



Course syllabus

Faculty of Social Sciences
Department of Political Science

4SK404 Demokrati och diktatur, 7,5 högskolepoäng
Democracy and Dictatorship, 7.5 credits

Main field of study
Political Science

Subject
Political Science

Level
Second cycle

Progression
A1N

Date of Ratification
Approved 2018-08-22.
Revised 2025-09-05. Revision of examination format.

The course syllabus is valid from spring semester 2026.

Prerequisites
Minimum of 90 credits in a main field of study in the social sciences or economics, or an equivalent subject. English 6 or equivalent.

Objectives

After completing the course, students shall be able to:

- account for essential theoretical and empirical research findings and distinctions, similarities and differences within the theme democratic, authoritarian and totalitarian forms of governance
- independently analyse and evaluate the predominant theoretical and empirical contributions to the areas of democratic, authoritarian and totalitarian forms of

governance

- adopt a critical and scientific approach to current literature in these areas
- orally as well as in writing contribute with their own views on these areas.

Content

The course discusses democratic and various authoritarian and totalitarian forms of governance based on normative theories and empirical research. Classical as well as modern theories and empirical research are addressed. The course also discusses the challenges that democracy today is confronted with from various directions, including the fact that several great powers and major regional powers in Europe presently are not democratic, and what this may entail in a normative perspective as well as in relation to Realpolitik.

Type of Instruction

Teaching consists of lectures and seminars.

Examination

The course is assessed with the grades A, B, C, D, E or F.

Grade A represents the highest grade, and the subsequent grades follow in descending order, where grade E is the lowest grade that qualifies as a Pass. A grade of F means that the student's performance is assessed as Fail. Fx is not a grade and is only used when a student is permitted to supplement their examination.

Examination consists of three seminars including written assignments (3.5 credits), graded as Pass (G) or Fail (U), and one on-campus written examination (4 credits), assessed by the use of the grading scale A-F.

In order to receive a grade of E, it is required that all the course objectives are attained. Information about the grading criteria of the A-F scale is given in a separate document provided at the start of the course, at the latest.

A retake of the examination is provided in accordance with the Local Regulations for First-cycle and Second-cycle Courses and Examination at Linnaeus University.

In the event a student with a disability is entitled to special study support, the examiner will decide on adapted or alternative examination arrangements.

Course Evaluation

A course evaluation should be conducted during the course or in connection with its conclusion. The results and analysis of the completed course evaluation should be promptly communicated to students who have completed the course. Students participating in the next course instance should be informed of the results of the previous course evaluation and any improvements that have been made, no later than at the start of the course.

Required Reading and Additional Study Material

Applebaum, Anne. (Latest edition). *Twilight Of Democracy: The Seductive Lure of Authoritarianism*. New York: Knopf (224 p).

Brennan, Jason. (2016). *Against democracy*. Princeton: Princeton University Press,

(288 p). ISBN: 9780691162607.

Linz, Juan J. (Latest edition). *Totalitarian and Authoritarian Regimes*. Boulder, Colorado: Lynne Rienner Publishers Inc, (342 p).

Ringen, Stein. (2016). *The Perfect Dictatorship: China in the 21st Century*. Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, (208 p). ISBN: 9789888208944.

Scientific articles also included, approx. 200 pages.