Applied social psychology, 7,5 credits

Master program in psychology, HT-17
Department of Psychology, Stockholm University

Course leader: Petri Laukka
General purpose and content

The purpose of the course is to provide deepened knowledge within the social psychological area that pertains to applied social psychology. It focuses on understanding social problems and to develop interventions in order to improve conditions for individuals and different groups of individuals. The course will bring up applied social psychological theories, methods and empirical findings, but also theories from the wider social psychological area, used for specific applied purposes. The course also provides opportunity for an elaboration within different applied subareas.

Learning goals

The student is expected to be able to:

• give an account of and employ applied social psychological theories, models and empirical findings on issues and questions that are relevant for the subject area
• value and discuss strengths and weaknesses with different applied social psychological theories, models and empirical findings
• assimilate advanced literature in the form of scientific articles and show an elaborated understanding for applied theoretical and methodological issues and questions

Educational activities

The education consists of lectures and seminars. The seminars are based on the students’ own questions which are to be answered in writing before each seminar where they will be discussed. The course is normally given in English but can be given in Swedish if only Swedish speaking students participate.

Examination

The examination is based on papers that are handed in before each seminar (seminar questions), attendance and active participation at the seminars as well as a written individual elaboration paper with attached formative evaluations of other students’ elaboration papers.

The course grade is based on the individual elaboration paper and marked with the seven-grade ECTS-scale (A, B, C, D, E, Fx, F). A prerequisite to attain at least grade E is that the requirements of all included tasks are fulfilled (including fulfilling all instructions associated with the individual elaboration paper).

The individual elaboration paper is evaluated on a number of different aspects: fulfilling of instructions (see below), usage of scientific literature and their scientific quality, the question formulation, the processing of the question formulation, scientific support, conclusions as well as
Seminars

Before each seminar, each participant is to individually formulate and answer two (2) own questions (200-400 words per question and answer, not including references) which can be used as a base for discussion at the current seminar. The participants are free to formulate the questions, but they shall be based on current seminar literature (make connections to at least one reference per question with different references for the two questions). The answers can be anything from descriptive to discursive. Email questions and answers to the course leader by the dates and times specified in the schedule. There are a total of four (4) seminars included in the entire course.

If seminar questions are not handed in by email on time (late submission or missed out submission) or if the instructions above are not fulfilled a complementary paper is required. This paper is based on specific questions which are to be answered according to specific instructions. Instruction concerning the specific content (subject matter) can be requested after each seminar. Please contact the course leader if applicable.

Individual elaboration paper

The individual elaboration paper, which is to be saved in word format (not pdf), shall comprise between 3500 and 4500 words (excluding title leaf and reference list), 12p and single spacing (1.0). Please do not use page header/footer other than for numbering pages (i.e. do not include e.g. running head, notes etc). Abstract is optional, and will be included in the word count.

The task consists of relating theory and/or empirical findings included in this course to existing research in some area of interest. This can, but need not be, related to research that the participant is involved in. However, the paper should not include results from any ongoing projects. Likewise, participants are not to collect new data for this paper. Rather, the paper should be a theoretical discussion text. More specifically, the participant shall formulate one (1) own question which shall be described in the first paragraph of the paper. The question shall be clearly associated with at least one of the four areas included in the course.

Refer to at least six scientific peer-reviewed articles, of which two (no more, no less) are to be chosen from the articles included in the course. Also, references shall be made to at least one chapter in the course book. Additional references are a bonus!

At the end of the text there shall be a reference list. References (both in the body of text and in the reference list) shall be in APA-format. Email the task to the course leader by the date and time specified in the schedule. Any deviation from instructions will render a reduction of points. Note however that the task will not be graded if it has been submitted after the deadline and/or if it does...
not meet requirements regarding the references (see above) and/or if it does not meet requirements regarding word limitation.

The deadline for submission of the final paper is Monday 30 October 2017. In cases where a paper is not submitted during this time (but has been given at least one formative evaluation) or was given the grade Fx, there are later deadlines for submission of a revised version of the paper or a completely new paper (so called “omtenta”). In a case where a paper is revised and submitted again it cannot receive a grade of A. A completely new paper has the possibility to receive an A. However, for it to be considered a completely new paper, is needs to have a completely different discussion question as a starting point, different areas of research and most likely different sources that are referred to. If in doubt, please contact the course leader before committing to a new discussion question.

Deadlines for submission of a revised/completely new paper will be December 12 2017.

Formative evaluations
Each participant will function as a sounding board (evaluator) for two other participants, at two separate occasions by reading and commenting on their drafts of the individual elaboration paper. Each participant shall email zher comments to the authors and to the course leader by the times/dates specified in the schedule.

The first formative evaluation is scheduled at the beginning of the course, making it possible to receive comments on a text that is in the beginning of its makings. At this stage, there is no requirement that the individual elaboration paper is finished when it is submitted to the selected evaluator and to the course leader, however, the evaluation does require a minimum to evaluate. This includes one or several discussion questions (in some form that is comprehensible to a reader). Further, there should be some text describing in some way the background to the question(s) and also, if more than one question is described, there should also be a passage describing what the thoughts are regarding making a choice between them. Finally, if the draft does not contain all or nearly all of the intended sections, it should include a passage outlining how the author intends to progress. Please do not include for instance large quotes from readings (such as abstracts), passages that are made up by key-words or the like, but make sure that whatever text is submitted, is readable even if it is in its early stages.

For the second formative evaluation, the submitted individual elaboration draft should exhibit a marked progression relative the first submitted draft. It might be helpful to make sure that the text in some way exhibits how the comments to the first draft have been approached in order to show progression, for instance through inserted comments. At this point in time, the evaluation is likely based on a more “finished” product.

A guideline for reviewers will be made available at the beginning of the course. It is composed of aspects included in the grading as well as aspects that a reviewer for a scientific journal might use.
Plagiarism, cheating and unallowed cooperation

It is included in your responsibility as a student to be aware of the examination rules at Stockholm University. Detailed information is available both at the web pages of the Department of Psychology and Stockholm University www.su.se/regelboken. Teachers are obliged to report suspicion about cheating and plagiarism to the principle and the disciplinary board. Plagiarism and cheating are always disciplinary matters and can lead to shutting off from studies. One example of plagiarism is to verbatim (word-by-word) or almost verbatim, copy a text (also concerns occasional sentences) and not to refer to the source of the text. This also concerns texts that you have yourself authored previously (self-plagiarism). Examples of cheating are to bring with you unallowed resources such as a cell phone, to an exam. To be involved in study groups is developing and time efficient, but when it comes to examination tasks you will need make sure that you are working on your own (if nothing else is instructed) in order not to risk that any collaboration will be considered unallowed.

Literature


A list of articles, making out the seminar literature, will be available at the beginning of the course.

Course leader

Petri Laukka (course leader), petri.laukka@psychology.su.se, room 133 (entry-level house 14), phone 08 – 163935 (email contact is preferred)

Course administrator

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