



SGR001F Political Psychology, 7.5 credits, third cycle

Details of approval

The course was established by the board of the Faculty of Social Sciences at Lund University on 7 June 2018.

The course syllabus was approved by the Research Studies Council on 2018-05-23 and was last revised on 2026-02-11. The revised syllabus is valid from 2026-02-11, autumn semester 2026.

General information

The course is conducted at the Faculty of Social Sciences as an interdisciplinary third cycle course in political psychology.

Language of instruction: English.

The course is given in an intensive format, with teaching sessions provided during about two weeks. **Learning outcomes**

On completion of the course, the students shall be able to:

- understand psychological theories about political actors and their behaviour
- explain political behaviour and political outcomes that result from decision-making and human psychology
- reflect on methodological approaches and problems in the subject of political psychology.

Course content

The aim of the course is to give the doctoral student advanced orientation in the subject of political psychology. Political psychology focuses on applying what is known about human psychology to the study of politics. The course provides an overview of different theoretical approaches that have established the foundations of the field. The course presents several applied subjects within political psychology, focusing on individual's decisions and behaviour in large groups and at an elite level. The course's teaching staff and participants come from various disciplines, which provides special opportunities for enriching alternative perspectives on research issues concerning political decision-making and political behaviour.

Course design

The course consists mainly of teaching sessions divided between lectures by the course's teaching staff and seminar discussions. The lectures are intended to provide orientation and a deepened insight into different questions posed in research on political psychology, the theories presented in the field of research, and the methods used to answer these questions. The seminars cover important political-psychological issues that are covered in the reading list. The participants are expected to prepare for the seminars by reading and critically reviewing the reading list and by preparing questions for discussions during the seminar part of the sessions.

Assessment

The doctoral student is expected to write a course paper, on an issue chosen by the doctoral student, concerning political psychology. The doctoral student is expected to come prepared to the teaching sessions, actively participate in the seminars, and contribute to a constructive discussion of other participants' course papers and other issues that are brought up in the required reading. Those who are unable to participate in a specific teaching session may instead complete a written assignment relating to the assigned texts.

Grades

The grades awarded are Pass or Fail. To receive a Pass the doctoral student must fulfil the learning outcomes of the course as well as have written a course paper about political psychology, fulfilled the seminar requirements, and has also demonstrated knowledge about, and an autonomous, reflectional and critical approach to, the theories, methods and empirical studies presented within the framework of the course.

At the beginning of the course, students will be informed about the learning outcomes stated in the syllabus as well as the grading scale and how it is applied at the course.

Entry requirements

Applicants must be admitted to a doctoral programme.

Doctoral students from the Faculty of Social Sciences at Lund University have precedence if a selection process for applicants is required.