

Course Name: Normativity Course (6 hp)

Course language: English

Credits: 6,0 university credits

Course Objectives

On completion of the course, the PhD candidate will be able to:

- approach key theoretical positions on normativity in the humanities and social sciences, specifically when such research engages with science, medicine, and technology;
- describe similarities and differences between these positions, and critically engage with strengths and weaknesses of these theoretical positions;
- form a basis for personal opinion on the relevance of these theoretical positions in relation to the PhD candidate's areas of research interest;
- critically and constructively reflect on the issue of societal impact.

Course Content

The course gives an introduction to theories and approaches that are central for researching normativity from and within the humanities and social sciences, specifically when such research engages with science, medicine, and technology. Normativity is understood broadly as including norms, values, and ethical and/or political features or dimensions where norms and values are expressed, enacted or argued for.

The course includes themes such as the co-emergence of normativity and technology; normativity's position in a western, colonial discourse; normativity and policy-work; embodied and enacted normativity in practices; scientific tools of normative vision; different ways to engage with normativity within and of research, and self-reflexivity on normativity in the course participant's own research. It includes perspectives and positions within STS, feminist science studies, feminist phenomenology, philosophy of technology and medicine, climate policy research, and urban and energy planning.

The course participants will be constantly challenged to discuss, critically examine, and compare various perspectives, approaches and concepts. They will read and discuss key texts and be familiarized with the criticism and debate surrounding core theoretical positions on how to engage with issues of normativity in research. They will be given ample opportunities for reflection and discussion of perspectives, theories and concepts in previous research on normativity, and relate this to their own research.

Course Organization

The course consists of three workshops (which mix lectures, panel- and small group discussions), regular seminars, and a response seminar.

Workshop I: Normativity of and/or in research

This workshop offers different theoretical positions on normativity in the humanities and social sciences, specifically when such research engages with science, medicine, and

technology. It also includes a decolonial critique of normativity and a focus on normativity in policy research. Furthermore, the workshop includes an Initial Reflection Session. For this session, course participants are expected to have prepared short initial reflections on aspects of normativity in their dissertation projects.

Workshop II: Norms Incorporated/Embodied/Enacted?

The second workshop engages with the embodied and enacted normativities in science or medicine as practices. It centers on the theme of norms in/by/through bodies, technologies, and practices. Teachers will present different analytic takes on embodied and enacted normativity, including the normative power of the visual.

Workshop III: Thinking with Norm-Critical Design and Other Modes of Normativity

The third workshop will continue where workshop II ended. It will engage with norm-critical design, and offer an opportunity to continue discussions of how to engage with modes of normativity – this time through example of norm-critical approaches that work with artifacts and visualization. Norm-critical designers will present their work.

Regular Seminars

Before the seminar: Each participant is expected to formulate one question, based on the obligatory readings, and to send this to the PhD candidates responsible for the text introduction (see below) and the teacher, before the seminar.

Each regular seminar consists of three phases:

- 1) An introduction by the teachers in which the theme and textual basis for the seminar are placed in a broader research context (10 minutes).
- 2) A text introduction by two-three appointed PhD candidates, who choose and draw attention to aspects/questions/problems/associations that have been generated by a careful reading of the day's texts - with the aim to spark discussion (15 minutes).
- 3) Seminar discussion on the aspects/questions/problems/associations brought to light above, including optional exercise to explore the perspectives in question in terms of their strengths, weaknesses, methodological implications, etc., by engaging with questions etc. by other PhD candidates if time remains (remaining time).

Impact Seminar

The theme for this seminar is 'Getting Normative by Engaging with Impact? Why and How?' Scholars have taken different positions on the issue of the ethics/politics of research in the area of science, medicine, and technology, and debates have at times been intense. This session re-opens the debate – but with an eye for present day concerns with how to engage with issues of societal impact.

Requirements

Participation in the course requires that the student has a completed undergraduate degree and is currently accepted in a PhD programme that is relevant for the course.

Examination

The examination consists of the following components:

- Active participation in all course sessions.

- Prepare a text introduction to one regular seminar, together with fellow PhD candidates. Moderate that session, with the fellow PhD candidates that you've been preparing the session with.
- Formulate one question, based on the obligatory readings, to each regular seminar.
- Write a course essay (ca 4000 words).
- Oral presentation of the course essay (20 minutes presentation); active participation in discussion of the other course participants' essays.

Those students who do not receive a passing grade two times for the course or for part of the course have the right to request a new examiner for a third examination.

Grades

Assessment will be pass or fail.

Literature

The course literature consists of articles and book chapters. Due to copyright regulations, we will only be able provide you with a small part of the readings. For this reason, please turn to your university library to get as much of the readings as possible. For Obligatory and Voluntary Readings, please see the Course Schedule.

Faculty

Course Coordinators: Ericka Johnson and Kristin Zeiler

Faculty (from Tema Child Studies; Tema Environmental Change; Tema Gender Studies, and Tema Technology and Social Change, all at the Tema Department, LiU): Jonas Anshelm, Jenny Gleisner, Ericka Johnson, Edyta Just, Björn-Ola Linnér, Silje Lundgren, Darcy Parks, Madina Tlostanova, Else Vogel, Anette Wickström, Kristin Zeiler, Teun Zuiderent-Jerak. We also have the pleasure of listening to and engage with two guests, working with norm-critical design: Emma Börjesson and Anna Isaksson, Halmstad högskola.