

Master's Programme in Child Studies

120 credits

Master's Programme in Child Studies

F7MCH

Valid from:

Determined by

Board of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences

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2013-10-17; 2014-05-28

Introduction

The objective of the United Nation's Convention on the Rights of the Child is to protect children, a group considered particularly vulnerable, but also to promote them as individuals with their own rights. Today the Convention has become a self-evident departure point for ethical standards related to children.

The Convention on the Rights of the Child is an expression of children's changing conditions and the transformation of childhood. In the Master's Programme in Child Studies the various cultural, social and political conditions of children and the transformation of childhood are studied with regard to both children's everyday life and political and cultural contexts. The programme combines the view of children as agents with an interdisciplinary, theoretical and critical awareness of the transitory and shifting meanings of childhood in a globalized world.

The Master's Programme in Child Studies is a one/two-year, full-time study programme. Instruction will take place in the form of distance learning online combined with shorter periods of campus-based instruction. Students who wish to complete only one year of the programme will receive a Master's Degree in Child Studies (60 credits) after having successfully completed all courses of the first and second terms. Successful completion of all courses of the programme's four semesters gives a student the right to apply for a Master's Degree in Child Studies (120 credits).

The aim of the programme is to stimulate an independent, critical and reflective way of thinking in a wide range of questions that are associated with children and childhood. The programme also aims to provide theoretical and methodological tools to participate in, scrutinize, develop and improve activities and organizations affecting children and their living conditions.

The programme offers students in-depth knowledge for working at governmental authorities and companies as well as local organizations, both governmental and non-governmental (NGO), whose activities affect children and their living conditions. The programme also provides professionals in the fields of, for example, education, politics, social work and care, with cutting-edge knowledge in issues dealing with children and their living conditions. It also provides preparation for research related to Child and Childhood Studies.

Aim

For a Master of Social Science with a major in Child Studies (60 credits) the student shall:

- demonstrate skill in the use of IT and digital resources in the learning process, and
- demonstrate knowledge of how an interdisciplinary approach is used to analyse questions dealing with children and childhood.

Knowledge and understanding

For a Master of Social Science (60 credits) degree the student shall:

- demonstrate knowledge and understanding in Child Studies, including both an overview of the field and specialised knowledge in certain areas of the

- field as well as insight into current research and development work, and
- demonstrate specialised methodological knowledge in Child Studies.

Competence and skills

For a Master of Social Science (60 credits) degree the student shall:

- demonstrate the ability to integrate knowledge and analyse, assess and deal with complex phenomena, issues and situations even with limited information
- demonstrate the ability to identify and formulate issues autonomously as well as to plan and, using appropriate methods, undertake advanced tasks within predetermined time frames
- demonstrate the ability in speech and writing to report clearly and discuss his or her conclusions and the knowledge and arguments on which they are based in dialogue with different audiences, and
- demonstrate the skills required for participation in research and development work or employment in some other qualified capacity.

Judgement and approach

For a Master of Social Science (60 credits) degree the student shall:

- demonstrate the ability to make assessments in the main field of study informed by relevant disciplinary, social and ethical issues and also to demonstrate awareness of ethical aspects of research and development work
- 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.

For a Master of Social Science with a major in Child Studies (120 credits) the student shall:

- Demonstrate knowledge of how an interdisciplinary approach is used in research related to children and childhood.

Knowledge and understanding

For a Master of Social Science (120 credits) the student shall:

- demonstrate knowledge and understanding in Child Studies, including both broad knowledge of the field and a considerable degree of specialised knowledge in certain areas of the field as well as insight into current research and development work, and
- demonstrate specialised methodological knowledge in Child Studies.

Competence and skills

For a Master of Social Science (120 credits) the student shall:

- demonstrate the ability to critically and systematically integrate knowledge and analyse, assess and deal with complex phenomena, issues and situations even with limited information
- demonstrate the ability to identify and formulate issues critically, autonomously and creatively as well as to plan and, using appropriate methods, undertake advanced tasks within predetermined time frames and so contribute to the formation of knowledge as well as the ability to evaluate this work
- demonstrate the ability in speech and writing both nationally and internationally to report clearly and discuss his or her conclusions and the knowledge and arguments on which they are based in dialogue with different audiences, and
- demonstrate the skills required for participation in research and development work or autonomous employment in some other qualified capacity.

