



FAK3123 Environmental Humanities 7.5 credits

Miljöns humaniora

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 FAK3123 valid from Spring 2017

Grading scale

Education cycle

Third cycle

Specific prerequisites

The course is open to PhD and masters students who work in one of the disciplines connected to the environmental humanities, such as: environmental history, ecocriticism, political ecology, anthropology, geography, philosophy, gender studies, STS, cultural theory, post-colonial studies, religious studies, museum and heritage studies

Language of instruction

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

Intended learning outcomes

The course aims to familiarize students with the more recent methodological and theoretical tools of the environmental humanities. Envisioning the field as a post (or anti)-disciplinary arena, the course will encourage students to think across disciplinary borders in order to tackle the environmental and social challenges of current times.

Course contents

The contemporary challenges arising from global environmental change, such as climate change, land degradation, loss of biodiversity, freshwater scarcity, toxic contamination and energy scarcity provide important tasks for scholars from not only the natural and social sciences but also the humanities. As a result of rising concerns about global environmental change, over the last decade a new field of academic research has emerged, the Environmental Humanities (EH). Whereas the state of scholarship on issues of environmental change was formerly dominated by the natural, economic and social sciences and technological and problem-solving approaches, this relatively new and rapidly growing field is constituted by the work of scholars from a wide variety of disciplines within the Humanities, including history, literature, philosophy, cultural studies, religion studies, arts, architecture, and linguistics. These scholars are investigating how humanity and human agency are to be understood in the age of the Anthropocene – the era in which humans have become a geological force (Crutzen and Stoermer, 2000). This includes interrogating fundamental concepts such as ‘nature’ and the ‘human’; exploring humans’ relations to, and transformations of, their natural and built environments. In particular, the course will examine how these relations and transformations are mediated by culture and values which can produce both destructive and sustainable futures.

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.

1. Commentaries

For each class students should write a commentary on the book assigned for that section, responding to two questions. The commentary should be about 350 words long.

2. Final exam

The final course assignment is a take-home exam consisting of one essay in which the students will present their understanding of the EH.

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.