



LUND UNIVERSITY  
Faculty of Social Sciences

Department of Political Science

## General syllabus for third cycle studies in Political Science

The syllabus was approved by the Board of the Faculty of Social Sciences on 4 February 2016, reg. no U 2016/1.

The general syllabus is substantially based on the current regulations of third-cycle studies covered in the Lund University Admission Rules for Third-Cycle Education and the Regulations for Third-Cycle Education at the Faculty of Social Sciences.

### 1 Subject description

A third-cycle degree in Political Science requires research skills covering the entire field of research within the subject. A quality indicator of a social sciences discipline is its ability to analyse rapid societal developments frequently involving unexpected problems and opportunities. This requires a research programme characterised by breadth and pluralism in terms of methodology, empirical data and theoretical approaches. Another ambition is to integrate areas within the subject, such as Swedish and comparative politics, international politics and public administration. This makes it possible to highlight common aspects, problems and issues. The ambition is based on the observation that the boundaries between different policy areas tend to blur.

Current research fields are described on the departmental website [www.svet.lu.se](http://www.svet.lu.se)

### 2 Objective and outcomes of third-cycle studies

The objective of third-cycle studies in Political Science at the Department of Political Science, Lund University, is to provide students with specialised knowledge of political science and to train them to become independent and critical researchers with a broad knowledge of social science theory, methodological skill and judgement, and the ability to conduct research projects. Students are encouraged to adopt international research perspectives.

On completion of the third-cycle programme in Political Science students are awarded the degree of Doctor of Philosophy. It is also possible for students to be awarded a degree of Licentiate of Philosophy.

#### 2.1 Doctor of Philosophy

On completion of the programme, the doctoral student is to have acquired the following knowledge and skills:

##### *Knowledge and understanding*

For the degree of Doctor the third-cycle student shall:

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

#### *Competence and skills*

For the degree of Doctor the third-cycle student shall:

- demonstrate the capacity for scholarly analysis and synthesis as well as the ability 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 advanced tasks within predetermined time frames and to review and evaluate such work
- demonstrate through a thesis 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 third-cycle student shall:

- 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.

## **2.2 Licentiate**

On completion of the programme, the research student is to have acquired the following knowledge and skills:

#### *Knowledge and understanding*

For a degree of Licentiate the third-cycle student shall

- demonstrate knowledge and understanding in the field of research of political science including current 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 Licentiate the third-cycle 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 some other qualified capacity

*Judgement and approach*

For a Licentiate the third-cycle student shall:

- demonstrate the ability to make assessments of ethical aspects of his or her own research
- demonstrate 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 personal need for further knowledge and take responsibility for his or her ongoing learning

**3 Admission requirements**

The requirements for admission to third-cycle courses and study programmes are that the applicant meets the general and specific admission requirements, and is considered in other respects to have the ability required to benefit from the course or study programme.

**3.1 General admission requirements**

A person meets the general admission requirements for third-cycle courses and study programmes if he or she:

1. has been awarded a second-cycle qualification, or
2. has satisfied the requirements for courses comprising at least 240 credits of which at least 60 credits were awarded in the second cycle, or
3. has acquired substantially equivalent knowledge in some other way in Sweden or abroad.

The faculty board may permit an exemption from the general admission requirements for an individual applicant, if there are special grounds.

**3.2 Specific admission requirements**

In addition to meeting the general admission requirements, the candidate must have at least 30 credits of second-cycle courses in political science, of which at least 15 credits consist of a second-cycle degree project, or equivalent knowledge acquired in Sweden or abroad.

**3.3. Credit transfer**

If a student has successfully completed a second-cycle higher education study programme or equivalent, he or she is entitled to transfer the credits awarded for the study programme to the third-cycle programme, on condition that an examiner approves the course or programme for transfer. Credit transfer is assessed individually following a request by the student.

**4 Admission and selection**

Admission of research students takes place in accordance with the Lund University Admission Rules for Third-Cycle Education and the Regulations for Third-Cycle Education at the Faculty of Social Sciences.

**4.1. Admission**

The faculty aims to admit research students once a year, following a general advertisement of doctoral studentships at a set time of year. Students admitted to licentiate studies must re-apply in order to pursue studies for a PhD.

Primarily applicants who are appointed to a doctoral studentship are admitted to third-cycle studies. Research students must have funding in the form of employment or alternative means of finance in accordance with the University's admission rules.

The faculty board is to ensure that the applicants' funding is carefully reviewed.

#### **4.2 Selection**

A selection among applicants must be made if there are a limited number of places. The criteria for selection are the qualifications of the applicant at the time of application. The overriding criterion is the applicant's ability to benefit from the programme. Special emphasis is placed on the applicant's capacity to pursue research in the social sciences. The fact that an applicant is considered able to transfer credits from prior courses and study programmes or to be given credit for professional or vocational experience may not alone give the applicant priority over other applicants.