Judgement and approach

For a Master of Social Science (120 credits) the student shall:

- demonstrate the ability to make assessments in Child Studies informed by relevant disciplinary, social and ethical issues and also to demonstrate awareness of ethical aspects of research and development work
- 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.

Content

Semester 1

Introduction course (7.5 credits)

The course begins on campus with an introduction to the interdisciplinary field of child studies including the current theoretical directions and recent developments in research. The introduction continues later online. The different resources of the digital classroom and the pedagogical organization are introduced on campus. The foundation for both oral and written scientific communication (academic writing, the rules for citation and references and the implications of plagiarism, and the significance of critical reflection) are introduced on campus and continue online.

Historical Perspectives on Child Studies (7.5 credits)

This course deals with how historical studies of children and childhood make visible the way in which childhood is bound up in the chronological and spatial context. Factors such as gender, ethnicity, class and age categories are discussed, as well as children's conditions and the meaning and changes that have occurred in relation to the organization of welfare and the growth of the educational system. The course illuminates different research and methodological traditions within the field of child studies.

Anthropological Perspectives on Child Studies (7.5 credits)

This course treats anthropological perspectives and cross-cultural views of

what it means to be a child and to grow up within various cultural contexts. This includes fundamental anthropological concepts and their significance for the study of children's living conditions and daily life, how different views on for example personhood, family, kinship, peer groups, body and gender vary and permeate the child's daily life and the relationship to welfare and educational institutions. Anthropological research methods are also treated.

Sociological Perspectives on Child Studies (7.5 credits)

This course provides an overview of the field of sociology of childhood, both theoretically and methodologically. An important section of the course deals with the relationship between the children as actors and societal structures. The ways in which fundamental concepts are defined, such as child, the perspective of the child, children's perspective, age and generation, are treated. The course furthermore provides insight into the daily life of children, their conditions and relationships and how they appear in relation to other age groups, among peers and considering such factors as gender, class, ethnicity, etc. School, free time and peer groups are areas that are especially emphasized in the course.

Semester 2

Research Methods in Child Studies (7.5 credits)

This course deals with the fundamental research methods in child studies. It also deals with how research questions influence and determine the choice of methods for answering these questions. Furthermore, the relationship between research questions and the selection of methods for collecting material and the analysis are discussed. There is special focus on ethical principles and the dilemma in research processes involving children and childhood, as well as on criteria involving reflexivity and quality. The development and presentation of a research proposal is required, as well as evaluating and discussing the plans of others.

Children's Rights (7.5 credits)

Various categories of children's rights and different philosophical arguments relating to these rights are treated in this course. Children's rights are discussed in relation to universal and culturally relativistic perspectives: the ways in which the rights of children can come into conflict with other interests and the ways in which the rights of children are given different meanings in varying institutional contexts and among different parties.

Master's Thesis (one year) (15 credits)

This course involves an individual in-depth study in the area of child studies and also includes the reading and scrutiny of the in-depth studies of others in this field. In this course the master's thesis (one year) is completed, which involves the collection and systematic analysis of empirical material with the help of online supervision. A seminar on campus, during which the papers are presented and defended, concludes the course. It is also required that each student act as a discussant for one of the other papers.

Semester 3

Children, Parenthood and Family Life (7.5 credits)

This course deals with the child's relationship within the family from various theoretical perspectives: the practices in family life in relation to reproduction, parenthood, children and childhood; the explanatory models and empirical

conditions, as well as the individual, interpersonal and structural levels. The concept "family" is problematized and the conditions of family life based upon family structure, socio-economic and cultural conditions, and trans-national relations are discussed. The relationship between the family and political processes, welfare and educational institutions is also treated.

Children, school and education (7.5 credits)

The course is structured around a number of areas that represent research on educational settings for children and children's peer groups. The course addresses historical and sociological perspectives in relation to how educational institutions have evolved in the context of political and societal processes. Various educational perspectives are described and discussed with regard to the wider societal notions of children, children's agency and the role children's peer groups have in socialisation.

Children, Gender and Sexuality (7.5 credits)

Children, gender and sexuality, historically and today, are the focus of this course. Essential is the definition of the concepts children, gender and sexuality in relation to one another. The course brings to light how the gender and sexuality of the child are dependent on the societal and cultural context, and how the children relate to and are formed by the conceptions of gender and sexuality in everyday life. The questions about how children learn about sexuality are discussed from cultural and everyday practices related to age, school and the media.

