



AL2121 Global Development and Political Ecology 7.5 credits

Global utveckling och politisk ekologi

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

The course syllabus is valid from Autumn 2024 according to decision of Director of First and Second Cycle Education: A-2024-0651, 3.2.2. Decision date: 2024-03-15

Grading scale

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

Education cycle

Second cycle

Main field of study

Environmental Engineering

Specific prerequisites

At least 120 higher education credits in science or technology.

Courses from upper secondary school corresponding to the courses Eng B/6 according to the Swedish upper secondary school system or equivalent.

Language of instruction

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

Intended learning outcomes

The overall goal of the course is to provide a deeper insight into how the world's historically and geographically unequal development affects opportunities for more just and environmentally sustainable development. After completing the course, the student should be able to:

- Provide an historical and geographical background to the concept of uneven development and its relationship to sustainable development.
- Describe the emergence of regional differences with a focus on countries in the global South (social, economic, and ecological differences).
- In a written essay and based on scientific literature, analyze, and discuss how infrastructure and technology affect various aspects of sustainable development in low- and middle-income countries.
- Discuss scientific methods for the analysis of social, ecological, and technical aspects of sustainable development with a focus on countries in the global South.
- To develop, in groups, a critical case study about the conditions for uneven development and sustainable development.
- Search scientific literature within the subject area of the course to use as reference material in an essay.
- Give a group oral presentation of a case study.

Course contents

The course develops a critical theoretical framework based on three key concepts: uneven development, "thinking from the South," and political ecology. Political ecology emphasises how all development is about social and environmental transformation with winners and losers that shape rural and urban landscapes and often with destructive environmental consequences. In parallel, we draw upon postcolonial thought to challenge from where development, sustainability, and urbanization can be understood, providing ample space to engage with knowledge centres, organisations, and civil society groups from cities and countries in the global South. This expands the places, experiences and researchers that can inform the theory and practice of development.

Pedagogically, the course is based on creating a community of inquiry between students and the teacher. Lectures are followed by group work as well as seminars and individual consultation hours with the teacher. This creates an intimate learning environment, making it safe to both ask and try to answer difficult questions. Group work means to do a case study and receive training in applying theory to understand "messy realities." You will also develop your essay writing skills with peer feedback and feedback from the teacher to support your growth as a writer and thinker.

Examination

- INL2 - Peer review (UPP1) with workshop, 0.5 credits, grading scale: P, F
- PRO1 - Group Project with Presentation, 2.5 credits, grading scale: P, F
- UPP2 - Essay, 3.0 credits, grading scale: A, B, C, D, E, FX, F
- UPP3 - Short critical reflection on self-selected articles, 1.5 credits, grading scale: P, 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.

Other requirements for final grade

Differentiated grading scale A-F.

All course components needs to be approved to receive the final grade.

Obligatory attendance on seminars, workshop with peer-review, and the final presentation of the group project.

Transitional regulations

For students who have not completed the course before HT24: The written assignments UPP1, INL2, and UPP2, will be assessed in the same way as before HT24; for missed group presentation PRO1, students must contact the examiner for an individual oral 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.