



Sveriges lantbruksuniversitet  
Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences

# SLUkurs

## Syllabus

**PNSo161 Philosophy of Science, 5.0 credits**

## Syllabus approved

2018-01-29

## Subjects

Other Social Science/Agricultural History/Rural Development/Landscape Planning/Environmental Communication

## Education cycle

Third cycle

## Grading scale

Pass / Failed

The requirements for attaining different grades are described in the course assessment criteria which are contained in a supplement to the course syllabus. Current information on assessment criteria shall be made available at the start of the course.

## Language

English

## Prior knowledge

Accepted as a PhD student.

In entering the course students must possess basic knowledge of philosophy of science, at least equivalent to what is discussed in books like:

- Godfrey-Smith, Peter 2003: Theory and Reality: An Introduction to the Philosophy of Science. The University of Chicago Press.
- Ladyman, James 2001: Understanding Philosophy of Science. Routledge.

### **Objective, including learning outcomes**

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

- account for and critically discuss distinct philosophical paradigms of science
- actively use philosophies of science to deepen and strengthen their own research
- distinguish between distinct levels and forms of scientific analysis and be able to account for their ontological and epistemological preconditions.

### **Content**

The course offers a general introduction to philosophy of science, describing and analysing the distinct scientific paradigms and perspectives. The students will be introduced to the main philosophical paradigms of science with a special focus on the contexts, contents, arguments, and main concepts and assumptions of these philosophies. There will also be a focus on how distinct paradigms of philosophies of science have tackled problems related to ontology, epistemology and interpretation. The discussions will focus on the connections between philosophy of science and social theory with a distinct focus on its development during the first part of the 1900's.

The core of the course will be a series of seminars, introduced by lectures. The seminars will be dedicated to analysing original texts by central social science writers in order to see how philosophical assumptions influence them as well as to discussing general problems of philosophy of social science. Lectures will be used to present and discuss important concepts and problems of the philosophy of science, and introduce central themes that will be discussed in the seminars. The course will be divided into three parts, each devoted to one central issue.

### **Requirements for examination**

For successful completion of the course the student must write an essay of approximately 12 pages (4 500 words), focused on a subject presented by the teacher, and actively participate in lectures and seminars.

The essay may be written in English or Swedish.

**Additional information**

The course is offered by the research school Society and Landscape (SL) at the department of Urban and Rural Development.

**Responsible department**

Department of Urban and Rural Development