



FACULTY  
OF SOCIAL  
SCIENCES

GENERAL SYLLABUS FOR HUMAN  
ECOLOGY

Reg. No.  
U 2020/933

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Faculty Board

## **General syllabus for third-cycle studies in Human Ecology**

The general syllabus for third-cycle studies in human ecology was approved by the board of the Faculty of Social Sciences, 26 November 2020, Reg. no U 2020/933.

Studies in line with this general syllabus can lead to one of the following degrees:

Doctor of Philosophy

Licentiate of Philosophy

### **1 Subject description**

Human ecology studies the relationship between man and the environment in different cultural contexts. The subject establishes cultural perspectives on how the relationship with nature varies in time and space. Theoretical approaches are taken from areas such as anthropology, environmental history, sociology and biology, among others. A central objective is to better understand modern society's relationship with nature as a cultural phenomenon.

Human ecology thus wants to contribute to the discussion on global survival issues such as environmental problems, resource management and distribution. Its interdisciplinary development of theory and methodology focuses on integrated knowledge of the dynamics of socio-ecological systems, which includes both

the world view and symbolic systems such as power relations, resource flows and subsistence patterns.

Current research areas can be found on the department's website, [www.keg.lu.se](http://www.keg.lu.se)

## 2 Objective and outcomes of third-cycle studies

The objective of third-cycle studies in Human Ecology at the Department of Human Geography, Lund University, is to provide students with specialised knowledge in human ecology and to train them to become independent and critical researchers with broad knowledge of social science theory, methodological skill and judgement, and the ability to conduct research projects.

### 2.1 Doctor of Philosophy

On completion of the programme, the third-cycle student shall 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 human ecology research field 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 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 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.

### ***In addition to these learning outcomes, for the degree of Doctor the third-cycle student shall***

- demonstrate in-depth knowledge of human ecological processes at both local and global level, and of different attempts to interpret their interrelationships
- demonstrate the ability to integrate different scholarly perspectives in order to contribute to the emergence of more multifaceted insights into specific socio-ecological systems
- demonstrate the ability to develop a language and perspective that combines a critical commitment to global

environmental and development issues with epistemological maturity and analytical precision.

## **2.2 Degree of Licentiate**

On completion of the programme, the third-cycle student shall 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 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 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 degree of 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 studies 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 programme.

#### 3.1 General admission requirements

A person meets the general admission requirements for third-cycle studies if he or she

1. has been awarded a second-cycle qualification
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 entry requirements for an individual applicant, if there are special grounds.

#### 3.2 Specific admission requirements

Those who have completed course requirements of at least 30 credits in the subject area (or equivalent) or areas of relevance to the subject area, of which at least 15 credits consist of independent projects at second-cycle level, or equivalent knowledge acquired in Sweden or abroad, meet the specific admission requirements for the third-cycle programme in human ecology.

### **3.3. Credit transfer**

If a student at a higher education institution has successfully completed a second-cycle course or study programme, he or she is entitled to transfer the credits awarded for the course or study programme to the third-cycle programme if the examiner, following a review, judges that the course justifies a credit transfer. Credit transfer shall be considered at the request of the student on a case-by-case basis.

## **4 Admission and selection**

Admission of third-cycle students is granted in accordance with the Admissions Rules for doctoral programmes at Lund University and the Regulations for third-cycle education at the Faculty of Social Sciences.

### **4.1 Admission**

The faculty strives to admit third-cycle students on an annual basis following the announcement of study places at a set time. Students who are admitted to a Licentiate programme must re-apply to be able to continue studies towards a degree of Doctor.

Admissions are primarily granted to applicants to third-cycle courses and study programmes who have been appointed to doctoral studentships. Third-cycle students must have funding in the form a doctoral studentship or other funding in accordance with the University's admission regulations.

The faculty board is responsible for a thorough assessment of the study funding.

### **4.2 Selection**

A selection among applicants must be made if there are a limited number of places. The basis for selection is the applicant's qualifications at the time of application. The overriding criterion is the applicant's ability to benefit from the third-cycle programme. Special emphasis is placed on the applicant's

capacity to pursue research in the social sciences. However, the fact that an applicant is considered able to transfer credits from prior courses and study programmes or for professional or vocational experience may not give the applicant priority over other applicants.

In order to assess the ability to benefit from the third-cycle programme, the applicant's previous study results, papers, any other research qualifications and documented professional experience will be considered. Independent projects in first and second-cycle courses and study programmes and research plans are of particular importance. For independent projects, the breadth, depth, originality, analytical ability, independence and critical reflection are assessed. Furthermore, an assessment is made of the applicant's ability to complete their education within the allotted time.

The faculty strives to ensure diversity. Gender equality must always be taken into account. Priority will be given to the under-represented gender in the subject at Lund University, in cases of equally qualified applicants, unless there are valid reasons to the contrary.

