



School of Economics and Management

EEH014F, Human Capital in a Historical Perspective, 7.5 credits

Humankapital i ett historiskt perspektiv, 7,5 högskolepoäng
Third Cycle / Doktorandnivå

Details of approval

The syllabus was approved by The Board of the Department of Economic History, Lund University School of Economics and Management 2020-04-14.

General Information

This is an optional course at the PhD programme.
The language of instruction is English.

Learning outcomes

This course aims to develop an understanding of the principle issues relating to human capital formation, while providing opportunities to develop a range of key skills. Upon completion of the course, the students should acquire advanced knowledge about human capital theory and the relationship between human capital, economic growth and equality. In particular, emphasis is placed on empirical founded knowledge referring to the long-term development of these relations.

More specifically, to pass the assessments students should be able to:

Knowledge and understanding

- understand the underlying empirical approaches used to evaluate these models and show familiarity with empirical work testing their predictions
- present a theoretically-based analysis on a key issue relating to human capital in the broader context of economic history set in a specific country or region

Competence and skills

- be able to apply theory and empirics to relevant problems and policy areas whilst being aware of limitations of theory as well as of data

Judgement and approach

- understand and critically evaluate human capital theory as well as competing theories concerning education as an economic and social phenomenon
- analyse the role of human capital in long-term economic change
- assess effects of large-scale expansions of education on economic and social change

Course content

The content of the course is determined by lectures, teaching material, seminars, and the course literature.

This course explores a range of subjects concerning human capital, historically and comparatively. The focus is on human capital formation, broadly defined, and the role of education in the economy and policy using historical, comparative, and current perspectives. Topics include the theory of human capital, the role of education in economic growth and income distribution as well as for individual careers and family formation, and equality along different lines. The course relates to both macro- and micro-level topics, all within the broader context of economic history.

Human capital is often considered an important determinant to economic growth and a strategic factor with respect to productivity. In this course, theoretical foundations as well as empirical evidence are reviewed and critically examined. Different concepts and methods for the measurement of human capital are studied. Human capital formation and its implications for macro-economic performance as well as for individual well-being are analysed from a historical point of view, in particular during the first, second, and third industrial revolution. The relation between human capital and equality is studied from several perspectives. In many different contexts, changes in the education system have often been motivated by a political ambition to diminish social inequality begging the question to what extent has human capital formation through education been important in promoting equality. Moreover, education has been a measure to overcome gender inequality, which makes questions relating to gender gaps in education and new forms of gender inequality relevant. From a comparative point of view, we ask to what extent are experiences from the western world applicable to the developing economies today

Course design

The course is designed as a series of lectures, exercises, seminars and work with projects reports.

Assessment

Grading is based on individual performance, via written exams, papers, presentations, and other mandatory activities. Examination may draw on information presented in class as well as the course literature.

The University views plagiarism very seriously and will take disciplinary actions against students for any kind of attempted malpractice in examinations and assessments. The penalty that may be imposed for this, and other unfair practice in examinations or assessments, includes suspension from the University.

Grades

Marking scale: Fail or Pass.

Entry requirements

PhD students applying for this course should have at least 60 credit points in either economic history, business administration, economic and social geography, economics, history, sociology or the equivalent knowledge.

Further information

This course at the secondary cycle was previously labelled EKHM82, EKHP15, EKHM34 and EKHM82, and cannot be included in the same degree as this course.