

General Syllabus for Doctoral Studies in Social Anthropology

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1. Decision

This general syllabus for doctoral studies in social anthropology was established by the Faculty Board of the Faculty of Social Sciences at Stockholm University on 31/05/2007, last revised on 21/05/2019.

The general syllabus has been put into practice as of 21/05/2019.

2. Subject description

Social anthropology is a social science subject focused on cultural variation and human diversity across the globe. The subject concerns itself with human relationships in their social, cultural, economic and political context. The research highlights how variations arise in human living, thinking and conduct, how these are experienced, and the social consequences that may arise as a result, but also commonalities between different people and their societies. The comparative perspective offers in-depth insight into social processes and an understanding of how people, institutions and value systems are related in an increasingly globalised world, both locally and over geographical distances.

Social anthropology studies are characterised by an interest in understanding the everyday lives of people from different parts of the world. In the 21st century, social anthropologists are involved in a multitude of different areas, such as media and literature, migration and movement, environment and nature, infrastructure, social movements and political violence, gender relations, global developments, organisations and power relations. Prolonged ethnographic fieldwork with active observation is a central component of the subject and contributes to a deeper understanding of human relations in a larger perspective.

The Board of Human Science

Stockholm University

3. Program objectives

Admission to doctoral studies in social anthropology is permitted for studies resulting in a doctoral degree (PhD).

A licentiate degree as a stage of doctoral studies in social anthropology is not permitted.

3.1 Doctoral degree (PhD)

A doctoral degree (PhD) is awarded once the doctoral student has completed a program comprising 240 higher education credits within a defined field for doctoral studies.

Knowledge and understanding

To obtain a PhD, the doctoral student must:

- demonstrate a broad knowledge of social anthropology and a systematic understanding of the research area, together with detailed and current specialist knowledge within a defined part of the research area;
- demonstrate familiarity with scholarly methodology in general, and with social- anthropological methods in particular.

Skills and abilities

To obtain a PhD, the doctoral student must:

- demonstrate an ability to engage in scholarly analysis and synthesis, as well as in independent, critical examination and assessment of new and complex phenomena, issues and situations;
- demonstrate an ability to identify and formulate issues critically, independently, creatively and with scholarly precision; to plan and, using appropriate methods, conduct research and other advanced tasks within specified time limits, and to examine and evaluate such work;
- demonstrate, in a thesis, their ability to make a substantial contribution to the development of knowledge through their own research;
- demonstrate an ability, in both national and international contexts, orally and in writing, to present and discuss research and research results with authority in dialogue with the scholarly community and society in general;
- demonstrate an ability to identify needs for further knowledge;
- demonstrate the potential to contribute to the development of society and support other people's learning, in the fields of research and education and in other advanced professional contexts.



Judgement and approach

To obtain a PhD, the doctoral student must:

- demonstrate intellectual independence and scholarly integrity, as well as an ability to make ethical assessments relating to research;
- demonstrate deeper insight into the potential and limitations of scholarship, its role in society and people's responsibility for how it is used.

Academic thesis (doctoral thesis)

To obtain a PhD, the doctoral student must have received a pass grade on an academic thesis (doctoral thesis) of at least 120 higher education credits.

4. Prerequisites and admission requirements

4.1 General entry requirements (according to the HEO)

In order to be eligible for PhD programs, students must have obtained a second-cycle qualification, completed courses equivalent to at least 240 higher education credits, of which 60 credits must be in the second cycle, or acquired essentially equivalent knowledge in another way in Sweden or elsewhere.

The university college may grant exceptions from the general entry requirements for individual applicants under special circumstances. Any decisions made regarding basic entry requirement exceptions shall be handled by IS in accordance with the provisions stipulated by the Faculty Board of the Faculty of Social Sciences.

4.2 Special entry requirements

In order to meet the special entry requirements, students must have completed courses equivalent to at least 120 higher education credits in subjects relevant to social anthropology, of which 60 credits must be in the second cycle. At least 15 of the credits in the second cycle must constitute a thesis project.



The doctoral student must have a sufficient command of English in spoken and written forms in order to benefit from lectures and course materials without difficulty.