## **5 Third-cycle courses and study programmes**

Third cycle studies that lead to a degree of Doctor comprise four years of full-time study (240 credits). Studies for a degree of Licentiate comprise two years of full-time study (120 credits). Part-time studies (at least 50%) may be pursued but must be completed within eight years for the degree of Doctor and four years for the degree of Licentiate. The doctoral student is also entitled, but not obliged, to take a licentiate degree (120 credits) as a stage in third-cycle education leading to a degree of Doctor.

### **5.1 Programme design**

The programme leading to a degree of Doctor comprises 240 credits, made up of courses comprising 60 credits and an

academic thesis (PhD thesis) comprising 180 credits. The programme leading to a degree of Licentiate comprises 120 credits, made up of courses comprising 30 credits and a Licentiate thesis comprising 90 credits. Teaching is in the form of courses and seminars, and supervision of the thesis work. General seminars and guest lectures are also organised.

For a degree of Doctor the third-cycle student must have successfully completed all examinations in the programme and the PhD thesis. For a degree of Licentiate the third-cycle 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 third-cycle student. One of them shall be nominated as the principal supervisor. The principal supervisor is to have the qualifications of an associate professor and be employed at Lund University. The individual study plan must specify the duties and responsibilities of each of the supervisors. Third-cycle students are entitled to supervision during the time deemed necessary for the studies. Supervision includes both help with the orientation of studies, thesis work and support throughout the studies. A third-cycle student who so requests shall be allowed to change supervisor.

## **5.3 Individual study plan**

At the start of the programme, the student shall draw up an individual study plan of the University's and their undertakings along with a timetable for the studies in consultation with the supervisors. The individual study plan must be followed up annually. The third-cycle student is to register at the start of each semester and, in consultation with the supervisors, specify the degree of activity for the current semester.



## **5.4 Courses and other components**

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

For courses at Lund University, there must be course syllabi that state the courses' learning outcomes, content and credits. For courses completed at other faculties and higher education institutions, the credits available for credit transfer are 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 a professor or lecturer with the qualifications of an associate professor who is not the third-cycle student's supervisor.

### **5.4.1 Courses**

For the degree of Doctor, 33 credits out of 60 credits are compulsory credit-earning components and are distributed as follows:

- At least one third-cycle course or individual independent study course in theory of science (7.5 credits);
- At least one third-cycle course or individual independent study course in methodological specialisation (7.5 credits);
- At least one third-cycle course or individual independent study course in theory of human ecology (7.5 credits);
- At least one third-cycle course or individual independent study course in thematic specialisation (7.5 credits);
- At least one third-cycle course in research ethics (3.0 credits)

At least 18 credits of the compulsory credits must be third-cycle courses. For third-cycle students who have prior knowledge

corresponding to at least 7.5 credits each in theory of science and methodological specialisation at second-cycle level, these courses can be replaced by optional third-cycle courses or individual third-cycle independent study courses.

For the degree of Licentiate, 18 credits out of 30 credits are compulsory credit-earning components and are distributed as follows:

- At least one third-cycle course or individual independent study course in theory of human ecology (7.5 credits);
- At least one third-cycle course or individual independent study course in thematic specialisation (7.5 credits);
- At least one third-cycle course in research ethics (3.0 credits)

The remaining course credits may consist of additional third-cycle courses, as well as one or both of the following non-compulsory, credit-earning components: participation in doctoral or research seminars (maximum 7.5 credits) and individual independent study courses adapted to the individual third-cycle student's needs.

For all credit-earning components, the syllabus or credit transfer certificate must be available in order for the credits to be registered in Ladok.

The choice of courses and required reading must provide broad knowledge in the area of human ecology. The specific specialisation and choice of courses is decided in consultation with the supervisor.

#### ***5.4.2 Research seminars and other components***

As part of the third-cycle studies, the third-cycle student is to participate in seminars on the department's research and other doctoral students' thesis projects. Third-cycle students shall have the opportunity to present reports on the theoretical and/or methodological issues of the project, plans, papers and thesis chapters, and critically review the papers of fellow students.

Third-cycle students shall present their thesis work at no fewer than three seminars:

1. When the plan for the work is drawn up (thesis report)
2. When the work has reached its halfway point (midway seminar),
3. Concluding seminar in preparation for the public defence/public seminar

### **5.5 Thesis**

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

The PhD thesis is to be designed as a unified research study (monograph thesis) or as a number of research articles that are to be accompanied by an introductory summary in which the components are placed within a whole (compilation thesis).

A work by two or more authors may be approved as a doctoral thesis or part thereof, 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, with the grades being awarded by an examining committee.

### **5.6 Licentiate thesis**

The Licentiate thesis for the degree of Licentiate shall be presented orally at a public seminar. It is awarded one of the grades Pass or Fail by an examining committee.

### **5.7 Departmental duties**

A third-cycle student can participate in departmental work within a framework of a maximum of 20% of full-time working hours. The third-cycle student must be compensated by a corresponding extension of the study period. The individual study plan is also to specify the departmental duties.

Third-cycle students who teach in the first or second cycle shall have completed introductory training in teaching and learning in higher education of at least two weeks.

## **6 Further information**

Information on admission and application deadlines is available from the department.