AK1204 Environmental History 7.5 credits

Miljöhistoria

This is a translation of the Swedish, legally binding, course syllabus.

If the course is discontinued, students may request to be examined during the following two academic years

Establishment

Course syllabus for AK1204 valid from Autumn 2008

Grading scale

A, B, C, D, E, FX, F

Education cycle

First cycle

Main field of study

Technology

Specific prerequisites

Applicants registered on a regular KTH programme are eligible.

For applicants not registered on a regular KTH programme: Documented completed upper secondary education, including proficiency in English.

Language of instruction

The language of instruction is specified in the course offering information in the course catalogue.

Intended learning outcomes

After the course the student shall:

- have knowledge about the environment as a limiting factor in human societies from the oldest times to the present modern society,
- be able to describe and explain how and why the environment has become a political, economical and technological issue in modern society,
- be able to analyse the growing interest in risks, catastrophies and understand those phenomena in a historical context.

Course contents

The course is a general introduction to environmental history but also covers themes such as landscape, risk, and infrastructure as well as technologies and policies that have provided the framework conditions for human ecological footprints and the built environment. The perspective is global but with numerous examples from Sweden. The chronological focus will be on the modern period, in particular the 20th century.

Disposition

The course consists of 8 lectures and about as many seminars. At seminars students will discuss texts with an instructor in a group format. Each student will also introduce a text at a seminar and at the end of the course write an essay of approximately 2000 words.

Course literature

- John R. McNeill, **Something New Under the Sun: An Environmental History of the Twentieth-Century World.** W.W. Norton New York and London, 2000, selections.
- Joachim Radkau, **Nature and Power: A Global History of the Environment,** Cambridge University Press, 2008, selections.
- Sverker Sörlin and Paul Warde eds., **Nature's End**, Palgrave MacMillan, in press.
- Articles and seminar texts.

Approximately 1000 pages in total.

Equipment

None.

Examination

- TEN1 - Examination, 7.5 credits, grading scale: A, B, C, D, E, FX, F

Based on recommendation from KTH's coordinator for disabilities, the examiner will decide how to adapt an examination for students with documented disability.

The examiner may apply another examination format when re-examining individual students.

Active participation in seminars and lectures; at one seminar in advance prepare a comment or a review; write an essay (about 2000 words) about one of the central themes of the course that clearly draws on the course literature, lectures, and seminars.

Other requirements for final grade

Assessment criteria for the course are:

- Quality of essay (50%)
- Quality of oral and written seminar presentation (20%)
- Quality of overall activity in lectures and seminars. (30%)

Results on all three dimensions make up one single grade for the entire course.

Mandatory attendance to pass the course. Absence on more than 25% of lectures or on more than one seminar is made up for by additional writing assignment.

The assessment criteria of essay are:

- Coverage of reading assignments to demonstrate full grasp of all literature, which should be listed as end references
- Ability to present the topic and argue for its relevance and overall interest
- Ability to follow a line of argument and to organize materials to support the argument
- Analytical capability
- Clarity of style and ability to distinguish the voices and views in sources from author's argument and presentation

Ethical approach

- All members of a group are responsible for the group's work.
- In any assessment, every student shall honestly disclose any help received and sources used.
- In an oral assessment, every student shall be able to present and answer questions about the entire assignment and solution.