



# Programme Syllabus

## **One-Year Master Programme in African Studies**

**60 Credits <sup>\*)</sup>**

*Magisterutbildning i afrikastudier*

*60 högskolepoäng*

*Approved by the University Faculty Board, 18 December 2006  
This syllabus comes into force 1 July 2007*

<sup>\*)</sup> 1 Credit = 1 ECTS

## **1. Objectives of the Educational Programme**

### **1.1 Objectives, as Specified in the Higher Education Act (1992:1434), Chapter 1, 9 §:**

Education on an Advanced Level implies, in relation to the undergraduate level studies, higher in-depth knowledge of skills and capacities. In contrast to undergraduate level studies it should:

- further develop students' capacity to independently integrate and use knowledge
- further develop students' capacity to manage complex research questions and situations
- increase the students' possibilities for life of work where high demand for independent decision making is required or for research- and development work. (Act 2006:173).

### **1.2 Degree Objectives, as Specified in the Higher Education Ordinance (1993:100), Appendix 2:**

The degree objectives of the One-year Master Programme in African Studies is in accordance with the objectives specified in the Higher Education Ordinance (1993:100), appendix 2.

### **1.3 Objectives of the Programme**

The specific objectives of this education programme are that the students' should :

- Have developed and demonstrated a deeper knowledge as well as a theoretical and critical understanding of political, social and economical features of African societies from the beginning of the nineteenth century to the present
- Be able to analyse the interplay between religion and politics in African societies south of the Sahara and independently apply and evaluate the results when analysing specific African countries and regions
- Be able to demonstrate a theoretical and critical awareness when analysing the importance of gender and the economy of nutrition
- Be able to demonstrate a theoretical awareness when relating education to other factors, such as urbanism, human rights and democratic governance
- Have a deepened capacity to analyse issues of continuity and change in African societies, a critical ability to evaluate different types of sources and a capacity to analyse a general research problem relevant for several countries to thereby, with a high degree of independence, formulate a research problem and communicate it orally and in writing in the form of a thesis on an advanced level.

## **2. Main Structure of the Programme**

The Master Programme in African studies is made up of four obligatory courses and a number of optional courses. Students are free to choose any two of the optional courses. The number of optional courses given at any semester will vary. All of these courses deal mainly with Africa south of the Sahara. The Programme is given in English.

### **3. Courses of the Programme**

#### **I. Obligatory Courses**

##### **The Dynamics of African Societies (History) 12 ECTS**

This course takes up synchronic and diachronic approaches to African societies from the early 1800 up to the present. The structure of African economies; the principles of political organisation; the links between the individual and the collective; the natural resource base and the production and reproduction of material culture shall be the main issues of the course. The themes of change and continuity shall provide the connecting thread throughout the course. Relations between Europe and African societies are themes covered by the course.

##### **Religion and Politics in African Societies (History) 9 ECTS**

This course introduces the course participant to the religious landscape of the continent. The various strands of Christianity (Catholic, Protestant, Orthodox and Millenarian movements), Islam and the basic tenets of African and non-Christian religions are identified and studied in the context of the political environment. The course shall examine more closely broad questions like the following. How does religion affect the political orientation of a society? How are religious differences and conflicts confronted and resolved? What role do religions play in the organisation of social, political and economic life? The course would also focus on the interaction between the various religious outlooks and the constant creation (invention) of what might be described as new belief systems.

##### **Education and Change in African Societies (History) 8 ECTS**

The course deals with education policies and the role of education in the development of African societies. The focus in the course is on the relation between education and social change. Indigenous knowledge and learning systems will be related to formal and structured education systems. The role of international aid in education for development in African societies will be discussed. Questions related to professional ethics and to the role of official curricula will be discussed.

##### **Research Paper (History) 15 ECTS**

The research paper is the most central part of the International Masters programme. Although we recommend that the use of primary materials and sources, the research paper could be based on only secondary sources. The overriding objective with the research paper is to train the course participant to carry out an original piece of research that could either stand on its own or lead to a Ph.D research issue. Students would be given a series of lectures and seminars on the use of sources and interdisciplinary research methodologies.

