



Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences
Cultural Studies

Syllabus

History of Ideas II

Course Code:	KVGH20
Course Title:	History of Ideas II <i>Idéhistoria II</i>
Credits:	30
Degree Level:	Undergraduate level
Progressive Specialisation:	First cycle, has less than 60 credits in first-cycle course/s as entry requirements (G1F)

Major Field of Study:
KSU (Cultural Studies)

Course Approval

The syllabus was approved by the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences 2018-02-22, and is valid from the Spring semester 2019 at Karlstad University.

Prerequisites

History of Ideas I, 30 ECTS credits, or equivalent, with 22.5 ECTS credits completed

Learning Outcomes

Module 1. Theoretical and Methodological Traditions of History of Ideas (7.5 ECTS cr)

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

Knowledge and understanding

- give an account of the main features of the emergence, development and identity of the subject History of Ideas in Sweden,
- give an account of some key theories in the contemporary subject History of Ideas,
- outline how theory, method, concept and source criticism can be used in research in the field of History of Ideas,

Competence and skills

- formulate their own research questions against the background of different tradition in History of Ideas,
- assess, select and apply theoretical and methodological approaches to answer their own formulated questions, and

Judgement and approach

- reflect on the traditional Swedish history of ideas in terms of class, gender, culture, ethnicity and accessibility.

Module 2. Global History of Ideas (7.5 ECTS cr)

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

Knowledge and understanding

- identify and give an account of the main features of historical non-Western world views and relate these to European world views and ideals of life,
- analyse the encounter and interaction between Western and non-Western conceptions of the world as expressions of a globalisation process,

Competence and skills

- critically discuss and argue for dissemination, evolution, convergence, modernisation and hybridisation as explanatory models of similarities between Western and non-Western world views and thought patterns,
- contextualise and analyse world views in texts and documents of non-European cultures,
- outline the most important problems, arguments and conclusions in some non-European idea historical primary source.

Judgement and approach

- give an account of and discuss historical courses of events through analysis of the connection between world views and human action, and
- critically reflect on Western idea traditions, canon, universal norms and axiomatic truths when considering non-European perspectives and experiences.

Module 3. Meta Theories: Science, Culture, Politics (7.5 ECTS cr)

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

Knowledge and understanding

- give an account of some of the most important intellectual traditions and the most controversial problems in theory of science and philosophy of science in the past 100 years,
- give an account of some current central political philosophical and cultural theoretical approaches,

Competence and skills

- identify different interpretative alternatives in reading meta theoretical texts,
- summarise some main features of meta theoretical discussions in the past decades and actively participate in current meta theoretical debates,

Judgement and approach

- discuss the social and historical context of meta theories, and
- critically approach the consequences of meta theoretical views of the relation between knowledge and culture in terms of power, conflict and representation.

Module 4. Independent project (7.5 ECTS cr)

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

Knowledge and understanding

- give an account of the importance of formal aspects to the quality of academic texts,
- give an account of the writing process and the importance of language use in academic presentations,

Competence and skills

- formulate a delimited research question in the field of history of ideas,
- collect relevant information for a research question in the field of history of ideas,
- present the results of an idea-historical study according to guidelines for academic writing,
- critically review and assess their own project and that of others, and

Judgement and approach

- evaluate the potentials and limitations of the knowledge contribution of a project and its ethical and social implications.

Content

Students deepen their knowledge and understanding of history of ideas based on skills components involving critical interpretation of short and long texts of high complexity, such as historical sources and current research articles. Themes of History of Ideas I (empirical philosophy, theory of science and cultural history) are developed in the light of theoretical and problematising perspectives. In all modules students practise different degrees of text interpretation and close reading, which are central to the subject History of Ideas.

The course comprises four modules, each of 7.5 ECTS credits. The order of the modules may vary.

Module 1. Theoretical and Methodological Traditions of History of Ideas (7.5 ECTS cr)

The aim of the module is to introduce the distinguishing character of History of Ideas while providing methodological tools to read and interpret texts in the field as a basis and preparation for an independent project. The module has two main themes: first, the special situation of History of Ideas, its traditional identity and recent applications, different views on its emergence and development and theoretical problems associated with research in the field. The second theme comprises a study of some current interpretation theories and a survey of collection and analysis methods in the field, including source criticism, information retrieval and the handling of archived material.

Module 2. Global History of Ideas (7,5 hp)

Non-European cultures are studied from a global and comparative perspective. The overarching theme is world views with the aim to relate some of the main features of world views, primarily beyond Western and Abrahamic cultures, to a traditional idea-historical canon. Europeans' encounters with alien cultures and their effects on our understanding of the world are treated. An important aspect in this context is non-Europeans' conceptions of Europeans. The importance of the colonial heritage to the ideas conveyed is studied with the help of postcolonial theories which are placed in an idea historical context. The concept of globalisation and the emergence of global cultural patterns are also analysed.

Module 3. Meta Theories: Science, Culture, Politics (7.5 ECTS cr)

The module has a meta science approach, centring on theory and science and philosophy of science from positivism to postpositivism as well as on contemporary cultural theory and political philosophy, studied from the perspective of history of ideas. Students are expected to critically reflect on the theoretical and social basis of science, the relation between knowledge and power, the challenges to contemporary democracy and different views of the general conditions and crises of Western culture.

Module 4. Independent Project I (7.5 ECTS cr)

Students complete a minor independent project, based on a highly delimited topic and on relevant questions, theories and methods. How to seek, use, analyse, and interpret primary sources and secondary sources are discussed in seminars along with the characteristics of purpose, delimitation, outline, referencing, language use and meticulousness. In conclusion, students present and review their projects in final seminars.

Instruction is in the form of lectures, presenting essential content, and mandatory seminars in which students discuss their understanding of course content in the light of course literature, orally and in writing.

Reading List

See separate document.

Examination

Assessment is based on

Module 1: a take-home exam, an individual PM, and active seminar participation.

Module 2: a take-home exam, active participation in seminars, and a brief popular science seminar

presentation on a course theme.

Module 3: a take-home exam and active participation in seminars at which written individual hand-in assignments are regularly discussed.

Module 4: an independent project, orally defended in seminar and peer review performance.

Grades

One of the grades Distinction (VG), Pass (G), or Fail (U) is awarded in the examination of the course. The grade of Distinction (VG) is awarded to students who have earned this grade for at least 22.5 of the 30 course credits.

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.