



Programme Study Plan

Master Programme in Political Science

Programme Code: SASTV

Programme Title: Master Programme in Political Science

ECTS credits: 120

Approval: The Programme Study Plan was approved by the Faculty Board for Arts and Social Sciences on 11 March 2021 and is valid from the Autumn semester of 2021.

Language of instruction: Swedish and English

Degree Level: Master

Degree Type: General one- or two-year Master's degree

Prerequisites: Bachelor's degree of 180 ECTS credits with a major in political science, or equivalent. Upper secondary level Swedish 3 or B and English 6 or A, or equivalent.

General Information

The Master Programme in Political Science is designed to provide in-depth knowledge of concepts, analytical methods and research traditions in political science. On the basis of the classic divisions of fields in political science – political theory, public politics and administration and international politics – the courses offer research-based and substantially deepened knowledge in these fields, including a focus on the potentials and limitations of science and its role in politics and society. In addition, the study programme offers particular opportunities for thematic and analytic specialisations in Political Science. Thematic through courses based on several key concepts in Political Science – the importance of applying critical perspectives to power, with a particular focus on gender; ethnicity and class; societal upheaval associated to the climate and environment; and new forms of political organisation from a cross-border perspective with a particular focus on the EU. Analytic through courses based on specific analytical

traditions such as policy analysis and post-structural analysis. To facilitate the understanding, illustration, and analysis of power and politics, the study programme places an overall emphasis on theory, analysis, methodology, and method. Students' independent research and investigative and analytical skills are also enhanced in the planning, completing and presenting of a research project firmly based in theory and appropriate method.

The combination of disciplinary depth and social science broadening provides a solid basis for developing the knowledge, skills and abilities required to make advanced analyses of societal issues and complex problems from a political science perspective with a social science approach. In this way, programme students not only prepare for doctoral studies, but also for independent investigative and development work and project leadership and management.

Learning Outcomes

Master's Degree (120 credits)

Knowledge and understanding

For a Degree of Master of Arts/Science (120 credits) students shall

1. demonstrate knowledge and understanding in the main field of study, including both broad knowledge of the field and a considerable degree of specialised knowledge in certain areas of the field as well as insight into current research and development work, and
2. demonstrate specialised methodological knowledge in the main field of study.

Competence and skills

For a Degree of Master of Arts/Science (120 credits) students shall

3. demonstrate the ability to critically and systematically integrate knowledge and analyse, assess and deal with complex phenomena, issues and situations even with limited information,
4. demonstrate the ability to identify and formulate issues critically, independently and creatively as well as to plan and, using appropriate methods, undertake advanced tasks within predetermined time frames and so contribute to the formation of knowledge as well as the ability to evaluate this work,
5. demonstrate the ability in speech and writing, in national as well as in international contexts, to report clearly and discuss their conclusions and the knowledge and arguments on which they are based, in dialogue with different audiences, and
6. demonstrate the skills required for participation in research and development work or independent employment in some other qualified capacity.

Judgement and approach

For a Degree of Master of Arts/Science (120 credits) students shall

7. demonstrate the ability to make assessments in the main field of study informed by relevant disciplinary, social and ethical issues and also to demonstrate awareness of ethical aspects of research and development work,
8. demonstrate insight into the possibilities and limitations of research, its role in society and the responsibility of the individual for how it is used, and
9. demonstrate the ability to identify the personal need for further knowledge and take responsibility for their ongoing learning.

Independent project (degree project)

A requirement for the award of a Degree of Master of Arts/Science (120 credits) is completion of an independent project (degree project) for at least 30 credits in the main field of study. The degree project may comprise less than 30 credits, however no less than 15 credits, if the student has already completed an independent project in the second cycle for at least 15 credits in the main field of study or the equivalent from a programme of study outside Sweden.

Master's Degree (60 credits)

Knowledge and understanding

For a Degree of Master of Arts/Science (60 credits) students shall

1. demonstrate knowledge and understanding in the main field of study, including both an overview of the field and specialised knowledge in certain areas of the field as well as insight into current research and development work, and
2. demonstrate specialised methodological knowledge in the main field of study.

