



## GENERAL SYLLABUS FOR THIRD-CYCLE PROGRAMMES IN COMPARATIVE LITERATURE

This syllabus is for programmes leading to a doctoral degree and for programmes leading to a Licentiate degree. This general syllabus is subordinate to the Swedish Higher Education Ordinance and Södertörn University's *Regulations for Third-Cycle Education at Södertörn University (Föreskrifter för forskarutbildning vid Södertörns högskola)*.

The syllabus was validated by the Faculty Board on 1 February 2017.

### 1. Qualitative targets

The subject examines research problems and themes associated with literary history and theoretical and thematic studies. The subject's foundation in the humanities and literature's interaction with theory are the basis of research in the subject. At its heart is the assumption that no work can be analysed without its shifting contexts also being included in its study: e.g. its effective history, relationship with theory and the interpreting subject's position and interests. This means that a multicultural perspective and aspects relating to gender, queerness, class, and postcolonialisation are naturally integrated in the subject.

The combination of broad literary competence with critical thinking means that research in Comparative Literature's is problem-oriented. In principle, this entails that concrete examples and historic information cannot be studied empirically without a theoretical approach: a concept, an interpretive tradition or historiographic position. An "object" in Comparative Literature consists of a text and of the ideas, thoughts and traditions that have generated, interpreted and historicised it. Literary theory, gender theory, theories and methods in philosophy, history, and aesthetics are thus united in research in the subject.

The intended learning outcomes of the Doctor of Philosophy in Comparative Literature at Södertörn University have been validated on the basis of the provisions found in the Swedish Higher Education Ordinance.

#### *Knowledge and understanding*

For the degree of Doctor of Philosophy the doctoral student shall

- demonstrate broad knowledge and systematic understanding of the research field of comparative literature, as well as advanced and up-to-date specialised knowledge in a limited area of the research field
- demonstrate familiarity with research methodology in general and the methods of the specific field of comparative literature research in particular.

### *Competence and skills*

For the degree of Doctor of Philosophy the doctoral student shall

- demonstrate the capacity for scholarly analysis and synthesis, as well for reviewing and assessing new and complex phenomena, issues and situations autonomously and critically within the field of comparative literature,
- demonstrate the ability to, within the field of comparative literature, 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,
- via a thesis, demonstrate the ability to make a significant contribution to knowledge development in comparative literature through his/her own research,
- demonstrate the ability in both national and international contexts to present and discuss comparative literature 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 in the field of comparative literature,
- demonstrate the capacity to contribute to social development and support the learning of others both through research and education and in other qualified professional contexts.

### *Judgement and approach*

For the degree of Doctor of Philosophy the doctoral student shall

- demonstrate intellectual autonomy and disciplinary rectitude as well as the ability to make assessments of research ethics, and
- demonstrate deep insight into the possibilities and limitations of knowledge, its role in society and the responsibility of the individual for how it is used.

### *Thesis*

In order to be awarded a doctoral degree, the doctoral student must have completed a scholarly thesis in the field of Comparative Literature (doctoral thesis) worth 180 credits and received a Pass grade.

## **2. Entry requirements**

### *2.1 General regulations*

A person is eligible for third-cycle (doctoral) education if he/she fulfils the general entry requirements and the specific entry requirements. The applicant must also be assessed as possessing the necessary capability to assimilate the content of the degree.

### *2.2 General entry requirements*

A person meets the general entry requirements for third-cycle courses and study programmes if he or she has:

1. been awarded a second-cycle qualification,
2. fulfilled requirements for courses comprising at least 240 credits of which at least 60 credits were awarded in the second-cycle, or
3. 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. (Ordinance 2010:1064)

## *2. Specific entry requirements*

The specific entry requirements are fulfilled by a person who has knowledge equivalent to 90 credits in Comparative Literature, or a closely related subject in the humanities, including a degree project worth at least 15 credits at second-cycle level, or who has acquired the equivalent knowledge abroad or through a previous degree. If there are special grounds, the Faculty Board may permit an exemption from the specific entry requirements for an individual applicant. The ability to assimilate literature and academic material in Swedish and English is a prerequisite for admission to the programme. A research project that is dedicated to literature in a foreign language requires fluency in that language.

The specific entry requirements may also be fulfilled by a person who has acquired the equivalent expertise either inside or outside of Sweden.

## **3. Admissions**

### *3.1 Application*

Applications for admission to a third-cycle programme shall be submitted to Södertörn University.

### *3.2 Limitations on admission and selection*

The number of doctoral students admitted may be no greater than that which can be offered supervision, acceptable study conditions and who have a plan for student financing. A research student who is employed on a doctoral studentship is assumed to conduct his/her studies on a full-time basis. If it is believed to benefit the doctoral student's education, the doctoral studentship may be extended for a maximum of one year when the doctoral student conducts teaching or administrative tasks. These departmental duties may not exceed 20% of full-time.