5. Notification and admission procedure

Decisions regarding the admission of applicants to doctoral studies in social anthropology are made by the Department Board of the Department of Social Anthropology. The Department Board is not permitted to delegate decisions pertaining to admission. The Department Board may only admit applicants to doctoral studies who are to be employed as a doctoral student.

Decisions regarding admission to doctoral studies with financing other than employment as a doctoral student are made by the Faculty Board.

Doctoral studentships are announced once per year if funds are available. The number of positions is determined by the available resources. Application is done via the university's recruitment system, which can be found at www.su.se.

The positions are announced in the recruitment system, on the department website, and international mailing lists and newsletters. The announcement will clearly state who to contact in case of any queries regarding the position. The announcement time is always at least one month. When applying, the applicant is to submit a cover letter, CV, degree certificate, grades and certifications proving the fulfilment of basic and special entry requirements, as well as prior degree projects/theses the applicant may wish to present

Detailed instructions for how the application should be structured along with which documents should be attached will be published on the department website when the position is announced.

5.1 Selection and assessment criteria

The admissions group appointed by the head of department in consultation with the director of studies processes the applications and makes the selection.

Selection from among applicants who meet the general and specific entry requirements is made taking into account their ability to benefit from the education. The selection criteria in the assessment of the applicants are as follows:

- independence in the analysis and planning of previous degree projects
- problem definition and cogency, both in previous projects and in the research plan
- previously demonstrated ability to complete tasks within specified time limits
- methodological and scientific maturity
- the ability to adopt a critical approach to material
- the ability to structure material using an anthropological conceptual framework and method of analysis
- the ability to conduct an analysis in an original and scholarly fashion. (Here it should be emphasised that originality pertains to the analysis, not the material)
- the capacity for ethnographic observation and reflection

- the ability to communicate and cooperate with others

The admissions process is described on the department's website.

6. Program content and structure

The PhD program in social anthropology normally takes four years to complete for a full-time student (240 higher education credits).

The program consists of a course component and a thesis component. The course component carries 75 higher education credits. The thesis project is expected to take approximately 5.5 semesters of full-time studies. Out of these semesters, 2 should be devoted to field preparations and data collection.

The studies begin with two semesters of reading courses. Studies equivalent to 60 higher education credits should be completed before starting the field work. Some course units, with the exception of methodology units, may be taken later in consultation with the supervisor. The course Field report (15 higher education credits) is closely linked with the field work and is completed when the data collection is finished.

The later stages of the program are devoted primarily to the thesis.

6.1 Individual study plan

Individual study plans must be drawn up for all active doctoral students of social anthropology. The individual study plan is established by the supervisor in consultation with the doctoral student. The plan outlines the department's and the doctoral student's obligations, as well as a proposed timeline for the program. In connection with admission, funding needs to be arranged for the entire period of study (equivalent to four years of full-time studies). The plan is established by the head of department.

The individual study plan should then be updated annually by the supervisor in consultation with the doctoral student. Revisions will also be made if necessary. Additionally, the supervisor shall once per semester assess whether the doctoral student is adhering to their study plan and then share their assessment with the student. The head of department shall be informed of any major deviations from the individual study plan. Both the supervisor and the doctoral student are entitled to suggest changes to the study plan, however decisions regarding implementing any changes are made by the head of department.

For details regarding the establishment, management and follow-up of the individual study plans, see Chapters 6, Sections 29 and 30 of the Higher Education Ordinance, the Regulations for Doctoral Studies at Stockholm University, the instructions of the academic area of human science and the guidelines of the Faculty of Social Sciences.

6.2 Supervision and other resources

Each doctoral student accepted should be assigned at least two supervisors. At least one supervisor must have received training in supervision or be considered by the Faculty Board to have equivalent expertise. The doctoral student is entitled to supervision during their studies unless the Vice-Chancellor decides otherwise in accordance with Chapter 6, Section 30 of the Higher Education Ordinance.

Upon admission to the PhD program in social anthropology, the doctoral student should be referred to two of the department's supervisors, one of which should be designated as the principal supervisor. Decisions regarding supervisors are made by the head of department. However, one supervisor may come from another department or university. This must be approved by the supervisory board and the head of the department. At least one of the supervisors must have completed supervisor training or be deemed by the Faculty Board to have equivalent expertise. All supervisors must at least be qualified for appointment as a docent. In exceptional cases, a supervisor with a PhD who is not qualified for appointment as a docent can be appointed as supervisor if they have expertise beneficial to the doctoral student.

