

## Programme Description

### Work Integrated Political Studies

#### SAWIP-H24

<b>Decision taken by</b>	Head of Department; Fredrik Sjögren
<b>Document contact</b>	Laurence Piper, Wayne Stephen Coetzee Head of Programme
<b>Version</b>	2
<b>Adopted</b>	2024-02-28
	<i>Programme description is a supplement to the programme syllabus which is the legally binding document.</i>

## Ground data

Department	School of Business, Economics and IT
Section	Division of Urban Planning and Development
Name of Programme, Swedish	Arbetsintegrerade politiska studier, masterprogram
Name of Programme, English	Work Integrated Political Studies
HE credits (number of credits)	120
Level (1st Cycle, 2nd Cycle)	2nd Cycle
Entry requirements, Swedish	Kandidatexamen om 180 hp inom det samhällsvetenskapliga fältet, eller motsvarande. Engelska 6 eller motsvarande.
Entry requirements, English	Bachelor degree of 180 HE credits within the field of Social Science, or equivalent. Verified knowledge of English corresponding to the course English 6 in the Swedish Upper Secondary School or equivalent.
Main field of study, Swedish	Arbetsintegrerat lärande
Main field of study, English	Work Integrated Learning
Degree, Swedish	Filosofie masterexamen med huvudområde arbetsintegrerat lärande med inriktning mot politiska studier
Degree, English	Degree of Master of Arts (120 credits) with a major in Work Integrated Learning with a specialization in Political Studies
Rate of study (full-time, part-time)	Full-time
Type of instruction (on campus, distance teaching)	On campus
Language of instruction (Sw, Eng)	Eng

## General programme information

Policies and political decisions form and influence the social, economic, and environmental world we live in. This programme develops new perspectives of how knowledge production, combined with learning and experiences, can influence societal change through applied work integrated political studies.

The programme is closely integrated into University West's complete academic environment and profile of Work Integrated Learning. During your studies you conduct a research internship in direct collaboration with surrounding society, focusing on finding real sustainable solutions to societal challenges.

Apart from providing you with relevant knowledge and skills, your studies will give you work experience and networks that enhance your employability. Upon graduation, you receive a master's degree in Arts with a major in Work Integrated Learning, specialised in Political Studies, also open up opportunities for doctoral studies in many fields of social science, including the PhD programme in Work Integrated Learning at University West.

## Programme contents, structure, and progression

University West is the leading university for Work Integrated Learning (WIL). This is a unique two-year international master's programme (120 credits) that leads to an MA degree in Work Integrated Learning with a specialization in political studies. The work integrated applied research approach provides you with training in how to have a direct impact on societal change through your work.

The programme is particularly useful for political-economic oriented professions in public administration, NGO's and private corporations, in Sweden as well as internationally. The studies prepare you for professional work across cultural and national borders to develop, implement and lead projects handling politically and economically oriented issues for societal change.

The programme is divided into two progressively challenging phases:

In the 1<sup>st</sup> year you study a set of compulsory courses focusing on WIL in theory and practice, in total 30 credits. These courses are combined with a selection of elective courses focusing on applied political studies and/or societal change. You can choose elective course according to your interest, building up your own educational profile.

In the 2<sup>nd</sup> year you will use the knowledge from your theoretical studies, applied through a research internship placement with a host organization in Sweden or abroad, with continuous supervision by the programme staff and internship host. You can, depending on your interest, work with NGO's, public or private institutions, organisations or companies, performing research tasks dealing with real-life challenges. To further focus your education and degree towards your interest, the research internship also forms the foundation of your master's thesis.

### Course overview 1<sup>st</sup> year

You select elective and/or optional courses (total 30 credits) related to your interest. The following courses are offered by the programme, but you can also select other courses of your interest.

