



# LUND UNIVERSITY

Faculty of Social Sciences

Department of Communication and Media

## **General syllabus for third cycle studies in Media and Communication Studies**

The syllabus was approved by the Board of the Faculty of Social Sciences on 16 May 2013.

### **1 Subject description**

A qualified third cycle programme in Media and Communication Studies must provide expertise in all areas of research in the field. It is a measure of quality of a social sciences discipline that it is able to analyse a rapid societal development often including unexpected problems and opportunities. This requires a study programme marked by methodological, empirical and theoretical breadth and pluralism.

Research at the Lund University Department of Communication and Media combines different research methods with critical social and cultural theories in order to understand the role of the media in a wide societal, political and cultural context. The research orientation is international and comprises topics such as the relationship of the media to democracy and citizenship, gender, diversity and the media, media audiences, popular culture, news studies, health communication, and consumption and advertising.

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

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

The objective of third cycle studies in Media and Communication Studies at Lund University is to provide students with specialised knowledge in Media and Communication Studies 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. Furthermore, the programme is to encourage an international orientation in all areas.

The third cycle programme in Media and Communication Studies leads to a degree of Doctor of Philosophy. It can also lead to a degree of Licentiate.

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 Media and Communication Studies 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

**Degree of Licentiate**

*Knowledge and understanding*

For a degree of Licentiate the third cycle student shall

- demonstrate knowledge and understanding in the field of research 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 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 research project 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 courses and 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 programme.

#### **3.1 General admission requirements**

A person meets the general admission requirements for third cycle courses and 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 (or another body by delegation) may permit an exemption from the general admission requirements for an individual applicant, if there are special grounds.

Transitional provision: Those who meet the general admission requirements for doctoral programmes before 1 July 2007 will also be considered to meet the general admission requirements for third cycle courses and study programmes after that, however, until no later than the end of June 2015.

#### **3.2 Specific admission requirements**

A person meets the specific admission requirements for third cycle studies in Media and Communication Studies if he or she has passed at least 30 second cycle credits in the main field of Media and Communication Studies, or equivalent knowledge acquired in Sweden or abroad (for example in the field of Strategic Communication). The candidate must also have completed a second cycle degree project worth at least 15 credits.

#### **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 the department board, following a review, finds that the previous programme has a satisfactory quality and focus. A review is always to be carried out if the student requests it and the decision is to be documented in the individual study plan, no later than a year after the decision. A decision on credit transfer is to be linked to a decision on reduction of funding relative to the number of transferred credits.

### **4 Admission and selection**

Students are admitted to four years of full-time study leading to a degree of Doctor of Philosophy. A Licentiate degree can be taken after two years, as part of the

programme. Under special circumstances, students can be admitted to a two-year programme leading to a Licentiate degree.

Admission of research students takes place in accordance with the Lund University Admission Rules for Doctoral Programmes from 18 December 2006, reg. no I G 9 6251/2004, and the Regulations for Third Cycle Education at the Faculty of Social Sciences from 22 March 2012.

#### **4.1. Admission**

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

Only applicants who are appointed to a doctoral studentship are admitted to third cycle studies. However, applicants who are funded in some other way can be admitted if the department finds the funding to be guaranteed for the duration of the third cycle programme, so that the student will have sufficient time to spend on their studies and will be able to complete their doctoral degree within a period of eight years (four years for a degree of Licentiate).

A funding plan must be available at the time of admission. The plan shall clarify the student's financial means during the entire study period.

#### **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 department. 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 comprise four years of full-time study (240 credits). The programme leading to a degree of Doctor normally requires four years of study. Part-time studies (at least 50 per cent) may be pursued but must be completed within eight years. 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. Tuition is provided in the form of courses and seminars, and guest lectures.

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

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.

## **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 an associate professor and be employed at Lund University. The individual study plan shall 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 of 240 credits within four years of full-time study. Supervision comprises both help with the orientation of studies and thesis work, as well as support throughout the studies. Doctoral students who so request shall be allowed to change supervisors.

## **5.3 Individual study plan**

At the start of the programme, the student shall draw up an individual study plan in consultation with his or her supervisor that indicates how his or her studies are to be organised. This plan shall be revised annually. The individual study plan describes how the study programme for the individual student will be organised.

## **5.4 Courses and other components**

The courses that can be included in the programme may be offered by the home department and the Faculty of Social Sciences at Lund University. Courses at other departments at or outside Lund University may also be included.

The courses are to include theory and method courses and may also comprise independent study courses selected in view of the thesis project. The ambition is to provide each research student with broad knowledge of methodology, which is why the method courses are to be worth at least 15 credits.

Faculty-wide second cycle courses have syllabi stating the learning outcomes, content and available credits of the course. The credits available for transfer from courses taken at other faculties or higher education institutions are determined by the supervisor in consultation with the supervisors' committee. 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. Compulsory courses and seminars, including their credits, are to be stated.

One of the grades Pass or Fail will be awarded for the thesis and other assessments within the programme.

The examiner of courses is to be a professor or lecturer with the qualifications of an associate professor.

## **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 present their thesis work at no less than three seminars:

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

Doctoral students shall have the opportunity to critically review the papers of fellow doctoral students and present memoranda on theoretical and/or methodological issues in the research project, and/or preliminary findings.

### **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 (compilation thesis).

The thesis is to be defended orally at a public defence. It is awarded one of the grades *Pass* or *Fail*. The grading is to take into account both the content of the thesis and the public defence.

The grade is determined by an examining committee composed of 3 or 5 members.

### **5.7 Departmental duties**

A doctoral student can take on departmental duties for up to 20 per cent of full-time working hours. The doctoral student is to be compensated with a corresponding extension of the total study period.

Doctoral students teaching on first or second cycle study programmes must have completed two weeks of introductory training in teaching and learning in higher education.

## **6 Further information**

More information is available in the Regulations for Third-Cycle Education at Lund University (LS 2011/702, approved 7 June 2013) and the Regulations for Third Cycle Education at the Faculty of Social Sciences from 22 March 2012.

For information on the withdrawal of resources of doctoral students who substantially neglect their undertakings in the individual study plan (Chapter 6 Section 30 of the Higher Education Ordinance) please consult the Regulations for Third-Cycle Education at Lund University.

Information on admissions and application deadlines are provided by the Department of Communication and Media.

Research students admitted before 16 May 2013 are entitled to complete their studies in accordance with the present syllabus. An agreement to this effect is to be documented in the individual study plan.