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General syllabus for doctoral (third-cycle) studies in Political Science at Luleå University of Technology

Decided by the Chair of FFN 19 August 2021.

1. Subject description

English name: Political Science

Political Science is the scientific study of politics and political systems, and comprises both empirical and theoretical studies. The research is primarily concerned with issues regarding how individuals and interest groups as well as various political and administrative systems deal with natural resources, energy and environmentally related conflicts and agreements. Disciplinary orientation is mainly public policy and administration, institutional analysis, comparative politics, public opinion studies and political theory.

2. Programme aim and intended learning outcome

The aim of the doctoral (third-cycle) studies in Political Science at the University is to give the doctoral student specialised knowledge in Political Science in-depth knowledge of different research methods and a good understanding of the challenges related to research and its practical application. The overall objective of the programme is that the doctoral student develops into a critical and autonomous researcher in Political Science, able to plan and carry out research projects. The doctoral student shall fulfil all the qualitative targets specified in the Higher Education Ordinance as well as in the locally decided qualitative targets, if any (see attached Annex A).

3. Admission requirements and selection

3.1 General entry requirements

An applicant meets the general entry requirements for doctoral (third-cycle) studies if he or she has been awarded a Master's (second-cycle) qualification, has satisfied the requirements for courses comprising at least 240 credits, of which at least 60 second-cycle credits, or has acquired substantially equivalent knowledge in another way, in Sweden or elsewhere (Higher Education Ordinance (2010:1064) Chapter 7 Section 39).

3.2 Specific entry requirements

In addition to the general entry requirements, a Degree of Master with Political Science (or related area) as main subject/main area, alternatively a Degree of Master within an adjacent area, is required for admission to doctoral (third-cycle) studies in Political Science.

3.3 Selection

In selecting among applicants who meet the requirements, their ability to benefit from the course or the study programme shall be taken into account. However, the fact that an applicant may be

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credited for previous courses and study programmes or for professional or vocational experience may not alone give the applicant priority over other applicants (Higher Education Ordinance (2010:1064) Chapter 7 Section 41). The University's local guidelines in the Admissions procedure for doctoral (third-cycle) studies must also be applied.

The following criteria will be used in the selection of applicants for doctoral (third-cycle) studies in Political Science.

- Good knowledge of oral and written communication in English
- Knowledge relevant to the project in question
- The quality of the master's thesis
- Formulated research idea
- Analytical ability
- Professional experience
- Personal characteristics relevant to postgraduate education

4. The degree

The doctoral (third-cycle) studies lead to a Degree of Doctor. Within Political Science, a student admitted to doctoral studies has the right to be awarded a licentiate degree after having completed at least 120 credits of the programme leading to a Degree of Doctor.

4.1 Degree requirements

For a Degree of Doctor, the doctoral student shall

- have been awarded a pass grade for courses of at least 60 credits.
- have been awarded a pass grade for a research thesis (doctoral thesis) of at least 165 credits.

The thesis and the courses shall together amount to 240 credits for a Degree of Doctor.

For a Degree of Licentiate, the doctoral student shall

- have been awarded a pass grade for courses of at least 30 credits.
- have been awarded a pass grade for a licentiate thesis of at least 82,5 credits.

The thesis and the courses shall together amount to 120 credits for a Degree of Licentiate.

4.2 Titles of degree

- After the completion of the Degree of Doctor in Political Science the doctoral student is awarded the title Doctor of Philosophy.
- After the completion of the Degree of Licentiate in Political Science, the doctoral student is awarded the title Licentiate of Arts.

A request of a title of degree other than the stipulated may be submitted in accordance with laid down guidelines.

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5. Programme structure and implementation

5.1 Programme scope and structure

The doctoral (third-cycle) programme includes two blocs; courses and thesis work. The programme comprises four years (two years for the licentiate degree). In case the doctoral student has a doctoral studentship and carries out departmental duties to a certain extent (no more than 20% of the whole programme), a corresponding prolonged period may be approved.