##### **Developing the Research Proposal (History) 1 ECTS**

In this course the students will develop and revise their research proposal in regard to objectives, analytical questions, as well as state of research.

##### **Elaborated Research Plan (History) 1 ECTS**

In this course the students will further elaborate their research project, considering theories, scientific perspectives and methods.

## **II. Elective Courses (two are chosen)**

### **1. The Contemporary African Novel (English) 7 ECTS**

The course consists of a study of a selection of African novels, written in English, in a cultural and historical context. The texts will be read from the viewpoint of the aesthetic, cultural, and political concerns that have motivated African authors.

### **2. Economic Development in Africa: An Introduction (History) 7 ECTS**

This course is intended as an introduction to the study of current social and economic conditions in Africa in recent decades within a global context and from a historical perspective. Central issues in the course is different theories of development and how they have changed over time as well as different explanations of Africa's development experience over the past decades. Special attention is devoted to the economic success story of Botswana.

### **3. Health and Nutrition: Gender and Economic Perspectives (Health Science) 7 ECTS**

This course focuses most generally on issues related to health and nutrition in Africa. Particular attention is paid to gender relations, economic developments and population changes and how these conditions impact on health and nutritional status. Major themes of the course are the cultural and political conditions under which food is produced and consumed and how this affects the health status of women, children and youth. Included as well is a focus on the social and cultural aspects of the HIV-AIDS pandemic.

### **4. Human Rights in Sub-Saharan Africa (Religious studies) 7 ECTS**

The course deals with theories of Human Rights and Democracy, with a primary focus on their relevance for different Sub-Saharan societies. On the theoretical level, philosophical, legal and religious aspects of rights are treated. Possible conflicts and different kinds of rights are analysed, as e.g. claims for cultural rights to self-determination, and individual freedom.

### **5. Islam and Islamic Societies in Africa (History) 7 ECTS**

The course aim to introduce students to the importance of Islam in Africa and its influence upon African Societies. Central issue of the course is African Islam and Islam in Africa: encounters between Sufis and Islamists, focusing on Somalia, Senegal, Nigeria, Sudan. Current Institutional as well as Legal situation will be analysed.

### **6. Language and Nationhood in African Multilingual Countries (Swedish as a Second Language) 7 ECTS**

This course deals with issues such as language and nation; territoriality versus nationality; concepts of oneness/integration/unity in the context of bilingualism; politics of language education and Human Rights dimensions of language policies.

### **7. Urban Spaces and Urban Policies in Africa South of the Sahara (History) 7 ECTS**

This course introduces the student to the history of urbanisation and urban culture south of the Sahara. Central issues deal with the interaction between the market and

social/public places in urban settings; the daily struggles and strategies of individuals and groups; the links between urban and rural landscapes and the overall urban policies pursued by governments. The course furthermore deals with demographic features of African cities; relations between the city and society; the rural-urban interface; urbanisation and migration; policies governing urban spaces.

#### **8. West Africa since the 19th Century (History) 7 ECTS**

This course module introduces the reader to the social history of West Africa in the context of the political changes and economic transformations that were introduced by the process of colonialism. There shall be more emphasis these changes affected the patterns of urbanisation, population resettlements and displacements, up to the post-colonial phenomenon of pauperisation of the continent.

#### **4. Degree Awarded**

Students will be awarded a Filosofie magisterexamen med huvudområdet historia (Degree of Master of Arts (One Year) with a Major in History)

#### **5. Required Entry Qualifications**

Bachelor Degree of 180 credits in the field of Humanities, Social Sciences or Education and English 6

#### **6. Other Information**

The programme is given in English. After completion of the Programme students with at least 30 ECTS fulfilled in courses Education and Change in African Societies (8 ECTS) and Language and Nationhood in African Multilingual Countries (7 ECTS) as well as a Research Paper (15 ECTS) focusing on Education in Africa may apply for a second year of Master Studies and continue in the two year Master's Degree Programme in Education and Globalisation at the University of Oulu, Finland.

Students who have completed the One-year Master Programme in African Studies may apply to a second year as students in the Two-year Master programme in African and Asian studies at Bologna University.