- Ecophilosophy, 15 credits
- International Political Economy, 15 credits
- Glocal Challenges and Applied Approaches to Sustainable Development 15 credits
- Political Perspectives of Gender and Sexuality, 15 credits
- Political Communication, 15 credits
- Political Violence, 15 credits
- Work-integrated Research Orientation 10 credits
- Work-integrated Research Practice I 5 credits

Compulsory courses (30 credits):

- Theory of Science & Applied Research Methods, Second Cycle , 15 credits
- WIL in Theory and Practice, Second Cycle, 15 credits

### Course overview 2<sup>nd</sup> year

- WIL: Reflection and Portfolio I, Second Cycle, 7,5 credits
- WIL: Reflection and Portfolio II, Second Cycle 7,5 credits
- Research Internship, master 15 credits
- Degree Thesis in Work Integrated Learning with a Specialization in Political Studies, Master 30 credits

## The research basis for the programme

The main program staff are all active researchers within the WIL-field and involved in WIL-projects, both in direct relation to the programme where research internships are conducted by the students, and research projects linked to other instances. Some of the senior staff members are also closely attached to the university's development of WIL as an educational and research profile, as well as teachers and supervisors in the Ph.D. WIL study programme.

The programme has a distinct applied research focus and profile that includes a semester-long compulsory research internship at a host that in cooperation with the university develops research tasks relevant for societal development. Research on and related to the co-creation of knowledge is central to the programme and contribute in forming the aims, objectives and research theme(s) in the thesis in work-integrated learning.

## The labour market, collaboration, and work-integrated learning<sup>1</sup>

This programme responds to an outspoken need by societal actors to find graduates with inter-disciplinary knowledge, experience and understanding, relevant to take on complex real societal challenges in an increasingly diversified world. Hence, the programme integrates

<sup>1</sup> Work-integrated learning is a pedagogical practice in which students' learning takes place through the integration of theoretical and practical knowledge and experience, derived from an educational context within the framework of both higher education as a work environment and civil society.

WIL, as a form, educational and research approach, as part of developing WIL as a unique field of study within its own right.

The entire programme is built upon a WIL approach and provides a degree in WIL. This becomes perhaps most prominent in the 2<sup>nd</sup> year when the student conducts a research internship, integrated with reflective course, and concluded in a master's thesis. The research internship placements are secured through a close formal collaboration with a number of local, national and international hosts, enabling the students to choose a placement and field of research of their interest.

Through the programme, blending theoretical and practical knowledge, with understanding and reflective abilities, graduates foresee various work opportunities and career paths, as planners, project leaders, administrators and analysts in municipalities, regional authorities, state- and international organisations, NGOs, as well as banks and private companies.

## **Sustainable development**

Perspectives on, and concepts of, sustainability is an integrated part of the programme explicitly discussed and elaborated upon. In some courses with specific themes connected to areas within social and economic sustainability from local to international levels. Being an international programme with a culturally diverse student and staff group provides further understanding, reflection, and thereby strength, for the students developing into relevant actors for sustainable social change.

It is not necessarily the exact terminology from the traditional sustainability discourse that is used in every course syllabus, but sustainability is very much at the focal point in courses on for example gender and sexuality, race and freedom, European politics, international political economy among others. Since the idea of sustainability is the integration of the ecological, economic, and social it is a bit problematic to divide, but themes from all areas are present in the programme. Furthermore, as mentioned, a central ambition of the WIL approach is to develop students into actors for sustainable social change (which by necessity is connected to ecological and economic sustainability).

## **Internationalisation**

This is a truly international, English taught programme, with a blend of international and Swedish students and staff, bringing a wealth of different experiences from around the world, creating a rich international learning environment and student life. A collaboration between University West in Sweden and University of the Western Cape in South Africa.

The programme is jointly delivered in close collaboration with the University of the Western Cape (UWC) in Cape Town, South Africa, and the Central University of Technology in Bloemfontein. This provides opportunities to take course modules and/or work on research internship projects with hosts in Sweden, South Africa as well as other locations around the world.

## Other information

### INTERVIEW WITH MADELEINE HOFFMAN – A MASTER STUDENT FROM THE UNITED STATES

“I applied to University West because I enjoyed studying here four years ago, during an exchange programme. I loved how I could take fewer courses at the same time which gave me the chance to dig deeper into the topics that were being discussed”.

“This programme is unique in the way that it assists in connecting students with internships during their second year. I picked this programme because I knew it would prepare me for a job after I graduated”.

“My favourite part is the discussions with my classmates. They come from all over the world which helps me open up my perspective even more on varying issues. They’ve helped me with my communication and listening skills which are valuable tools to take with me outside of university”.

“The studies have provided me with professional connections that I can rely on. Also, most importantly, the university has given me the opportunity to meet people from around the globe”.