5.2 Individual study plan and supervision

An individual study plan outlining the implementation of the studies is drawn up for each doctoral student. The plan is established in consultation with the supervisor and is decided by the Head of Department by delegation of the Vice-Chancellor. The plan is reviewed and revised at least once a year.

The Head of Department shall appoint at least two supervisors, one of whom is appointed principal supervisor, for each doctoral student. The person appointed principal supervisor shall have at least qualifications required for appointment as a docent and be employed by the University. A principal supervisor who no longer meets the job requirements may continue as supervisor until the doctoral student completes his or her studies, by an individual agreement with the relevant department. The doctoral student is entitled to supervision during the studies, unless the Vice-Chancellor has decided otherwise in accordance with the Higher Education Ordinance (2010:1064) Chapter 6 Section 30. A doctoral student who so requests may have another supervisor (Higher Education Ordinance (2010:1064) Chapter 6 Section 28). The request does not need a justification.

5.3 Courses

The individual study plan shall specify the courses to be included in the doctoral student's education. The goal attainment is examined according to the examination procedure specified in the course syllabus. Credits may be transferred in accordance with the local guidelines in the Admissions procedure for doctoral (third-cycle) studies.

Students are often given individual tuition in those courses that are specialized within the framework of the thesis subject while the more general courses in Political Science and those that have a more methodological and theoretical thrust are normally taught in groups, either at LTU or in cooperation with other universities in Sweden and abroad. The specific content of the course-part of the education is adjusted to the needs given by the doctoral student's background and choice of specific subject for the thesis, and is finally determined by the supervisors along with the Supervisory committee. The ambition is that a doctoral degree not only should reflect knowledge and understanding of the specific subject of the thesis, but also a broad knowledge and a systematic understanding of the research domain as well as a familiarity with research methodology in general. At least 30 higher education credits for the licentiate degree and at least 60 higher education credits for the doctorate must therefore be so-called core courses, i.e. courses in theories relevant for Political Science as well as qualitative and quantitative methods. Knowledge of equal opportunities and sustainable development must be ensured in the doctoral (third-cycle) studies, and this will be done either through coursework or in other ways.

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5.4 Thesis

The thesis may take the form of either a single coherent work (a monographic thesis) or a compilation comprising a number of scientific articles interrelated by an introductory summary chapter (a compilation thesis). Quality and scope requirements for the research activities do not differ between the two alternatives. The scientific articles or, as appropriate, the monograph must be of such quality that they meet reasonable requirements for publication in a peer-reviewed scientific forum.

In Political Science the norm is a compilation thesis written in English, comprising 3-5 publishable scientific papers and an introductory summary chapter. The expectation is that at least one of these should be accepted for publication in a peer-reviewed outlet. For the Degree of Licentiate, the thesis should include 2 publishable scientific papers in addition to the introductory summary chapter. For both the doctoral dissertation and the licentiate thesis, the papers can be either single or co-authored. The number of co-authored papers, as well as the doctoral student's own contribution to these, are accounted for in the assessment of how many sub-projects the thesis should contain. The papers must deal with one and the same overall theme and are normally written in one and the same language. The introductory summary chapter should have the character of an overview where the papers are placed in a context. It must be written alone. The purpose of the introductory summary chapter is to clarify the scientific contribution made by the thesis. To achieve this goal, the introductory summary chapter should present and discuss the themes of the thesis. In general, the introductory summary chapter offers an opportunity for the doctoral student to deepen theoretical and/or methodological problems that are brought to the fore by the scientific papers. More precisely, this should include a discussion of the scientific contribution, the purpose of the thesis, theoretical framework, key concepts, method and material choices, results and conclusions. The scope of the introductory summary chapter is also affected by the number of papers, where fewer papers normally call for a more comprehensive introductory summary chapter.

For the degree of doctor, thesis manuscripts shall be presented at a mid-term (50%) seminar, where a first draft of the introductory summary chapter and two draft papers are discussed by an external opponent. Prior to the defence of the licentiate or doctoral thesis, thesis manuscripts shall be presented at a final research seminar with an external opponent. After this, the Supervisory committee will meet to set the date for the defence.

The introductory summary chapter shall include a separate section describing the doctoral student's contribution to the articles.

