



FAK3160 Planetary Histories 5.0 credits

Planetära historier

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

Establishment

The official course syllabus is valid from autumn semester 2026 as decided by the Faculty Board: HS-2026-1759. Decision date: 2026-10-01.

Grading scale

P, F

Education cycle

Third cycle

Specific prerequisites

The course is open to PhD students who fulfil the prerequisites for admission to doctoral studies in history or other humanities or social science subjects, and work in one of the disciplines connected to environmental history, such as history of science, history of technology, political theory, energy history, political ecology, anthropology, geography, philosophy, gender studies, STS, cultural theory, intellectual history, post-colonial studies, or the environmental humanities more broadly.

Knowledge of English equivalent to English 6.

Intended learning outcomes

After having passed the course, the students will be able to:

- account for the concept of planetary history, and its rise and development as a historiographical and environmental concept
- review how the planetary-scale has been configured throughout history and critically engage with the planet as an object of knowledge
- draw on methodological advances in more-than-human and elemental historiography in their own practice and explore field-based approaches to environmental history and multiple temporalities
- discuss forms of agency of actors and organizations in environmental knowledge production from a global justice perspective
- communicate research results orally and in writing and apply concepts and perspectives of planetary history consciously in their own work

Course contents

The course provides the students with an overview of recent research in environmental history and, more fundamentally, tools to explore what environmental history is and can be in a new planetary age. Students will be introduced to planetary perspectives on environmental history, and explore how they encompass the geophysical and biological planet as well as political, cultural and economic orders. The course explores how the material dimensions of the planet, and their interwoven relations to politics and economics, shape our understanding of history as well as how planetary perspectives compel us to think across new temporalities and timescales. The planetary will also be treated as a methodological challenge of tracing more-than-human connections and reading natural “archives”. Special attention will be given to the critical analysis of the epistemological and political roots of planetary-scale environmental knowledge, practical applications of environmental history and global perspectives. The course will draw on environmental history, environmental humanities, history of political thought, STS, history of technology and global history.

Examination

- SEM1 - Seminars, 3.0 credits, grading scale: P, F
- UPP1 - Final Essay, 2.0 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. If the course is discontinued, students may request to be examined during the following two academic years.

To pass the course, students will have to:

- prepare for class by reading the assigned primary and secondary literature and be ready to discuss it in class;
- actively participate in lectures and seminars;
- submit all written assignments, including the final essay;

Other requirements for final grade

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.

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.