LUND UNIVERSITY

JOINT FACULTIES OF HUMANITIES AND THEOLOGY

[Course code] **Environmental Humanities: New Perspectives on Global Sustainability, (5 credits)**

Third cycle

Details of approval

The syllabus was approved by the Vice Dean of Third Cycle Studies at the Faculties of Humanities and Theology on 201x-xx-xx. The syllabus is valid from the autumn semester 2026.

General information

The course is offered as a free-standing course. Language of instruction is English.

Course description

This course brings humanistic approaches to bear on contemporary sustainability challenges—climate change, biodiversity loss, resource depletion, pollution, and environmental injustice. Drawing on philosophy, archaeological and historical perspectives, literary and cultural studies, and sustainability science, the course examines how values, narratives, institutions, and knowledge practices shape responses to planetary-scale problems. Through interdisciplinary seminars, case studies, and a student conference, participants will develop research projects that connect humanistic analysis with policy and practice. The course engages UN Sustainable Development Goals, emphasizing justice, inclusion, and plural knowledge systems (e.g., SDG 4, SDG 5, SDG 13, SDG 14, SDG 16).

Course goals

On completion of the course, the students shall be able to:

Knowledge and understanding

- Demonstrate knowledge of key debates, concepts, and histories in Environmental Humanities

Competence and skills

- Apply humanistic methods to a concrete sustainability problem.
- Integrate humanistic and empirical sustainability perspectives to formulate policy-relevant or practice-oriented research questions.
- Present and defend their research orally and in writing.

Judgement and approach

- Critically evaluate the strengths, limits, and epistemic assumptions of different knowledge systems.

- Provide and incorporate peer feedback; follow ethical standards and inclusion practices in research.

Course design

Intensive one-week on-campus course (Monday–Friday), combining morning lectures and afternoon seminars, plus preparatory online orientation and final exam paper. Attendance in Lund is required for the full week (Monday lunchtime–Friday lunchtime).

Week schedule

Pre-course (2 weeks before campus)

- Complete core readings.
- Submit a 300–500 words project proposal.

On-campus week (Lund)
Monday

- 13:15–15:00 Introduction: What are the Environmental Humanities? Aims, methods, and interdisciplinarity
- 15:30–17:00 Seminar: Framing research projects; peer feedback on proposals

Tuesday

- 09:15–11:00 Lecture 1: Histories of environmental thought and the making of the Anthropocene
- 13:15–15:00 Seminar 1: Case studies in environmental history and archaeological perspectives

Wednesday

- 09:15–11:00 Lecture 2: Ethics, responsibility, and intergenerational justice
- 13:15–15:00 Seminar 2: Justice in the Anthropocene

Thursday

- 09:15–11:00 Lecture 3: Plural knowledges, narratives and posthumanism
- 13:15–15:00 Seminar 3: Applying a humanistic approach to sustainability problems

Friday

- 09:00–13:00 Student conference: 10–15 minutes presentations, Q&A, peer feedback
- 13:30 Course closing and reflections

Course requirements and examination

Examination is in the form of one course paper (6 000 words) as well as a 10–15 min presentation + 10 min Q&A per student at the concluding student conference. Active participation is required at all campus lectures and seminars.

The examiner, in consultation with Disability Support Services, may deviate from the regular form of examination to provide a student with a permanent disability with a form of examination equivalent to that of a student without a disability.

Grades

Grading scale includes the grades: Fail, Pass. To receive a Pass the student must fulfil the learning outcomes of the course.

Entry requirements and selection

The course is an optional course within the Agenda 2030 Graduate School at Lund University. It is open for Agenda 2030 PhD students as well as other PhD students from inside and outside of Lund University (priority in the order mentioned). Should the course director decide there is room for it the course may also include some master students.