Upon request, a doctoral student has the right to change supervisor. Changing supervisor can also be done at the request of a supervisor or due to other reasons. Requests for a change of supervisor should be discussed with the supervisor and/or head of the department, who will be deciding on the matter.

The doctoral student shall go to a supervisor for advice and directions regarding the thesis project. In addition, the supervisor will assist the doctoral student with advice and information regarding the planning of their independent studies, choosing a topic for their thesis, and on how to plan and carry out the thesis project. The doctoral student and the supervisor shall have regular meetings, during which the doctoral student will keep the supervisor informed about the progress of their work and seek advice on how to proceed.

In addition to the supervision, the department will provide a workspace and the working conditions required for the doctoral student to carry out their studies.

If a doctoral student significantly neglects their commitments outlined in the individual study plan, the Vice-Chancellor shall decide whether the doctoral student will have their right to supervision and other resources revoked. Before any such decision is made, the doctoral student and their supervisor shall be given an opportunity to submit a statement. The judgement will be made based on their statements and any other available information. During the assessment, consideration shall be given to whether the university college has fulfilled its own commitments outlined in the individual study plan. The decision shall be presented in writing with an accompanying justification. A decision to revoke resources according to Chapter 6, Section 30 of the Higher Education Ordinance may be appealed to the Higher Education Appeals Board.

For additional information regarding supervision and other resources, please see the Regulations for Doctoral Studies at Stockholm University and the individual study plan.

6.3 Courses and examination

The course component of the doctoral studies in social anthropology is aimed at the doctoral student attaining the qualitative targets. The examination formats are specified in the individual study plans. The courses are examined on the basis of written papers, oral presentations in seminars, practical exercises and/or combinations of these formats. The doctoral students' papers should, as far as possible, be presented and discussed in large or small seminar groups (but not at the regular research seminars) with the participation of supervisors/teachers. Courses grades will be given as “fail” or “pass”. A course in teaching in higher education equivalent to 7.5 credits may replace the course Research seminar themes (Forskarseminariers teman), 7.5 credits, or be regarded as department duties and result in a prolongation.

The courses shall further the doctoral student's specialisation, as specified in the thesis. This means that the content of some of the courses varies depending on specific interests.

Obligatory courses, 75 higher education credit

- (1) Transnational Anthropology, 7.5 credits**
- (2) Anthropological Classics, 7.5 credits**
- (3) Methods in Social Anthropology, 7.5 credits**

- (4) **Research Seminar Themes, 7.5 credits**
- (5) **Philosophy of Science, 7.5 credits**
- (6) **Current Anthropological Issues, 7.5 credits**
- (7) **Individual Specialisation I, 7.5**
- (8) **Individual Specialisation II, 7.5 credits**
- (9) **Individual Field Report, 15 credits**

(1) Transnational Anthropology

This is the first course of the program. It aims to provide a deeper insight into the department's general research areas, and applies a comparative perspective on the specific research problems that this brings to light.

(2) Anthropological Classics

This course discusses the major works that influenced the development of anthropology and the most important theoretical debates throughout history.

(3) Methods in Social Anthropology

This course discusses methodological issues with emphasis on fieldwork and the importance of ethnography for anthropological knowledge, the meaning of problem definition, and the structuring of text.

(4) Research Seminar Themes

The doctoral students have a general obligation to participate in the research seminars at the department during their studies, except for the time spent in the field.

This course consists of the doctoral student's continuous and active participation in the department's research seminars during the first two semesters of their studies. The course is examined on the basis of two papers, one at the end of each semester. The student highlights the theme(s) of the seminars and enhances the discussion with the help of literature compiled in consultation with the supervisor. The papers may be presented at the final seminar of the semester.



(5) Philosophy of Science

This course deals with issues related to the theory/philosophy of science that are raised in the course of anthropological study, and that concern social sciences in general.

(6) Current Anthropological Issues

This course discusses and problematises issues that arise in various ongoing anthropological debates.

