

Uppsala University, Faculty of Education

THEORY AND THEORIZING IN HIGHER EDUCATION RESEARCH

7,5 ECTS credits; advanced and doctoral student level

Language: Swedish

Lecturer

Eva Forsberg, Professor in Education, Uppsala University, eva.forsberg@edu.uu.se

Lars Geschwind, Associate Professor in Educational Engineering, KTH, larsges@kth.se

Syllabus

The Syllabus was set 2017-06-15

Entrance qualifications

Doctoral student in education or educational engineering, respectively or equivalent are qualified.

Doctoral students in these areas of knowledge from Uppsala University, first and KTH, second have precedence.

Course language

Swedish and/or English, set in course notice

Course contents and learning outcomes

The aim of this course is to teach students how to theorize in research on higher education through the employment of both theoretical and practical knowledge. In the course the focus will be on various theories used in research on higher education and theory as a process. In addition the course intends to inform on different understandings of the concept of theory.

After accomplishing the course the students are expected to:

- have knowledge of some common theories in higher education research and have the ability to critically assess them
- understand the objectives and functions of theories and conceptualization in research on higher education
- be able to identify and exemplify theorizing in higher education research
- be able to theorize at an elementary level and to further develop their capacity to theorize on their own

Seminars and examination

Each class will include a lecture on the course literature and a discussion of it and/or workshops on students own theorizing. The students will read selected literature and at times prepare assignments for most of the class meeting. In addition, every student will write a final paper focusing on the interplay between existing concepts and theories in higher education research and the own learning process of theorizing. Attendance and active participation in discussions and workshops is mandatory. To some extent absence may be compensated with additional assignments according to teacher directions. The examination will be graded Pass or Fail and the grade will depend on carrying out the assignments for different meetings, participation in discussions and workshops as well as the quality of the final paper.

Literature

- Alvesson, M. & Kärreman, D. (2007) Constructing mystery. Empirical Matters in Theory Development, *Academy of Management Review*, Vol. 32:4, p. 1265-1281.
- Becker, H. (1998). *Tricks of the Trade: How to Think about Your Research While Doing It*. University of Chicago Press.
- Biesta, G., Allan, J. & Edwards, R. (2011). The Theory Question in Research Capacity Building in Education: Towards an Agenda for Research and Practice, *British Journal of Educational Studies*, 59:3, 225-239.
- Bertilson, M. (2016). Theorizing - for what. *The British Journal of Sociology*, 67(1): 30-35.
- Bertilson, T.M. (2004). The Elementary Forms of Pragmatism. On Different Types of Abduction. *European Journal of Social Theory* 7(3): 371–389.
- Carlgren, I. (2005). Praxisnära forskning. – varför, vad och hur. In Carlgren, I., Josefson, I. & Liberg, C. Eds. (2005). *Forskning av denna världen II – om teorins roll i praxisnära forskning*. Stockholm: Vetenskapsrådet. (s 7-15)
- Forsberg, E. & Geschwind, L. (2016). The academic home of higher education research: the case of doctoral theses in Sweden. In Huisman, J. & Tight, M. (Eds). *Theory and Method in Higher Education Research. Vol. 2*. Bingley: Emerald Groups Publishing Limited.
- Knorr Cetina, K. (2014). Intuitionist Theorising. In Swedberg, R. Eds. *Theorizing in Social Sciences: The Context of Discovery*. Stanford: Stanford University Press. (p. 29-61)
- Merton, R.K. (1945). What is Sociological Theory? *American Journal of Sociology* 50: 462-73
- Moser, D. & Ream, T.C. (2015). Scholarship Reconsidered: Past, Present, and Future. *About campus / march–april 2015 p. 20-24*. Wiley Online Library (wileyonlinelibrary.com).
- Paulsen, R. (2014). The Counterfactual Imagination. In Swedberg, R. Eds. *Theorizing in Social Sciences: The Context of Discovery*. Stanford: Stanford University Press. (p. 158-176).
- Swedberg, R. (2014). From Theory to Theorizing. In Swedberg, R. Eds. *Theorizing in Social Sciences: The Context of Discovery*. Stanford: Stanford University Press. (p. 1-28)
- Tröhler, D. (2014). Between universally claimed theory and common understanding: theoretical knowledge in education. (45-64 p.) The theory question in education and the education question in theory. In Biesta, G. Allan, J. & Edwards, R. Eds. (2014). *Making a Difference in Theory: The theory question in education and the education question in theory*. London: Routledge. (p. 1-9)
- Weick, K.E. (2014). The Work of Theorizing. In Swedberg, R. Eds. *Theorizing in Social Sciences: The Context of Discovery*. Stanford: Stanford University Press. (p. 177-195)
- Wilson Nightingale, A. (2001) “Wandering and Wondering: ‘Theoria’ in Greek Philosophy and Culture”, *Arion* 9,2, p. 23-58.

Three chapters from either of:

- Huisman, J. & Tight, M. Eds (2013). Theory and Method in Higher Education Research. *International Perspectives on Higher Education Research. Vol. 9*. Bingley: Emerald Groups Publishing Limited.
- Huisman, J. & Tight, M. Eds (2014). Theory and Method in Higher Education Research. *International Perspectives on Higher Education Research. Vol. 10*. Bingley: Emerald Groups Publishing Limited.
- Huisman, J. & Tight, M. Eds (2015). Theory and Method in Higher Education Research. *Theory and Method in Higher Education Research. Vol. 1*. Bingley: Emerald Groups Publishing Limited.
- Huisman, J. & Tight, M. Eds (2016). Theory and Method in Higher Education Research. *Theory and Method in Higher Education Research. Vol. 2*. Bingley: Emerald Groups Publishing Limited.

... or forthcoming volumes.

Free of choice:

Two dissertations within Higher Education Research: one monograph and one compilation thesis.