



Course syllabus

Faculty of Social Sciences

Department of Social Studies

5SO449 Prestationssamhällets sociologi: kvantifiering, singularisering och (e)valuering, 7,5 högskolepoäng

5SO449 The sociology of performance society: quantification, singularization and (e)valuation, 7.5 credits

Main field of study

Sociology

Subject Group

Sociology

Level of classification

Second Level

Progression

A1F

Date of Ratification

Approved by Faculty of Social Sciences 2022-05-16

The course syllabus is valid from autumn semester 2023

Prerequisites

General entry requirements for second-cycle studies and specific entry requirements:

- Degree of Bachelor in Sociology, or the equivalent
- Swedish 3/B and English 5/A or the equivalent
- 30 credits at the second-cycle level in sociology or the equivalent

Objectives

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

- Summarise and compare different theories of sociology in relation to the performance society, particularly focusing on the functions and consequences that processes of quantification, singularisation and (e)valuation have within these theories.
- Discuss how different concepts and theories of sociology may be used to analyse the prevalence and signification of numbers, evaluation systems, ranking of performance indicators and symbols of uniqueness/authenticity within spheres of life such as organisational and working life, school and consumption, and intimate relationships.

- Adopt a critical approach to the strengths and weaknesses that characterise different theoretical perspectives on the performance society, and identify empirical research domains for which these concepts and perspectives are relevant.

Content

The course starts with a classic sociological discussion about objective culture and quantification of relationships in modern society. The contemporary scope is set by theories of our society's strive to make everything in the world disposable in order to subject it to the contemporary institutionalised demands on intensification (i.e. growth, productivity increase, quality improvement and self-actualisation).

In the light of these two perceptions of modernity, the course later discusses how we by the use of theory and empiricism can analyse how numbers, evaluation systems, ranking of performance indicators, symbols of uniqueness/authenticity spread into most of our spheres of life - from organisational and working life, school and consumption, to intimate relationships.

Type of Instruction

Teaching takes place in the form of lectures and seminars. Four seminars including associated written assignments are compulsory.

Examination

The course is assessed with the grades Fail (U), Pass (G) or Pass with Distinction (VG).

Examination of the course objectives takes place by means of an independent written assignment. In order to receive a grade of Pass in the course, the course objectives must be attained. For a grade of Pass with Distinction in the course, it is required that the final written examination is assessed as Pass with Distinction.

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.

Should the university determine that a student is entitled to special educational support due to impairment, the examiner may provide the student with an adapted test or the student may carry out the examination in an alternative way.

Course Evaluation

A course evaluation is carried out either during or at the end of the course. Results and analysis of the evaluation are presented to the students who have completed the course as well as to new students at the following course date. The course evaluation is conducted anonymously.

Required Reading and Additional Study Material

Illouz, Eva (ed.) (2018) *Emotions as Commodities. Capitalism, Consumption and Authenticity*. London: Routledge. ISBN: 9781351810593 (selected parts, ca. 75 p.)

Karpik, Lucien (2010) *Valuing the Unique: The Economics of Singularities*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. ISBN: 9780691137100 (selected parts, ca. 15 p.)

Kornberger, Martin, Justesen, Lise, Koed Madsen, Anders & Mouritsen, Jan (ed.) (2015) *Making Things Valuable*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. ISBN: 9780198712282 (selected parts, ca. 75 p.)

Lamont, Michèle (2012) "Toward a Comparative Sociology of Valuation and Evaluation". *Annual Review of Sociology*, 38 (21): 201-221. (20 p.)

Mau, Steffen (2019) *The Metric Society: On the Quantification of the Social*. Cambridge: Polity Press. ISBN: 978-1-509-53040-3 (ca. 170 p.)

Rosa, Hartmut (2021) *Det vi inte kan råda över. Om vårt förhållande till Världen*. Göteborg: Daidalos. ISBN: 9789171736086 (165 p.)

Sauder, Michael, Lynn, Freda, & Podolny, Joel M. (2012) "Status: Insights from Organizational Sociology", *Annual Review of Sociology* Vol. 38: 267-283 (15 p.)

Stark, David (ed) (2020) *The Performance Complex. Competition and Competitions in Social Life*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. ISBN: 9780198861669 (selected parts, ca. 75 p.)

Additional publications/chapters, ca. 100 p.