



## Course syllabus

# Theories in Educational Research

### Teorier i utbildningsvetenskaplig forskning

**Higher Education Credits:** 7,5 hp

**Level:** Doctoral studies

**Subject area:** Education science

**Subject:** Educational work

**Evaluation-assessment:** Fail, Pass

**Responsible Department:** Institutionen för tillämpad utbildningsvetenskap

The course was established by the graduate committee of the Department of Applied Educational Science, Umeå University, and the syllabus was confirmed the Department Head on 2020-12-22. The course plan applies from and including the spring term 2021 and until further notice.

### Content

The course aims to increase the students' knowledge of education theories and their purposes in educational research in order to strengthen the students' ability to make informed choices of theory in relation to specific research questions and contexts.

The course focuses on the function, meaning and purpose of theory in the field of educational science, with exemplifications from a range of theoretical perspectives, such as cognitive theories, theories about the teaching and learning sciences, theories in educational sociology, theories on didactics.

The course covers rationales for choosing theories and how theory can be used in research projects. The course addresses challenges of using theories when conducting education research, possibilities to combine different theories, and theories with different underlying ideological values. Students' individual doctorate work in the field of education is central throughout the course.

### Expected learning outcomes

After completing the course, the students should be able to:

*Knowledge and understanding*



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- Demonstrate knowledge about the functions, meanings and purposes of theory in scientific knowledge production
- Demonstrate understanding about the relationship between theory, research question, method and interpretation of data in research
- Develop and demonstrate knowledge of theoretical developments within education and its sub-fields

### *Skills and abilities*

- Critically discuss theoretical perspectives and their implications for research design
- Develop skills to argue for the choice of theory in relation to specific research aims
- Position their research within a theoretical framework and identify relevant concepts
- Demonstrate the ability to argue for the choice and use of theory and concepts in research practice

### *Competencies of critical evaluation and set of attitudes*

- Critically evaluate the implications of selecting a theoretical perspective for a specific research question

### **Prerequisites**

Admission to the PhD-program in a relevant subject area.

### **Course Design and Delivery**

The course is delivered by a combination of lectures, seminars, and student presentations.

### **Examination**

Assessment will be based on the writing of a 3,000-words essay. In addition, regular attendance and active participation in seminars is expected.