

Course Syllabus

The Social Contexts of Energy Systems 5 Credits*, Second Cycle Level 1

Learning Outcomes

The overall aim of this course is to help students increase their awareness of the importance that varying social actors and contexts have for the function of energy systems. After completing the course, the student shall be able to:

- Identify a number of factors which are essential for the introduction of new energy technology and the ability of the technology to gain stable foothold in specific cultural contexts.
- Explain how a change of energy carrier or energy system may vary by cultural context and may affect different categories of actors in varying ways. Explain the difference between inside and outside perspectives.
- Use social scientific concepts and approaches to analyse the implementation of energy systems and the options for these to be used in feasible, long-term, and sustainable ways.
- Show awareness of social and ethical aspects of research and development.

Course Content

Examples from different parts of the world are included in the course. The social contexts of energy systems are discussed during seminars. Examples from course literature, lectures and student papers are used. The students help each other to understand and compare specific examples, to situate these in an international context and global sustainability perspective, and to find solutions to concrete problematic situations.

The students practice analyzing the implementation and long-term feasibility of energy technologies. Certain orientation is also given in social scientific methodology.

The course takes as its point of departure the technical components of an energy system. To these are added social components necessary for the system to function in society, primarily acting human beings – social actors – who promote, use, or make decisions on the technology. The course puts great weight on the interaction of social actors, but also on their respective culturally specific positions, and areas of responsibility and interest. Furthermore, the course emphasizes the importance of subjective and varying perceptions and experiences of energy carriers or energy services.

Assessment

Written assignments and seminar presentations. A written essay with oral presentation.
Grades are given for the following two:

Written assignments (2 credits)

Essay (3 credits)

Forms of Study

Lectures and seminars, written and oral seminar preparations, literature studies, essay writing (analytical exercise).

Grades

The Swedish grades U–VG.

The final grade for the course is given after an overall assessment made by the examiner.

Prerequisites

Bachelor's degree of at least 180 credits and English 6

Other Information

Number of examination attempts is limited to five.

Subject:

Energy Technology

Group of Subjects:

Energy Technology

Disciplinary Domain:

Technology, 100%

This course can be included in the following main field(s) of study:

1. Energy Technology
2. Solar Energy Engineering

Progression Indicator within (each) main field of study:

1. A1F
2. A1F

Approved:

Approved 27 August 2015

Valid from 24 November 2015