

Political Theory, 7,5 credits

Politisk teori, 7,5 hp

Course Code/Codes	15SK072
Subject Area	Political science
School/equivalent	School of Humanities, Education and Social Sciences
Valid from	Autumn 2019
Approved	2019-03-01
Revised	
Approved by	Head of school
Translation to English, date and signature	2019-03-01 bnhr

1 Course content

The course aims to provide an understanding of core questions and debates in political theory. The course provides an overview of central questions in political theory in relation to historical contexts, shifts in meaning, and contemporary problems. Core concepts are interrogated to create a deeper understanding of how political order can be understood from different perspectives and in different contexts. The place of political theory within political science and its relationship to other disciplines is brought up to show how the meaning and use of political concepts varies within different subjects. Also examined is how political theory is studied, what type of knowledge is attained, as well as what functions this discipline serves within the subject and from broader societal perspectives. The first section of the course considers questions concerning the status of political theory as a branch of political science. The themes of the subsequent section centre around a number of core concepts that contain several dimensions associated with the basic building blocks of politics. These concepts are studied as examples of continuity and change in the history of political thought which can also provide us with perspectives on contemporary questions and problems.

2 Outcomes

2.1 The course in relation to the doctoral programme

The course shall primarily refer to the following intended learning outcomes for third-cycle courses and study programmes as described in the Higher Education Ordinance, i.e. the doctoral student shall demonstrate:

Knowledge and understanding

- broad knowledge and systematic understanding of the research field (part of outcome 1)
- advanced and up-to-date specialised knowledge in a limited area of this field (part of outcome 1)

Competence and skills

- the capacity for scholarly analysis and synthesis (part of outcome 3)
- the capacity to review and assess new and complex phenomena, issues and situations autonomously and critically (part of outcome 3)
- the ability to identify the need for further knowledge (outcome 7)

Judgement and approach

- intellectual autonomy and disciplinary rectitude (part of outcome 9)
- the ability to make assessments of research ethics (part of outcome 9)
- specialised insight into the possibilities and limitations of research, its role in society and the responsibility of the individual for how it is used (outcome 10)

The intended learning outcomes are listed in the same order as in the general syllabus for the programme.

2.2 Intended course learning outcomes

To obtain a passing grade, the doctoral student shall demonstrate:

- an ability to understand and analyse core questions and concepts in political theory in relation to historical contexts, shifts in meaning, and contemporary problems, and
- an understanding of political theory as a branch of political science as well as its relationship to other subjects and broader societal contexts.

3 Reading list and other teaching material

The following course readings and teaching material will be used on the course:

- Arendt, Hannah (1961), *Between Past and Future. Eight Exercises in Political Thought*, New York: Viking Press. 306 sidor.
- Ball, Terence, J. Farr och R. L. Hanson (red.) (1989), *Political Innovation and Conceptual Change*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Valda delar, ca. 150 sidor.
- Dryzek, John, B. Honig och A. Phillips. (red.) (2008), *The Oxford Handbook of Political Theory*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. Valda delar, ca. 250 sidor.
- Strauss, Leo. (1959), *What is Political Philosophy? And Other Studies*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press. 316 sidor.
- Wolin, Sheldon (2004), *Politics and Vision. Continuity and Innovation in Western Political Thought*, Princeton: Princeton University Press. Valda delar ca 400 sidor.
- Wolin, Sheldon (1969), "Political Theory as a Vocation", *American Political Science Review*, 63:4, s. 1062-1082.

In addition, approximately 300 pages consisting of articles and (selected sections from) original works relating to the thematic concepts will be added. This literature can partly be selected based on the students' interests and/or PhD projects.

4 Teaching formats

Teaching on the course takes the following format:

- Self-studies,
- lectures,
- literature seminars and
- seminars where the texts are presented and discussed

5 Examination

The course is assessed through an examination consisting of the components listed below. The individual components are not graded separately but together they provide the basis for assessment and grading.

- Oral participation in seminars in accordance with instructions for these and
- individual assignments consisting of scientific texts that maintain a high standard in terms of structure, style, language accuracy and composition.

For examinations consisting of several examination components, the following applies: If during the course it is concluded that a doctoral student is unable to complete a certain examination component, the examiner may set a substitute assignment provided that circumstances do not reasonably allow for the course component to be completed at a later date during the run of the course.

6 Grades

Examinations on third-cycle courses and study programmes are to be assessed according to a two-grade scale with either of the grades 'fail' or 'pass' (local regulations).

The grade shall be determined by a teacher specifically nominated by the higher education institution (the examiner) (Higher Education Ordinance).

To obtain a passing grade on examinations included in the course, the doctoral student is required to demonstrate that he/she attains the intended course learning outcomes as described in section 2.2. Alternatively, if the course consists of multiple examinations generating credit, the doctoral student is required to demonstrate that he/she attains the outcomes that the examination in question refers to in accordance with section 5.

A student who has failed an examination is entitled to a retake.

If an examination consists of several examination components, and a student fails an examination component, the examiner may, as an alternative to a retake, set a make-up assignment with regard to the examination component in question.

A doctoral student who has failed an examination twice for a specific course or course element is entitled, upon his/her request, to have another examiner appointed to determine the grade.

7 Admission to the course

7.1 Admission requirements

To gain access to the course and complete the examinations included in the course, the applicant must be admitted to a doctoral programme at Örebro University.

7.2 Selection

Selection between applicants who have been admitted to doctoral programmes at Örebro University and who otherwise meet the admission requirements as listed above is made according to the following order of precedence:

Priority is given to doctoral students admitted to the subject of Political science at Örebro University. Secondly, doctoral students admitted to other subjects at Örebro University may participate. Subject to availability doctoral students from other universities may participate.

If no other selection criteria are specified in this section, priority shall be given to applicants with a lower number of course credits left before the award of their degree over applicants with a higher number of remaining course credits. Should two or more students have equal number of credits, selection will be done through the drawing of lots. This also applies within any selection groups listed unless otherwise stated.

7.3 Other applicants than doctoral students admitted at Örebro University

Other applicants than doctoral students admitted at Örebro University may be given access to the course on the grounds of provisions for and/or agreements regarding contracted courses, joint degrees, national graduate schools or cooperation in other respects with other universities.

Any decisions on what such other applicants may be given access to the course are made separately and on the basis of the provisions and/or agreements that occasion the student to apply for the course.

For participation in the course in other respects, the same provisions shall apply as for doctoral students admitted to Örebro University.

8 Transfer of credits for courses, study programmes and other experience

Provisions on the transfer of credits can be found in the Higher Education Ordinance and on the university's webpage.

9 Other information

This course is given in English

Transitional provisions

No transitional provisions apply.