Limitations on admission to third-cycle programmes are applied if the number of eligible applicants is greater than the number of available places. The research area of Critical and Cultural Theory shall, as the preparatory body for the Faculty Board's decision on admission, observe the following criteria:

1. The applicant's merits and expertise.
2. The quality of the research project.
3. The suitability and feasibility of the research project as a doctoral project.
4. The funding plan.
5. Whether issues of research ethics have been considered.
6. Whether sufficient collected supervisory capacity exists to provide good and professional supervision and the relevant expertise.

For applicants to doctoral positions associated with BEEGS, the research plan will be assessed according to its link to the graduate school's specific geographic area, its orientation to the Baltic states or Eastern Europe.

The basis for selection among the eligible applicants to third-cycle studies in Comparative Literature comprises documented qualifications and the assessed level of ability to assimilate the third-cycle degree programme. The initial selection is made on the basis of documented material provided by the applicant, such as grades/credits, written work, the appended research plan (where appropriate) and any vocational certifications. The applicant's merits and expertise are assessed as regards creativity and academic maturity, the capacity for stringency and problem formulation, independent judgement and critical analysis, the ability to comply with a given timeframe and communication and cooperation skills. Other factors in

decision-making, such as interviews with applicants, may be significant. The expertise possessed by the teachers linked to third-cycle education and aspects relating to equal opportunities are also taken into account during the admissions procedure.

### *3.3 Admission decisions*

The admissions process complies with the *Regulations for Third-Cycle Education at Södertörn University*. The Faculty Board is responsible for decisions regarding the admission of students to third-cycle programmes.

## **4 Programme content**

### *4.1 General*

In total, a doctoral degree covers 240 credits, of which 60 credits are from courses and 180 credits are from the thesis. Of the course credits, 37.5 credits are obligatory (15 credits from obligatory courses common to the research area, and 22.5 credits from subject-specific obligatory courses). Doctoral students at BEEGS must study an additional obligatory course worth 7.5 credits. The remaining 22.5 credits or 15 credits (for doctoral students at BEEGS) are made up of elective courses.

A Licentiate degree programme covers 120 credits and consists of courses worth a total of 45 credits and a Licentiate thesis worth 75 credits. Such a degree may either be the final aim of the programme or a stage on the way to a doctoral degree.

Credits from courses at second-cycle level or higher and which are not included in the specific entry requirements may, after a decision in accordance with the academic school's delegation of authority, be transferred to the third-cycle programme. The doctoral student should begin his/her thesis during the first year of the programme and thus conduct research activities in parallel with course-based studies. Active participation in the research environment's seminar activities is also included in third-cycle programmes.

### *4.2 Courses*

The following courses are included in the third-cycle programme:

Obligatory courses within the research area (15 credits)

- 7.5 credits Introduction to Critical and Cultural Theory.
- 7.5 credits Truth, Construction and Subjectivity: Contemporary Issues in the Theory of Scientific Knowledge

Subject-specific obligatory courses (22.5 credits)

- 7.5 credits Research fields and methods in Comparative Literature
- 7.5 credits Specific problems within the field of Comparative Literature
- 7.5 credits Literary history

These courses are taken after consultation with the principal supervisor and can be offered as taught courses, internal or external to the university, or through literature studies. They are examined by the principal supervisor or other specially appointed examiner internal or external to the university.

Obligatory course for doctoral students at BEEGS

- 7.5 credits Contemporary Research into the Baltic Sea Region and Eastern Europe

Elective courses

- 22.5 credits or 15 credits for doctoral students at BEEGS

Elective, individually-decided courses are chosen in consultation with the doctoral student's principal supervisor and take account of how the principal supervisor assesses that the courses contribute to the doctoral student fulfilling the qualitative targets. They can be offered as taught courses, internal or external to the university, or through literature studies. They are examined by the principal supervisor or other specially appointed examiner internal or external to the university. Doctoral students who teach must have completed a course in teaching and learning in higher education, or have acquired the equivalent knowledge in another manner.

A Licentiate degree includes the following courses:

Obligatory courses within the research area (15 credits)

- 7.5 credits Introduction to Critical and Cultural Theory.
- 7.5 credits Truth, Construction and Subjectivity: Contemporary Issues in the Theory of Scientific Knowledge

Subject-specific obligatory courses (15 credits)

- 7.5 credits Research fields and methods in Comparative Literature
- 7.5 credits Specific problems within the field of Comparative Literature

These courses are taken after consultation with the principal supervisor and can be offered as taught courses, internal or external to the university, or through literature studies. They are examined by the principal supervisor or other specially appointed examiner internal or external to the university.

Obligatory course for doctoral students at BEEGS

- 7.5 credits Contemporary Research into the Baltic Sea Region and Eastern Europe

Elective courses (15 credits or 7.5 credits for doctoral students at BEEGS)

Elective, individually-decided courses are chosen in consultation with the doctoral student's principal supervisor and take account of how the principal supervisor assesses that the courses contribute to the doctoral student fulfilling the qualitative targets.

