



## **GENERAL SYLLABUS FOR THIRD-CYCLE PROGRAMMES IN MEDIA AND COMMUNICATION STUDIES**

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 has been validated by the Faculty Board and was revised 10 June 2016.

### **1. Qualitative targets**

Media and Communication Studies (MKV) places historical, aesthetic, cultural-theoretical and social scientific perspectives on the media. The emphasis is on the interplay between the media, culture and social development, with a clear cultural-theoretical profile, placing a historical perspective on the rapidly changing media landscape, striving for a broad openness to a rich diversity of traditions and flows in Media and Communication Studies. An interdisciplinary approach is applied and research is focused on issues of long-term social relevance.

Research programmes in MKV aim to deepen the doctoral student's knowledge in the field of study and to adequately prepare him/her for autonomous work in research and development. The aim of the programmes is to provide the doctoral student with the ability to autonomously plan and execute competent research work and to present and disseminate his/her research results.

The intended learning outcomes of the Doctor of Philosophy in Media and Communication Studies have been validated on the basis of the provisions found in the Swedish Higher Education Ordinance.

For the degree of Doctor of Philosophy the doctoral student shall:

#### *Knowledge and understanding*

- show broad knowledge and systematic and historical understanding of the field of Media and Communication Studies as well as advanced and relevant specialised knowledge in a limited area of this field,
- demonstrate familiarity with scholarly methods in general and with methods in Media and Communication Studies in particular,

### *Competence and skills*

- demonstrate the capacity for scholarly analysis and synthesis, as well for reviewing and assessing new and complex phenomena, issues and situations autonomously and critically in the research field of Media and Communication Studies,
- demonstrate the ability to critically, autonomously, and creatively identify and formulate issues in the field of Media and Communication Studies research with scholarly precision 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 documented research project the ability to make a significant contribution to the formation of knowledge in the research field of Media and Communication Studies through his/her own research,
- demonstrate the ability to present and discuss Media and Communication Studies research and research results with authority and in dialogue with the academic community and the wider community, both orally and in writing, in both national and international contexts,
- demonstrate the ability to identify the need for further knowledge in the research field of Media and Communication Studies,
- 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*

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

### *Thesis*

For a doctoral degree, the doctoral student must have been awarded a Pass grade for a documented research project in Media and Communication Studies (doctoral thesis) of at least 180 credits.

## **2. Entry requirements**

### *2.1 General provisions*

In order to be admitted to third-cycle studies, the applicant must fulfil the general entry requirements and the specific entry requirements as stated below. 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/she has:

1. 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)

### *2.3 Specific entry requirements*

The specific entry requirements are fulfilled by a student who has passed courses worth at least 90 credits in Media and Communication Studies, including a degree project worth at least 15 credits, or who has acquired the equivalent knowledge abroad or through a previous qualification. 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 academic material in English and a command of the language necessary for work on the thesis are prerequisites for admission to the degree programme.

## **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 basis for selection among eligible applicants for third-cycle programmes in Media and Communication Studies is the level of ability to assimilate such a degree programme. The following criteria are considered when making selections:

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 the total supervisory competence can provide a high level of professional supervision and the relevant expertise.

In association with admission to 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 applicant to third-cycle studies in Media and Communication Studies 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 an academic paper 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 academic paper during the first year of the programme and thus conduct research activities in parallel with course-based studies. The research environment's seminar activities are 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 Classics of Media Theory
- 7.5 credits Contemporary Debates in Media Studies

- 7.5 credits Advanced Methodology in Media Studies  
Offered as a teacher-led or individual reading course.

Obligatory course for doctoral students at BEEGS (7.5 credits):

- 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)

The elective, individually decided courses are chosen in consultation with the doctoral student's principal supervisor. They are offered through supervision, internally or externally to the higher education institution, through literature studies, through oral and written research presentations, reviews of others' research, participation in the course in teaching and learning in higher education, etc.

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 (22.5 credits)

- 7.5 credits Classics of Media Theory
- 7.5 credits Contemporary Debates in Media Studies
- 7.5 credits Advanced Methodology in Media Studies

Obligatory course for doctoral students at BEEGS

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

Elective course (7.5 credits)

Applies to doctoral students who are not at BEEGS. The individually decided course is primarily given in the form of a taught course or reading course, and is chosen in consultation with a supervisor.

*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 shall be based on autonomous research work and be of significance to research within the chosen field. The thesis shall either be a unified and continuous piece of academic work (monograph thesis) or a compilation of academic works that the doctoral student has written alone or with co-authors, to which a summarising discussion has been added (compilation thesis). 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) at least 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 lectures, seminars and supervision. 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 must be offered 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 Media and Communication Studies 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 on relation to the annual individual study plan. The choice of thesis subject must take place in consultation between the doctoral student and principal supervisor and should take place during the first semester of the programme. The doctoral student must contact his/her supervisor 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.