



Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences
Media and Communication Studies

Syllabus

Specialisation 2: Geomedia, public opinion, and the public sphere

Course Code:	MKA102
Course Title:	Specialisation 2: Geomedia, public opinion, and the public sphere <i>Specialiseringskurs 2: Geomedia, opinionsbildning och offentlighet</i>
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:
KGA (Human Geography)
MKA (Media and Communication Studies)

Course Approval

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

Prerequisites

90 ECTS credits of Human Geography or Media and Communication Studies, including at least 30 ECTS credits at the G2F level and a degree project/essay of at least 15 ECTS credits at the advanced level, or equivalent, plus upper secondary school level English B/6.

Learning Outcomes

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

- describe the basic mechanisms of public opinion,
- give an account of methods and methodological problems related to the study of public opinion and public spaces,
- describe the relationship between public opinion, the public sphere, and public spaces,
- compare theories of public opinion, the public sphere, and public spaces, and apply these theories when analysing the relation between these three phenomena,
- analyse public opinion and the public sphere in digital spaces on the basis of relevant theories,
- analyse mobility and mobile media in relation to public opinion and the public sphere on the basis of relevant theories,
- study, document, and analyse public opinion efforts in the public realm as well as the results of such efforts.

Content

The course introduces perspectives and theories on public opinion and the public sphere as well as the relationship of these phenomena to spatiality and public spaces. The mechanisms of public opinion are described, as well as the conditions of various forms of public opinion efforts. The concepts "public opinion" and "public opinion efforts" are defined broadly, including for instance PR, lobbying, advertising, propaganda, and journalism, but also popular culture texts (such as films or photography). Digital arenas and spaces for public opinion are described, as well as the role of mobility and mobile media in public opinion and the public sphere. The course introduces the connections between public opinion, attempts to influence public opinion, and marketing in relation to for instance place marketing. Methods and methodological problems related to the study of public opinion and public spaces are included. The course provides students with tools for understanding and analysing the relationship between public opinion, the public sphere, and public spaces, for documenting public opinion efforts in relation to public spaces, and for analysing the outcomes of such efforts in terms of the theoretical framework of the course.

Reading List

See separate document.

Examination

Assessment is based on a written group assignment and an individual written take-home exam.

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.