



## COURSE UNIT (MODULE) DESCRIPTION

Course unit (module) title	Code
<b>Scandinavian Political crises in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century</b> XXI amžiaus politinės krizės Skandinavijoje	

Academic staff	Core academic unit(s)
<b>Coordinating:</b> Kristian Nikolaj Rasmussen	Faculty of Philology Centre for Scandinavian Studies

Study cycle	Type of the course unit
BA	Optional

Mode of delivery	Semester or period when it is delivered	Language of instruction
Face-to-face	Autumn semester	English

Requisites	
<b>Prerequisites:</b>	<b>Co-requisites (if relevant):</b> None

Number of ECTS credits allocated	Student's workload (total)	Contact hours	Individual work
5	130	32	98

Purpose of the course unit		
<p>This course provides an exploration of major Scandinavian political crises of the 21st century—from the 2005 Mohammed cartoons and Denmark's COVID-era mink cull to Sweden's struggles with gang violence, along with several other cases listed below.</p> <p>Using a set of influential theoretical perspectives—Lakoff's framing theory, Ulrich Beck's Risk Society, Putnam's Social Capital, and Boin &amp; Paul 'T Hart's Crisis Approach—the course investigates how the Nordic governments frame crises, how we can understand our modern society as a risk society, what role social capital plays when governments response in times of crisis, and how crises can be systematically understood and conceptualized.</p>		
Learning outcomes of the course unit (module)	- Teaching and learning methods	- Assessment methods
Having completed the course, students will be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Account for the most important political crises in Scandinavia in the 21st century</li> <li>- Understand and apply different theoretical frameworks in understanding crises and defend their theoretical choice</li> <li>- Analyze cases of crises using various relevant theoretical frameworks</li> <li>- Communicate their findings in a coherent and interesting way. We will thus work with</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The course employs a combination of close readings of relevant theories and cases. They will be the basis of our analyses and discussions.</li> <li>- Students will actively participate in seminars, present and facilitate discussions</li> <li>- Students will choose which framework(s) to use in analyzing crises in Scandinavia</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 25% active participation</li> <li>- 25% presentations</li> <li>- 50% written exam</li> </ul>

presentation techniques as a part of the course		
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Content	Contact hours							Individual work: time and assignments	
	Lectures	Tutorials	Seminars	Workshops	Laboratory work	Internship	Contact hours, total	Individual work	Tasks for individual work
1. Introduction to the course and the study plan. What do the students know about Scandinavian politics, values and societal structures?			2				2	4	Be ready to share your motives for selecting the course, and your expectations for it.
2. Denmark, Greenland and Trump's threats The historical background of Denmark's relationship with Greenland. We will use the Crisis Approach in our analysis. Discussion: what constitutes a crisis?			2				2	6	Read Arjen Boin Paul T Hart – The Crisis Approach (2006)  Find background information on Denmark's relationship with Greenland
3. Case study: The Sami people and the Fosen conflict about windmills in Sami land. An analysis using Ulrich Beck's The Risk Society Discussion of the dilemma between solving the climate crisis and protecting indigenous rights			2				2	6	Read Ulrich Beck – The Risk Society (1992)  Find background information on the Fosen conflict
4. Sum up of the Risk Society and the Crisis Approach and its application to indigenous communities			2				2	8	Student presentation
5. Jyllands-Posten's Muhammad cartoons Controversy			2				2	6	Find background information on the

How did the Danish government react to the Muhammad drawings? Analysis using the Crisis Approach. Discussion of the government's approach and the limits to freedom of speech								Muhammad Cartoons
6. Guest lecturer: Mads Julius Elf will give a lecture on the Mohammed cartoons		2				2	6	Think of questions you want to ask the speaker
7. The 2015 refugee crisis  Analysis and discussion using framing theory. How did Scandinavian governments frame their messaging? Why were there different responses across countries and what are the ramifications today?		2				2	6	Find background information on the 2015 refugee crisis  Read George Lakoff – The Framing of Immigration (2006)
8. The Danish “Ghetto Law” of 2018  The Danish “ghetto law” of 2018 aims at breaking up segregated neighborhoods and that is by many seen as racist and illegal.  Analysis using the theory of your choice		2				2	6	Find background information on the Danish “Ghetto Law” of 2018
9. Swedish government's challenges with gang crime  Analysis of the Swedish government's response to the increase in gang violence using relevant theory Robert Putnam's theory of Social Capital		2				2	6	Find background information on the Swedish government's challenges combating gang crime  Read Robert Putnam – Theory of Social Capital (1994)
10. Students choose their own case and present it		2				2	6	Students' presentation
11. Covid: The Danish Mink disaster  We will analyze and discuss the Danish government's response to the Mink disaster during the Covid pandemic through the lens of Ulrich Beck's Risk theory and animal welfare considerations		2				2	6	Find background information on Covid: The Danish Mink disaster
12. The Case of Anders Behring Breivik  Analysis of the Norwegian response of more democracy and openness after the Breivik terror attack		2				2	6	Find background information on the Case of Anders Behring Breivik

13. Scandal in the Norwegian Royal Family  How did the Norwegian Royal family respond to recent scandals involving the Epstein files and a rape case and what was the public response?			2				2	6	Find background information on the scandal in the Norwegian Royal Family
14. The financial crisis in Scandinavia and Iceland  We will analyse and discuss how the governments of Scandinavia and Iceland reacted to the financial crisis of 2008			2				2	6	Find background information on the financial crisis in Scandinavia and Iceland
15. Students choose their own case and present it			2				2	8	Present your own case
16. Conclusion			2				2	6	
<b>Total</b>			<b>32</b>				<b>32</b>	<b>98</b>	

Assessment strategy	Weight %	Deadline	Assessment criteria
Active participation and presentation	25%		Active participation will be assessed based on the following criteria: 1. quality of home preparation (completeness of assigned readings, ability to relate readings to class discussions) 2. quality of contributions to discussions (frequency and relevance of contributions during seminar discussions).
Presentations	25%		The oral presentation will be assessed based on the following criteria: 1. Content and understanding (clarity and understanding of the topic; relevance and accuracy of information); 2. Structure and organization (clear structure with an introduction, main points, and conclusion). 3. Language use (accuracy and appropriateness of language; range of vocabulary; fluency and clarity of expression). 4. Delivery and presentation skills (clarity of speech; appropriate pronunciation; engagement with the audience).
Written exam	50%		The written exam will be an analysis of a given case. The student must use one of the theories that we have worked with. In their answer they must also make references to our previous findings in class. The written exam will take 2 hours and will be held without internet or use of computer.
Attendance is compulsory to pass the course. Only students who attended at least 75% of classes are admitted to take the exam.			

Author (-s)	Publishing year	Title	Issue of a periodical or volume of a publication	Publishing house or web link
<b>Required reading</b>				
Arjen Boin and Paul 'T Hart	2006	The Crisis Approach	Handbook of Disaster Research	
George Lakoff	2006	The Framing of Immigration		UC Berkely – Rockridge Institute

Ulrich Beck	1992	Risk Society Towards a New Modernity		University of Munich, Germany
Robert D. Putnam	1994	Social Capital and Public Affairs	Bulletin of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, Vol. 47, No. 8 (May, 1994), pp. 5-19 (15 pages)	

Last updated: 17-04-2026