



AK1214 Environment and Society in a Changing Arctic 10.0 credits

Miljö och samhälle i ett föränderligt arktis

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 AK1214 valid from Autumn 2011

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 will be able to:

1. Recount major climatic and environmental changes in the Arctic, with a focus on the last 15.000 years
2. Interpret climate change within the specific cultural and historical context of the Nordic region
3. Describe and explain the main processes of societal change in the Nordic / European Arctic: Settlements and colonization, Development of scientific research, and Development of natural resource utilization industry and tourism.
4. Discuss the main changes in international politics and economics in the Arctic and its relation to scientific research, military strategies and indigenous peoples
5. Conduct basic field research through documentation of natural phenomena, cultural remains or by interviews
6. Perform simple research tasks by using and combining different types of sources (i.e. those mentioned under point 5) and present it in written and oral form
7. Critically analyze current events in the Arctic, in relation to the course contents.

Course contents

AK1214 is a summer course, aimed at students from KTH, University of Illinois (Urbana Champaign) and other Swedish Universities. It is divided into three sections. Section 1 (mid June–early July) takes place at KTH and consists of A) a series of lectures which introduces the students to the themes of the course and B) seminars on literature and for preparing field work. Section 2 (mid July) consists of 10 days of intensive field work in the Arctic. In this period the students will be trained in field research and collect data for an essay. Section 3 (end of July) takes place at KTH and consists of seminars in which the students present their essays (examination tasks).

Disposition

The major learning activities are the following:

Lectures: 14 in section 1, six in section 2, normally lasting two hours.

Excursions: visits to museums in Stockholm, which in various ways deal with the Arctic.

Field work: The students will be trained in documentation of natural phenomena and cultural remains as well as interviewing, during a 10 day week field work period in the Arctic (northern Sweden or Svalbard). As a part of the field work, the students will collect data for use in their essays.

Seminars: The seminars will be in three different forms. In section 1 there will be literature seminars, devoted to discussing the course literature. In section 2 there will be field work seminars, focusing on the students findings during field work. In section three there will be essay seminars, devoted to presentations and discussions on the essays the students write.

Writing an essay: The students will write an essay on a topic they can choose from a given list of topics. The essay should be based on course literature, lectures as well as on data the students collect during the field work. The essay will be presented at a final seminar.

Course literature

Kursen behandlar pågående förändringsprocesser i Arktis, som för närvarande studeras av en bred och produktiv internationell polarforskning inom såväl naturvetenskapen som humaniora och samhällsvetenskap. Kurslitteraturen kommer att hämtas från fronten inom denna forskning, vilket gör att listan på kurslitteratur successivt kommer att förändras från år till år. Därför väljer vi att presentera kurslitteraturen senast två månader före varje kursomgång, dels genom meddelanden och dokument på kursens hemsida, dels i utskick till kursdeltagarna.

Generellt kan sägas att kurslitteraturen kommer att hämtas i lika utsträckning från kursen tre huvudområden: 1) klimat- och miljöförändringar i Arktis, 2) Arktis i kultur och representation samt 3) vetenskap, industri och politik i Arktis.

Examination

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.

Examination: 1) active participation in discussions on the course literature and essays during the seminars and 2) writing and presenting the above mentioned essay.

Other requirements for final grade

Examination: 1) active participation in discussions on the course literature, field work results and essays during the seminars and 2) writing and presenting a final essay.

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.