



Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences
English

Syllabus

Critical approaches to language and discourse

Course Code:

ENAS08

Course Title:

Critical approaches to language and discourse
Kritiska ansatser till språk och diskurs

Credits:

7.5

Degree Level:

Master's level

**Progressive
Specialisation:**

Second cycle, has only first-cycle course/s as entry requirements (A1N)

Major Field of Study:

ENA (English)

Course Approval

The syllabus was approved by the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences 2025-09-05, and is valid from the Spring semester 2026 at Karlstad University.

Prerequisites

90 ECTS credits, including at least 30 ECTS credits at the G2F level, in English or another main subject of study in the humanities or the social sciences, plus upper secondary level English 6 or English level 2, or equivalent

Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of the course, students should be able to:

1. give an account of and identify critical theoretical and methodological approaches to language and discourse data,
2. reflect upon and critically evaluate different ways of understanding the relationship between language and society and between language and ideology, and
3. apply selected approaches to language and discourse through formulating critical questions and analysing empirical data.

Content

The course covers different critical approaches to language and discourse, such as language and power, critical discourse analysis, critical linguistics, rhetoric, and discursive social psychology. These approaches are treated in relation to a number of relevant areas of application for studying the relationship between language and ideology, such as politics, education, racism and xenophobia, activism and social justice, and so on. The main methodological focus of the course is applied analysis of empirical language or discourse data, primarily taken from English-speaking contexts, but a theoretical component that involves study of perspectives from critical theory and discourse theory, for example, is also included. The approaches treated in the course are based on linguistic methodology, but applications can be adapted to the main interests or disciplinary backgrounds of the students.

Reading List

See separate document.

Examination

Assessment is based on individual written hand-in assignments and active participation in seminars.

If students have a decision from Karlstad University entitling them to Targeted Study Support due to a documented disability, the examiner has the right to give such students an adapted examination or to examine them in a different manner.

Grades

One of the grades Distinction (VG), Pass (G), or Fail (U) is awarded in the examination of the course.

Quality Assurance

Follow-up relating to learning conditions and goal-fulfilment takes place both during and upon completion of the course in order to ensure continuous improvement. Course evaluation is partly based on student views and experiences obtained in accordance with current regulations and partly on other data and documentation. Students will be informed of the result of the evaluation and of any measures to be taken.

Course Certificate

A course certificate will be provided upon request.

Additional information

The local regulations for studies at the Bachelor and Master levels at Karlstad University stipulate the obligations and rights of students and staff.