



Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences
History

Syllabus

History as Social Therapy and Trauma Recovery

Course Code:	HIG200
Course Title:	History as Social Therapy and Trauma Recovery <i>Historia som samhällsterapi och traumabearbetning</i>
Credits:	7.5
Degree Level:	Undergraduate level
Progressive Specialisation:	First cycle, has only upper-secondary level entry requirements (G1N)

Major Field of Study:
HIA (History)

Course Approval

The syllabus was approved by the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences 2020-03-10, and is valid from the Autumn semester 2020 at Karlstad University.

Prerequisites

General admission requirements

Learning Outcomes

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

1. define different historical conflicts and traumas,
2. discuss how the past has been used in society and history in relation to various traumas,
3. reflect upon central concepts such as the use of history, historical consciousness, and historical narratives on the basis of historical examples,
4. analyse narratives about the past and how they relate to present and future perspectives,
5. summarise the field of historical research in general terms, and
6. assess the historical consequences of experiences of societal trauma.

Content

The course covers processes of trauma recovery in relation to historical traumas. The issue of moral implications for the history subject will be raised, but no final answers will be provided concerning right or wrong, good or evil. Instead the course examines to what extent history can function as an instrument for processing collective trauma. If repressed memories are brought into the light and examined systematically, will this facilitate liberation from the demons of the past? Or will perhaps too much of an emphasis on the wrongs of the past instead hamper the peaceful co-existence of for instance different ethnic groups? In 2003, the Swedish government established a special agency called Living History Forum. The original purpose was to disseminate knowledge of the circumstances of the Holocaust, and later other instances of genocide have been included as well. The agency has had an explicit normative aim, and its purpose has been to promote tolerance, diversity, and democracy, in some sense through learning from the past. Since the Holocaust has arguably been a privileged object of analysis for a long time, the course will not focus specifically on this particular topic, even though Holocaust memories in post-war Germany are treated. The course focuses on certain other, not yet thoroughly processed traumas, such as the traumas of Finland after the civil war in 1918, Bosnia after the Balkan wars in the 1990s, South Africa after apartheid, and Spain after Franco. The ambition is to reflect upon experiences that to various degrees and in different ways raise issues such as responsibility, guilt, silence, active or passive support for evil regimes, but also the issue of how these traumas might be processed therapeutically. In a more general sense, the course also touches upon questions of collective memory production, ideology, and identity.

Reading List

See separate document.

Examination

Assessment is based on an individual written take-home exam and active participation in seminars.

If students have a decision from Karlstad University entitling them to special pedagogical 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.