

# Kursplan för Being Human and Making Sense

- 7.5 högskolepoäng
- **Kurskod:** ???
- **Utbildningsnivå:** Avancerad nivå
- **Huvudområde(n) och successiv fördjupning:** ???
- **Betygskala:** Underkänd (U), godkänd (G), väl godkänd (VG).
- **Inrättad:** ???
- **Inrättad av:** Institutionsstyrelsen
- **Gäller från:** ???
- **Behörighet:** Students admitted to any of one or two year master programmes within the humanities and social sciences or with a B.A. in humanities or social sciences.

## Mål

Making sense would seem to be a properly human judgment regarding human action and thought. The objective of this course is to make sense out of making sense. In order to do that, we will pose a number of basic questions: What is the nature of the “sense” being made? What is nonsense? What is common sense? On what bases do we determine what “makes sense”? Is “making sense” essentially an epistemological notion, or is it also, or even primarily, a normative term? Does the fact that ordinary usage sidesteps the distinction tell us something about how we make sense of sense? Is the sense made something discovered by reason, or is it literally “made”, that is, determined by the linguistic and social practice of a given community? Does making sense necessarily involve being able to give reasons or explanations? Do we *learn* to make sense, and, if so, how? The course will attempt to untangle the ideas involved in the notion of “making sense” with respect to, but without relying on, theory-laden philosophical terms such as “subjectivity”, “rationality”, “intentionality”, and the like. We will read seminal texts regarding how we make sense that touch on moral, political and aesthetic questions from the perspective of philosophical anthropology, broadly construed, so as to better understand the fuller human issues underlying the more purely theoretical discourses concerning objectivity, relativism, etc.

Upon successful completion of the course, the student is expected to:

- Master basic philosophical concepts regarding the relationship between judging, thinking, learning and acting as ways of making sense;
- Know some history of the concept of “common sense” in rationalism and empiricism;
- Recognize and critically assess “common sense” views of common sense, Wittgensteinian critiques of the latter and its relation to nonsense, and relate these to “constructivist” arguments for “making sense”.

## **Innehåll**

By reading and discussing selected works on sense, common sense, and nonsense, students will gain a broader understanding of such key philosophical concepts as rationality, intentionality, action, and normativity.

## **Undervisning**

Participating students will meet in class with the instructor to discuss the readings. Class attendance is obligatory. The language of instruction is English.

## **Examination**

Participants will be required to submit two critical/reaction papers. The papers should be about one page in length and may deal with any questions the readings raise, such as queries or criticisms regarding the authors' arguments or presuppositions; connections to other readings and/or the historical context; conflicting positions among the authors studied; implications of the readings for important issues in philosophy, anthropology, political theory, aesthetics, etc.

Students at the MA level are also to submit an 8-page final paper that uses the literature to discuss the relationship between thinking, judging and acting in terms of common sense and nonsense. The paper should primarily be exegetical and must range over a number of the arguments developed by the thinkers whose works we read during the course. PhD students will write a 12-page final paper that is both exegetical and analytical.

Participants will be assessed for their active participation in class, their reflection papers, and for the quality of their final paper.

## **Kontakt**

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