Children, Migration and Transnational Childhoods (7.5 credits)

The course deals with children and migration processes in a globalized world. Theoretical perspectives on migration are treated with focus on the forces behind, the causes and the strategies underlying forced as well as voluntary migration. The course especially illustrates the children's situation and the lived experiences of migration with emphasis on family life and relationships with kin. The needs of refugee children for care are also in focus. The ethical perspectives on children and citizenship are seen in relation to borders, migration policies and The Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Semester 4

Research Methods and Epistemology in Child Studies (7.5 credits)

The basic scientific theories in research in child studies are treated in this course. It also treats the significance of theories of knowledge for the choice of methods both in the collection and the analyses of data, as well as in the relationship between research questions, research methods and understanding of knowledge. The course treats how qualitative criteria can be used when scrutinizing earlier research and research proposals. Furthermore, principles of research ethics are dealt with, as well as the specific dilemmas that can arise in scientific studies of children and childhood. One section of this course includes independently, critically and creatively identifying and formulating a research problem for master's study. A research plan is written that describes how the problem can be studied using adequate methods and within the given time frame.

Children's Health and Development within a Global World (7.5 credits)

Different theoretical perspectives are used in this course to study children's development. The importance of the concept of development in today's views of children and childhood are illuminated. Concepts of normality and deviation in the thinking of developmental psychology are taken up from historical and societal

perspectives. A global perspective on children's health and development is placed in focus, as well as the dilemmas that arise when norms and values from one specific social and cultural perspective are transferred to another. The significance of The Convention on the Rights of the Child in the development of both national and international health policy is discussed.

Master's Thesis (two year) (15 credits)

This course implies an individual in-depth study within the field of child studies. The course also includes studying and evaluating one another's in-depth studies in the area of child studies. The course requires the collection and systematic analysis of research data and the completion of a master's thesis. Furthermore, the course ends with a seminar on campus during which the student is to present and defend his paper and serve as discussant for another.

Theoretical advancement

During the first term the student is introduced to the interdisciplinary field of child studies with special focus on historical, anthropological and sociological perspectives. The areas of knowledge attained in the first term provide the basis for in-depth study later in the programme, but then in relation to specific topics. During the second term this occurs in the course "Children's Rights", while during the third term the courses "Children, Parents and Family Life", "Children, Gender and Sexuality", "Children, Migration & Transnational Childhoods", and "Children, Culture and Media" serve this purpose. The in-depth course in the fourth term is "Children's Health and Development in a Global World".

Methodological advancement

In-depth study of the most important research methods takes place both within the various areas of study and across their boundaries. There is a methodological section in each of the courses named above and in the projects that are part of the courses. This means that the total instruction in methods is comprehensive and is tailor-made for the programme.

In addition, the programme offers two courses in methods, both at an advanced level (term 2 and term 4). The first methods course particularly emphasizes methodological breadth, while the second emphasizes in-depth study and methodological precision in relation to the student's own Master's thesis, including epistemological considerations.

Teaching and working methods

The programme combines distance learning online with five periods of instruction on campus. The first period on campus is at the start of the programme. Two periods are in conjunction with the thesis courses in semesters two and four. In addition there is instruction on campus on one further occasion in semester two.

Instruction takes the form of lectures, seminars, written assignments, group exercises and supervision.

The student is expected to participate in instruction both on campus and online. In addition, the student is expected to engage in self-study.

The student is expected to actively participate in his/her learning and is expected to work by means of self-study as well as in pairs or in groups with other students. The forms of instruction that are based primarily on use of the internet place greater demands on the student's own activity when compared to a purely campus-based programme.

Because the design of the programme implies that students must interact with their teachers and fellow programme members via a digital classroom and by way of electronic channels, this means that the students must have access to internet, preferably via a broadband system.

Technical requirements

The student must have access to email and the Internet. All courses are presented in a variety of multimedia formats. To ensure a positive online learning and to actively participate in training and communicating with fellow students and teachers, students must have access to the right hardware and software. Information about any special requirements that may be needed for a course can be found in the student handbook on the programme's website.