#### *4.3 Doctoral thesis*

To be awarded a doctoral degree, the doctoral student must write an academic thesis that is worth 180 credits. The thesis must be based on autonomous research work and be of significance and relevance to research in the selected field. The thesis must be either a unified and continuous piece of academic work (monograph thesis) or a compilation of academic works with a summary and discussion of these works (compilation thesis) that the doctoral student has authored alone or with another person. The works shall be of such quality that they can be published in recognised academic journals.

#### *4.4 Licentiate thesis*

To be awarded a Licentiate degree, the doctoral student must write an academic thesis that is worth 75 credits. The thesis must be based on autonomous research work.

#### *4.5. Additional information*

Additional information about third-cycle studies can be provided by the subject's director of doctoral studies or the equivalent representative.

## 5. Programme organisation

### 5.1 Individual study plan

The principal supervisor and doctoral student must, together, draw up an individual study plan for the doctoral student's third-cycle studies that includes the university's and the doctoral student's commitments, and a schedule for the programme. The study plan is drawn up at the start of employment and is validated by the Steering Group for Critical and Cultural Theory (according to the school's delegation of authority and decision procedure) no later than five months after the start of the doctoral studentship. Follow-ups and revisions to the study plan must be presented to and approved by the steering group once per year. The doctoral student and the supervisor must confirm in writing that they have read the individual study plan and any revisions to it.

### 5.2 Teaching

Teaching is primarily provided in the form of courses, lectures, seminars and supervision. Courses and thesis work shall be undertaken in parallel. The doctoral student must start his/her thesis work at an early date. This work is normally presented once each semester at the subject's higher seminar. Supervisor and doctoral student must maintain continual contact. It is both a right and an obligation for doctoral students to have their texts read and discussed at higher seminars. A half-way seminar is organised when at least one year remains until the intended final seminar. After a proposal from the principal supervisor, the seminar is announced by the subject coordinator or someone else coordinating the subject's higher seminar. The manuscript must be presented to the seminar in its entirety prior to its public defence (final seminar). In association with the final seminar, the manuscript shall be reviewed by a specially appointed reviewer. During the period of study, the doctoral student must participate in academic activities by attending seminars, guest lectures, etc. The doctoral student may be provided with the opportunity to participate in teaching and knowledge testing at another faculty or another higher education institution. The doctoral student is encouraged and shall, when possible, be given the opportunity to participate in international conferences and courses.

### 5.3 Supervision

Students in third-cycle education are entitled to supervision that is equivalent to four years of full-time study for a doctoral degree and to two years for a Licentiate degree. The content and scope of supervision is stated in *Regulations for Third-Cycle Education at Södertörn University*. Supervisors in third-cycle education in Comparative Literature are the subject's professors and associate professors and specially appointed teachers. At least two supervisors must be appointed for each doctoral student. One of them shall be the principal supervisor. Supervisors are selected in consultation with the doctoral student. The principal supervisor must be an associate professor and the assistant supervisors must have doctoral degrees. They must have completed a course in third-cycle supervision or be assessed as having the equivalent competence. The supervisor(s) are appointed by the Head of School after being proposed by the steering group. A doctoral student is able to change supervisor if he/she requests it.

The supervisor(s) and doctoral student must have close, regular contact and, every semester, they must check what has been achieved in relation to the annual individual study plan. The choice of thesis subject must take place in consultation between the doctoral student and principal supervisor during the first semester of the programme. The principal supervisor is responsible for providing advice as regards the focus, scope and execution of

work on the thesis. The supervisor must also ensure that delimitation of the thesis subject takes place in such a manner that studies can be completed within the decided period of study. The doctoral student must contact his/her supervisor, director of studies, or line manager, if there are any problems.

If a doctoral student substantially neglects his or her undertakings in the individual study plan, the vice-chancellor shall decide that resources for the programme are withdrawn. The local regulations in *Regulations for Third-Cycle Education at Södertörn University* state how the case is prepared before the proposal to withdraw resources is submitted to the vice-chancellor.

## **6. Examination**

Knowledge testing takes place through written or oral examination. Tests and examinations are graded as either Pass or Fail. The principal supervisor is examiner for the courses for which no specific examiner has been appointed.

The doctoral thesis shall be reviewed by an external examiner at a public defence. It is assessed by a specially-appointed examining committee in accordance with the provisions of the Higher Education Ordinance and the *Regulations for Third-Cycle Education at Södertörn University*. During grading, consideration must be paid to both the content of the thesis and its public defence. The thesis shall be given one of the following grades: Pass or Fail.

The licentiate thesis shall be reviewed by a faculty examiner and be defended publically. The procedures for presentation of the licentiate thesis are stated in the *Regulations for Third-Cycle Education at Södertörn University*. The Steering Group for Critical and Cultural Theory also creates area or subject-specific routines for its third-cycle subject areas. The thesis shall be awarded a grade of either Pass or Fail by a specially-appointed examining committee.