(7,8) Individual Specialisation I and II

These two courses comprise theoretical, methodological and ethnographic projects and are designed in consultation with the supervisor. When more than one doctoral student has chosen the same theoretical specialisation or ethnographic region, common reading lists and seminars may be arranged with the supervisor.

(9) *Individual field report*

During fieldwork, which begins with reconnaissance, the doctoral student writes three field reports (each report 10-15 pages) for a total of 15 higher education credits. These reports should provide an ethnographic and methodological description and preliminary analytical discussion of the different stages of the fieldwork. Report 1 gives 5 credits for the field report and 20 credits for fieldwork. Report 2 gives 5 credits for the field report and 20 credits for fieldwork. Report 3 gives 5 credits for the field report/prel. thesis outline and 25 credits for fieldwork and includes a research seminar where the fieldwork and an initial preliminary outline of the thesis manuscript is presented.

Higher education credits for field work/material collection pertains to the thesis component.

Instruction in these courses should be led by a teacher wherever possible. This can be done by the department's own teachers/supervisors/researchers, or through collaboration with other anthropological departments and/or other relevant departments.

6.3.1 Credit transfer

Doctoral students admitted to doctoral studies in social anthropology may transfer credits from previous third-cycle courses taken at another department or university equivalent to a maximum of 30 credits. Decisions concerning credit transfer matters will be made by the director of studies for the doctoral studies in social anthropology.

Requests to transfer credits are made using a specific form specifying the higher education institution, course name, time of study, level and the credit amount. The course syllabus and certification (or equivalent) must also be submitted. The form is signed by the doctoral student and their supervisor and then sent to the director of studies for the doctoral studies in question. A decision is then made regarding the credit transfer by the director, who then also ensures that the transferred credits are registered.

When transferring credits from previous courses, the funding period allotted to the doctoral studies is shortened according to the standard of one week per 1.5 credits transferred.

6.3.2 Other mandatory components

Examination of thesis text

The thesis text shall be submitted twice.

I. Mid-way review

A text equivalent to half of the manuscript shall be submitted for a mid-way review, following consultation with the supervisory staff, where the department supervisors and researchers are invited to attend. One of the department's researchers reviews the manuscript and provides comments during the seminar. 50 credits are awarded following a passing grade in the seminar.

II. Final review

Once the supervisor has assessed that the thesis manuscript is complete with all chapters in place, an external commentator will review the manuscript and provide comments at a final seminar. An internal group consisting of supervisors, other reading professors, and additional researchers will be present.

6.4 Doctoral thesis and defence

The thesis must be written in English or Swedish.

A doctoral thesis written in English must include a summary in Swedish; a Swedish thesis must include a summary in English. This summary should provide enough detail that a reader can obtain a clear idea of the thesis' aim and main content, the scientific method used and the theoretical discussion. Reference should be made to the different chapters of the thesis. Each doctoral thesis must be accompanied by a brief abstract in English of approximately 500 words.

The thesis should be written as a unified, coherent academic work (monograph) or as a compilation of academic essays accompanied by an introduction and summary. Work on the thesis project should be equivalent to 165 higher education credits in the doctoral program. 65 credits are devoted to data collection and 100 credits to writing the thesis.

The thesis should document the doctoral student's skills to independently discuss a defined scientific problem, as well as their capacity for scientific method and presentation. The word "independence" in this context should not be interpreted in such a way that supervision and the possibility of teamwork are made difficult.

Public defence of doctoral thesis

The doctoral thesis must be defended orally at a public defence seminar and will be awarded a grade of Pass or Fail. The grading process will consider both the content and the defence of the thesis. Regulations regarding external reviewer, examination committee, assessment, etc., can be found in the Higher Education Ordinance, and in instructions issued by the Faculty Board of the Faculty of Social Sciences.

Degree

A PhD degree in social anthropology requires the completion of courses totalling 75 higher education credits, and a passing grade in the public defence of the student's doctoral thesis.

7. Transitional regulations



Doctoral students who have been admitted before the general syllabus has been put into practice may, following consultation with their principal supervisor and the director of studies, request to transition to this syllabus. The request shall be submitted to the Department Board, after which the individual study plan will be updated.

8. Other

For other matters, please see applicable legislation, guidelines at Stockholm University and the Faculty of Social Sciences, as well as local implementing regulations.