



Faculty of Social Sciences

SIMP37, Social Sciences: Theories and Issues in Development, 15 credits

*Samhällsvetenskap: Teorier och frågeställningar inom utveckling,
15 högskolepoäng*
Second Cycle / Avancerad nivå

Details of approval

The syllabus was approved by Graduate School Board on 2021-02-25 to be valid from 2021-08-30, autumn semester 2021.

General Information

The course is offered as an interdisciplinary single subject course in Social Sciences and as a compulsory course within the Master of Science Programme in Development Studies (SADVS), 120 credits.

Language of instruction: English

<i>Main field of studies</i>	<i>Depth of study relative to the degree requirements</i>
Sociology of Law	A1N, Second cycle, has only first-cycle course/s as entry requirements
Sociology	A1N, Second cycle, has only first-cycle course/s as entry requirements
Development Studies	A1N, Second cycle, has only first-cycle course/s as entry requirements
Social Anthropology	A1N, Second cycle, has only first-cycle course/s as entry requirements
Political Science	A1N, Second cycle, has only first-cycle course/s as entry requirements
Social Work	A1N, Second cycle, has only first-cycle course/s as entry requirements
Media and Communication Studies	A1N, Second cycle, has only first-cycle course/s as entry requirements
Human Geography	A1N, Second cycle, has only first-cycle course/s as entry requirements

Learning outcomes

On completion of the course, the student shall:

Knowledge and understanding

- understand development theories and issues relating to poverty, inequality, human development, and sustainability;
- identify and critically reflect upon development issues including their causality, dynamics, interconnectivity, and possible solutions;
- apply development theory to identified development issues;
- locate, understand, and critically review development theory and research within their discipline(s) and the interdisciplinary field of Development Studies.

Competence and skills

- analyse the complexity of development issues by using key concepts and theories from the course;
- formulate and address research questions in and for development;
- give informative and thorough oral presentations on development theories and issues;
- communicate scientific knowledge and follow the development within their field(s) of study.

Judgement and approach

- act in accordance with the non-harm principle in development;
- consider ethical aspects of both knowledge production and actual practice in development;
- reflect upon their role and position in knowledge production and in interaction with society in the context of development;
- evaluate and review the work of peers.

Course content

This interdisciplinary course focuses on problems of poverty, inequality, human development, and sustainability. It deals with theoretical perspectives and key issues that serve to increase our understanding of the preconditions, origin, content, and future prospects of development. A major question addressed throughout the course is why poverty still exists despite extensive scientific knowledge, development policies, international projects, and global goal setting.

The course offers an overview and critical scrutiny of development theory and discourse in a historical context. In weekly assignments the student will deepen their understanding of a range of current and more specific development issues and theoretical perspectives. These include the multifaceted issues of climate and sustainability, food and agricultural production and distribution, health and demographic change, labour and income, poverty and deprivation, resistance and ethics, and diversity and inequality based on the intersections of class, ethnicity, gender, race, sex, etc.

The aim of this course is to give the student the opportunity to learn about and critically examine and evaluate current debates, issues, and theories in development. In this process the student will gain knowledge to understand the history and conditions of development and acquire concrete skills to work directly with social and institutional change in fields such as poverty reductions, health and well-being, labour and migrations, sanitation, and adaptation to climate change and environmental degradation. This should prepare the student for third-cycle studies as well as for professional development work in consultancy, government agencies, NGOs, policy, or private firms.

Course design

The course starts with a series of lectures covering key issues in contemporary development studies and a historically situated overview of development theory. In parallel to lectures there are thematic seminars in which the student will analyse and discuss the issues in greater depth and also apply theory. The student is expected to read and use the course literature, but also search for, evaluate, and apply material beyond the assigned literature.

Unless there are valid reasons to the contrary, compulsory participation in seminars is required. Students who have been unable to participate due to circumstances such as accidents or sudden illness will have the opportunity to compensate for or re-take compulsory components. This also applies to students who have been absent because of duties as an elected student representative.

Assessment

Assessment is based on the following:

- seminar assignments which include active contribution to debates and group-based posters, presentations, and literature reviews, active contribution to peer-review processes and group work, and written assignments relating to course theories and issues (50 % of the grade);
- an individually written final course paper in which the student selects a specific development issue and analyses it using one (or more) theoretical perspectives (50 % of the grade).

The course includes opportunities for assessment at a first examination, a re-sit close to the first examination, and a second re-sit for courses that have ended during that school year. Two further re-examinations on the same course content are offered within a year of the end of the course. After this, further re-examination opportunities are offered but in accordance with the current course syllabus.

The examiner, in consultation with Disability Support Services, may deviate from the regular form of examination in order to provide a permanently disabled student with a form of examination equivalent to that of a student without a disability.

Subcourses that are part of this course can be found in an appendix at the end of this document.

Grades

Marking scale: Fail, E, D, C, B, A.

The grade for a non-passing result is Fail. The student's performance is assessed with reference to the learning outcomes of the course. For the grade of E the student must show acceptable results. For the grade of D the student must show satisfactory results. For the grade of C the student must show good results. For the result of B the student must show very good results. For the result of A the student must show excellent results. For the grade of Fail the student must have shown unacceptable results.

The seminar assignments count for 50 % of the entire grade and the final individually written course paper counts for 50 %. The grade for the entire course is an average of these two assessed components. For the grade of Pass on the entire course the student must have been awarded at least E on all assessments for which the grading scale for A-E+Fail applies. The student must have also participated in all compulsory components.

At the start of the course students are informed about the learning outcomes stated in the syllabus and about the grading scale and how it is applied in the course.

Entry requirements

To be admitted to the course, students must have completed 150 credits including a Bachelor's degree project in Development Studies, Gender Studies, Human Geography, Media and Communication Studies, Political Science, Social Anthropology, Social Work, Sociology, and Sociology of Law, or the equivalent.

Oral and written proficiency in English equivalent to English 6/B (advanced) from Swedish upper secondary school is a requirement. International qualifications will be assessed in accordance with national guidelines.

Further information

The course cannot be included in a degree together with SIM301: Development Issues and Theories, 15-credits, SIMP31: Development Issues and Theories, 15-credits, SIMP33: Theories and Issues in Development, 15-credits, or SIMP35: Theories and Issues in Development, 15-credits.

Subcourses in SIMP37, Social Sciences: Theories and Issues in Development

Applies from H21

2101 Theories and Issues in Development, 15,0 hp
Grading scale: Fail, E, D, C, B, A