The doctoral thesis shall be defended at a public defence seminar. The grades for the thesis are either 'pass' or 'failed'. When grading the thesis, the content and the defence of thesis shall be taken into account. The grade of a doctoral thesis is decided by an examining committee, appointed anew for each thesis.

A doctoral student wanting to be awarded a Degree of Licentiate shall, after consultation with his or her supervisor, request approval from the responsible Head of Department. The doctoral student defends his or her licentiate thesis at a licentiate seminar after which the thesis is graded 'pass' or 'failed'. When grading the thesis, the content and the defence of the thesis is taken into account. An examiner, appointed by the Head of Department, grades the licentiate thesis.

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6. Entry into effect and interim regulations

The previous general syllabus will cease to apply for third-cycle students who are admitted to studies at third-cycle level after 2021-08-19.

If agreed between the third-cycle student and the supervisors, the new general syllabus (LTU-2259-2021) may be used as a steering document for a previously admitted third-cycle student. It must be documented in the third-cycle student's individual study plan which general syllabus that applies.

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ANNEX: QUALITATIVE TARGETS

Qualitative target in accordance with the Higher Education Ordinance (HF)

Degree of Doctor

Knowledge and understanding

For the Degree of Doctor, the doctoral student shall

- demonstrate broad knowledge and systematic understanding of the research domain as well as advanced and up-to-date specialised knowledge in a limited area of the research domain, and
- demonstrate familiarity with research methodology in general and the methods of the specific research domain in particular.

Competence and skills

For the Degree of Doctor, the doctoral student shall

- demonstrate the capacity for scholarly analysis and synthesis as well as to review and assess new and complex phenomena, issues and situations autonomously and critically
- demonstrate the ability to identify and formulate issues with scholarly precision critically, autonomously and creatively, and to plan and use appropriate methods to undertake research and other qualified tasks within predetermined time frames and to review and evaluate such work
- demonstrate through a dissertation the ability to make a significant contribution to the formation of knowledge through his or her own research
- demonstrate the ability in both national and international contexts to present and discuss research and research findings authoritatively in speech and writing and in dialogue with the academic community and society in general
- demonstrate the ability to identify the need for further knowledge, and
- demonstrate the capacity to contribute to social development and support the learning of others both through research and education and in some other qualified professional capacity.

Judgement and approach

For the Degree of Doctor, the doctoral student shall

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- demonstrate intellectual autonomy and disciplinary rectitude as well as the ability to make assessments of research ethics, and
- demonstrate specialised insight into the possibilities and limitations of research, its role in society and the responsibility of the individual for how it is used.

Research thesis (doctoral thesis)

For the Degree of Doctor, the doctoral student shall have been awarded a pass grade for a research thesis (doctoral thesis) of at least 120 credits.

Degree of Licentiate

Knowledge and understanding

For a Degree of Licentiate, the doctoral student shall

- demonstrate knowledge and understanding in the research domain including current specialist knowledge in a limited area of this field as well as specialised knowledge of research methodology in general and the methods of the specific field of research in particular.

Competence and skills

For a Degree of Licentiate, the doctoral student shall

- demonstrate the ability to identify and formulate issues with scholarly precision critically, autonomously and creatively, and to plan and use appropriate methods to undertake a limited piece of research and other qualified tasks within predetermined time frames in order to contribute to the formation of knowledge as well as to evaluate this work,
- demonstrate the ability in both national and international contexts to present and discuss research and research findings in speech and writing and in dialogue with the academic community and society in general, and
- demonstrate the skills required to participate autonomously in research and development work and to work autonomously in another qualified capacity.

Judgement and approach

For a Degree of Licentiate, the doctoral student shall

- demonstrate the ability to make assessments of ethical aspects of his or her own research,

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- demonstrate specialised insight into the possibilities and limitations of research, its role in society and the responsibility of the individual for how it is used, and
- demonstrate the ability to identify the need for further knowledge, and take responsibility for his or her ongoing learning.

Thesis

For a Degree of Licentiate, the doctoral student shall have been awarded a pass grade for a research thesis of at least 60 credits.