perspectives for the PhD candidate's own research, and for contemporary/ongoing developments in the field of technology and social change.

Contents

This course introduces technology and social change as a theoretical field by situating it in larger intellectual traditions and debates on technology, science and medicine in the social sciences and humanities. Acknowledging the richness of theoretical developments in this broad area, the course focuses on influential intellectual streams as well as on critique, reactions, responses and new trajectories that these have opened up. The course is attentive to the co-emergence of intellectual streams, as well as the specific socio-political, cultural, philosophical, and historical contexts in which they have been developed and subsequently been employed in scholarly practice.

The course shows and invites discussion on how different theoretical perspectives can be understood as reactions and responses to previous thinking, that build on, develop or break with it. It enables discussions of distinct aspects or questions within a certain theoretical perspective, and discussions of what is shared across perspectives. It also enables discussions of analytic tensions and conflicting positions if or when different perspectives are brought into dialogue with each other. In addition, it enables discussion of the relevance of these theoretical perspectives for contemporary research, and for continued theoretical development. Finally, the course gives ample opportunity to discuss not only what a certain theoretical perspective entails, but also how it can be used and what it can help do, through the use of examples.

Educational methods

Lectures, seminars, tutorials.

Examination

The examination consists of the following components:

- Active participation in seminars
- Individual written assignments
- Oral presentation

Students who fail are offered one re-examination occasion in close connection to the course. After that participation in a coming course examination is offered. The re-examination should be equally comprehensive as the ordinary examination.

Change of examiner

Students who have failed the course or part of the course twice are entitled to request another examiner for the following examination occasion.

Grading

Two-grade scale

Course literature

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

General information

The course is given in English.

The course is planned and carried out according to what is stated in this syllabus.

Course evaluation, analysis and suggestions for improvement should be fed back to the Research and PhD studies Committee (FUN) by the course coordinator.

If the course is withdrawn or is subject to major changes, examination according to this syllabus is normally offered at three occasions within/in close connection to the two following semesters.