Examination

Each course is examined individually or in a group and mainly online, but in certain cases also on campus. Both written and oral examinations are used. The course syllabi and the course study guides explain more precisely what is expected in the individual courses.

Examining course modules are compulsory. If a compulsory course module is missed, the course examiner notifies the student how the missed exercise should be compensated. A missed compulsory exercise during the campus period is normally compensated with an exercise during the next campus period.

Every student is guaranteed at least three opportunities to take each test for each course (without the literature being changed) during one year.

Grades

Grades as stipulated in the course syllabi.

Entry requirements

A bachelor's degree in the humanities, social sciences or the behavioral sciences with a major (or its equivalent) in a field relevant to the programme. Examples of fields relevant to the programme are anthropology, education, history, communication studies, media studies, language studies, psychology, social work, sociology and political science.

Each applicant must enclose a Letter of Intent written in English, explaining why they want to study this programme, and a summary of their bachelor's essay or project. If applicants hold a degree that does not include a bachelor's essay or project, their Letter of Intent should describe previous studies and any academic activities that are related to the master's programme or the programmes applied for.

English B/English 6 or equivalent.

Threshold requirements

In order to be accepted to the third semester the student shall have successfully completed 45 credits of the first year's courses. In order to be accepted for the fourth semester the student shall have successfully completed at least 75 credits, 15 of which must be the master's thesis in semester two.

Degree requirements

The student will be awarded the degree of Master of Social Science (120 credits) with a major in Child Studies provided all course requirements are completed and that the student fulfils the general and specific eligibility requirements including proof of holding a Bachelor's (kandidat) or a corresponding degree.

Students who have completed the first year, including a master's thesis of 15 credits, are eligible for a Filosofie Magisterexamen (translated as Master of Social Science (60 credits) in Child Studies).

Completed courses and other requirements will be listed in the degree certificate.

A degree certificate is issued by the Board of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences on request. A Diploma Supplement will be attached to the degree certificate.

Degree in Swedish

Filosofie masterexamen i huvudområdet barn alternativt Filosofie magisterexamen i huvudområdet barn.

Degree in English

Master of Social Science (60/120 credits) with a major in Child Studies

Specific information

Merits

The specific requirements will be assessed as not fulfilled if the average grade is in the lower third of the grading scale used in the country where the degree was awarded, that is grades have to be average/pass or above (the equivalent to the Swedish grade "Godkänd").

Language of instruction

The language of instruction is English.

Enrolment Procedure

Students are admitted to the programme in its entirety. Selection is based on academic merit.

Transfer of Credits

The Board of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences or a person nominated by the board decide whether or not previous education can be transferred into the programme.

Curriculum

Semester 1 (Autumn 2016)

Course code	Course name	Credits	Level	Weeks	ECV
736A25	Introduction to Child Studies	7.5	A1X		C
736A26	Historical Perspectives on Children and Childhood	7.5	A1X		C
736A27	Anthropological Perspectives on Children and Childhood	7.5	A1X		C
736A28	Sociological Perspectives on Children and Childhood	7.5	A1X		C

Semester 2 (Spring 2017)

Course code	Course name	Credits	Level	Weeks	ECV
736A30	Children's Rights	7.5	A1X		C
736A29	Research Methods in Child Studies	7.5	A1X	v201804-201808	C

Specialisation: One Year Master

Course code	Course name	Credits	Level	Weeks	ECV
736A31	Master's Thesis (one year)	15	A1E		C

Semester 3 (Autumn 2017)

Course code	Course name	Credits	Level	Weeks	ECV
736A33	Children, Gender, and Sexuality	7.5	A1X		C
736A34	Children, Migration and Transnational Childhoods	7.5	A1X		C
736A35	Children, Culture and Media	7.5	A1X		C
736A32	Children, Parents, and Family Life	7.5	A1X	v201734-201734	C

Semester 4 (Spring 2018)

Course code	Course name	Credits	Level	Weeks	ECV
736A36	Research Methods and Epistemology in Child Studies	7.5	A1X	v201804-201808	C
736A37	Children's Health and Development in a Global World	7.5	A1X	v201809-201813	C
736A38	Master's Thesis in Child Studies (two year)	15	A1X	v201814-201823	C

ECV = Elective / Compulsory / Voluntary

*Kursen läses över flera terminer