In order to assess the applicant's ability to benefit from the programme, the applicant's previous study results, publications, reports, research plans and any other research qualifications will be considered. First- and second-cycle degree projects are accorded special weight.

Diversity is a desired goal of the faculty. Gender equality must always be taken into account. Priority will be given to the under-represented gender, relative to the gender representation among research students in the subject at Lund University, in cases of equally qualified applicants, unless there are valid reasons to the contrary.

### **5 The programme of study**

Third-cycle studies leading to a degree of Doctor comprise four years of full-time study (240 credits). Third-cycle studies leading to a degree of Licentiate comprise two years of full-time study (120 credits). Part-time studies (at least 50 per cent) may be pursued but must be completed within eight years for a degree of Doctor and four years for a degree of Licentiate. Doctoral students are entitled but not obliged to complete a licentiate degree (120 credits) as part of their third-cycle studies leading to a degree of Doctor.

#### **5.1 Programme details**

The programme leading to a degree of Doctor comprises 240 credits divided into courses worth 60 credits and a thesis (PhD thesis) worth 180 credits. The programme leading to a degree of Licentiate comprises 120 credits divided into courses worth 30 credits and a thesis (Licentiate thesis) worth 90 credits. Tuition is provided in the form of courses and seminars and individual supervision. Moreover, general seminars and guest lectures are provided.

For a PhD the doctoral student must have successfully completed all examinations in the programme and the PhD thesis. For a Licentiate the research student must have successfully completed all examinations in the programme and the Licentiate thesis.

#### **5.2 Supervision**

At least two supervisors shall be appointed for each doctoral student. One of them shall be nominated as the principal supervisor. The principal supervisor must have the qualifications of a reader and be employed at Lund University. The individual study plan must specify the duties and responsibilities of each of the supervisors. Doctoral students are entitled to supervision during the time deemed necessary for completing the programme. Supervision comprises both help with the orientation of studies and thesis work and support throughout the studies. Doctoral students who so request shall be allowed to change supervisors.

### **5.3 Individual study plan**

When initiating their studies, doctoral students together with their supervisors are to draw up an individual study plan detailing the student's and the University's undertakings and including a time plan for the studies. The individual study plan is to be followed up once a year. Doctoral students must register at the beginning of each semester and, in consultation with the supervisor, specify the degree of activity for the semester.

### **5.4 Courses and other components**

The courses that can be included in the programme may be offered by the home department or faculty or by other departments at or outside Lund University.

Courses offered at Lund University are to have syllabi specifying the learning outcomes, content and number of credits. For courses at other faculties or higher education institutions, the number of credits available for transfer will be determined by the examiner. The courses to be taken by the individual student and to be included in the degree are to be specified in the individual study plan.

One of the grades Pass or Fail will be awarded for the thesis and other examinations within the programme. The examiner of courses is to be a professor or lecturer with the qualifications of a reader.

#### **a) Courses**

The course component includes one or more method courses (30 credits for a degree of Doctor and 15 for a Licentiate), independent study courses and specialisation courses selected to support the thesis project. The ambition is to provide all research students with broad methodological training.

#### **b) Research seminars and other components**

As part of their studies and thesis work, research students shall participate in seminars on the research activities of the department and the thesis work of doctoral students. Doctoral students shall have the opportunity to present memoranda on issues of theory and/or method in the research project, submit plans, papers and thesis chapters, or critically review the papers of fellow doctoral students.

Doctoral students shall present their thesis work at no less than three seminars:

- 1) at the time of planning the design of the thesis project
- 2) about midway through the research project
- 3) a final seminar approximately 3–6 months prior to the thesis defence

### **5.5 PhD Thesis**

The PhD thesis is the most important component of the programme. The thesis is to be based on an independently pursued research project.

The PhD thesis can be designed either as a unified research study (monograph thesis) or as a number of research papers accompanied by an introductory summary placing the different papers in a context (compilation thesis).

A work by two or more authors may be approved as a PhD thesis if the contributions of the different authors are so clearly specified that they can be assessed individually.

The thesis is to be defended orally at a public defence. It is awarded one of the grades *Pass* or *Fail*. The grade is determined by an examining committee.

#### **5.6 Licentiate thesis**

The Licentiate thesis is to be defended orally at a public seminar. It is awarded one of the grades *Pass* or *Fail*. The grade is determined by an examining committee.

#### **5.7 Departmental duties**

A doctoral student can take on departmental duties for up to 20 per cent of full working hours. The doctoral student is to be compensated with a corresponding extension of the total study period. Departmental duties are to be included in the individual study plan.

A doctoral student teaching on first or second cycle study programmes must have undergone two weeks' introductory training in teaching and learning in higher education.

#### **6 Further information**

Information on admissions and application deadlines is provided by the Department of Political Science.