Competence and skills

For a Degree of Master of Arts/Science (60 credits) students shall

3. demonstrate the ability to integrate knowledge and analyse, assess and deal with complex phenomena, issues and situations even with limited information,
4. demonstrate the ability to identify and formulate issues independently as well as to plan and, using appropriate methods, undertake advanced tasks within predetermined time frames,
5. demonstrate the ability in speech and writing to report clearly and discuss their conclusions and the knowledge and arguments on which they are based in dialogue with different audiences, and
6. demonstrate the skills required for participation in research and development work or employment in some other qualified capacity.

Judgement and approach

For a Degree of Master of Arts/Science (60 credits) students shall

7. demonstrate the ability to make assessments in the main field of study informed by relevant disciplinary, social and ethical issues and also to demonstrate awareness of ethical aspects of research and development work,
8. demonstrate insight into the possibilities and limitations of research, its role in society and the responsibility of the individual for how it is used, and
9. demonstrate the ability to identify the personal need for further knowledge and take responsibility for their ongoing learning.

Independent project (degree project)

A requirement for the award of a Degree of Master of Arts/Science (60 credits) is completion by the student of an independent project (degree project) for at least 15 credits in the main field of study.

Programme Structure

The first semester offers required courses in political science. The first half of the spring semester is dedicated to methodology and methods in political science, followed by the recommended courses in Policy Analysis and Governmentality and Other Post-Structural Approaches. Students have the option to take courses in other subjects or at another higher education institution. The third semester includes four electives for students who want to specialise within the field of Political Science: Feminist Perspectives on Politics (7.5 ECTS credits), Environmental Politics (7.5 ECTS credits), The EU in Sweden and Sweden in the EU 7.5 ECTS credits), and Philosophy of Science (7.5 ECTS credits). Third-semester students who want a broad academic profile have the option to study abroad, take other courses at the University, or study at another higher education institution in Swedish. Students opting for a more professional profile can choose practical placement in the Swedish Parliament, the EU administration or more locally at Karlstad municipality or Region Värmland. Political Science also offers courses in Theory of Science and on EU studies. Courses offered at doctoral level are sometimes open to master-level students.

Programme Content

The programme has two possible degree paths: a 60-credit Master's and a 120-credit Master's.

Note that courses may be offered in a different order and with a different than listed below.

Master's degree (60 credits)

Semester 1

Political Theory, 7.5 ECTS credits

Democracy - theories, practices and dilemmas, 7.5 ECTS credits

Public Politics and Administration, 7.5 ECTS credits

International Politics, 7.5 ECTS credits

Semester 2

Public Science Methodology and Research Methods, 15 ECTS credits

Master Degree Project, 15 ECTS credits

Master's degree (120 credits)

Semester 1

Political Theory, 7.5 ECTS credits

Democracy - theories, practices and dilemmas, 7.5 ECTS credits

Public Politics and Administration, 7.5 ECTS credits

International Politics, 7.5 ECTS credits

Semester 2

Public Science Methodology and Research Methods, 15 ECTS credits

Elective courses 15 ECTS

Semester 3

Semester 3 is an optional semester during which students may profile their degree through specialising courses in political science, or broadening courses. Students who want to specialise in the field of Political Science are offered the following courses: Feminist Perspectives on Politics (7.5 ECTS credits), Environmental Politics (a7.5 ECTS credits), The EU in Sweden and Sweden in the EU (7.5 ECTS credits), and Philosophy of Science (7.5 ECTS credits). Note that a maximum of 30 ECTS credits may be earned at undergraduate level. Students can also choose practical placement or studying abroad.

Semester 4

Master Degree Project, 30 ECTS credits

Degree Title

Degree of Master of Social Science (60 credits)

Major: Political Science

Degree of Master of Social Science (120 credits)

Major: Political Science

Transfer of Credits

According to the Higher Education Ordinance Ch. 6 Sec. 6–8 students have the right to transfer credits and have prior learning recognised upon approval.

Additional Information

Local regulations for the Bachelor and Master level at Karlstad University stipulate the rights and obligations of staff and students.

Previous versions of the programme syllabus have been approved:

7 February 2019, reg.no. HS 2019/45, applies from the autumn semester 2019