The Swedish Model: The Making of a Welfare State in a Comparative and Historical Perspective

Content of the course
This course discusses what is known as "the Swedish Model" - a model that has generated a prosperous welfare state for several decades. Generally this system has been defined by the organization of the labor market parties and the structure of the welfare system. Negotiations in the labor market are carried out by trade unions and employers with societal concerns in an effort to solve conflicts without state intervention. The Swedish model is also known for the principle of equal distribution of incomes and a solid progressive tax-based transference system with a social security system, including such components as public health care, child support, social support, and old age pension – for all citizens regardless of income.

The course explores the historical context and political circumstances that produced this model. How was this possible? It takes a critical stance by examining the development of a welfare state from a gender, class and ethnicity perspective and places this welfare state in a comparative perspective, in both time and space. The course also presents the discursive and concrete changes of the model over time, which includes a discussion of what has been described as the welfare state retrenchment.

Learning outcomes
At the end of the course the students will be able to:
- identify and account for the characteristics of the Swedish model in an international and Nordic perspective;
- describe the emergence and the transformation of the Swedish model in a historical perspective; and
- describe and problematize the gender- and ethnicity dimensions of the Swedish model.

Forms of examination
- Three individual written assignments, 2 pages each (Times New Roman, 12 pt, line spacing 1,5). See the lecture plan for further information. (Each represents 10% of the final grade).
- A final paper of 5 pages (Times New Roman, 12 pt, line spacing 1,5). (60% of the final grade).
- An oral presentation and active participation in the seminars. (10% of the final grade).
The following grades will be used: A, B, C, D, E, Fx, F.

Non-approved parts of the course have to be completed within three semesters of the student registering for the course.

**Assignments**

Answer the questions by discussing the main features of the development, and provide concrete examples. Make active use of the relevant literature. Refer to the literature with at least the author’s name and the page number.

Note, that it is not allowed to copy text from articles/books, the internet, or other students. If you refer to others’ texts, either by quoting or in your own words, make sure you make a reference. Make it clear in the text when it is others’ thinking and when it is your own!

Your **seminar assignments** should not exceed 2 pages, font size 12 points, 1.5 line spacing. The assignments for the seminars should be uploaded on the student platform Mondo ([https://mondo.su.se](https://mondo.su.se)), “Resources”/assignment seminars” (Name your file with your second name (family name) _seminar1, e.g. jonsson_seminar1.doc. Make sure you have inserted page numbers and header with your name and date).

Your **final paper** should not exceed 5 pages (Times New Roman, 12 pt, line spacing 1,5). The final assignments for the seminars should be uploaded on the student platform Mondo ([https://mondo.su.se](https://mondo.su.se)), “Assignment”/”final paper” (Name your file with your second name (family name) _groupno, e.g. jonsson_group2.doc. Make sure you have inserted page numbers and header with your name and date).
Schedule

Week 24–28

Session 1. 9 June, 10–12 am. Introduction. Room B413.

Pernilla Jonsson

Course introduction.

This lecture introduces the concept ‘the Swedish Model’ and provides a brief overview of Sweden’s economic history – from agricultural to industrial society.


Session 2. 12th of June, 2-4 pm, Labour market regimes. Room B413.

Sandra Hellstrand.

Lecture on the historical development of the Swedish labour market regime in a comparative Nordic perspective.


Session 3. 17th of June, seminar, Class mobilization and class coalitions in the Nordic Model.

Group 1. 10-12 am. Room D255. Camilla Elmhorn.

Group 2. 2-4 pm. Room D255. Sandra Hellstrand.


Seminar assignment for session 3.

1. Write an individual essay (2 pages maximum, 1.5 line spacing, and font size 12), based on the relevant literature, answering the following questions:

   a) What effect did the Saltsjöbaden Agreement have on the structure of the Swedish labor market regime? Were there comparative pivotal agreements in the other Nordic countries? What were the main differences and similarities between the Nordic countries in this regard?

   b) What was the role of the employers in the creation of centralized institutions of industrial relations?

The assignment should be uploaded on the student platform Mondo (https://mondo.su.se), “Resources”/assignment seminars” no later than 8 am on 17th June.
2. Prepare to discuss the following question in the seminar (this does not need to be included in the essay):

If you are Swedish: How did the distribution of influence and power vary between the different levels (company, the local/regional, meso and peak levels) of the labor market organizations during the 20th century?

If you are not Swedish: What are the main differences and similarities between the development of the Swedish labor market regime and the labor market regime in your own country?

Session 4. 19 June, 2-4 pm. Room B419. Public welfare.
Pernilla Jonsson
Lecture on the wider definition of the Swedish model – the welfare system’s components and how it has evolved since the 1930s and provides an introduction to Gösta Esping-Andersen’s theory of the three welfare regimes.


Session 5. 24 June. Seminar: The welfare state in a comparative perspective.
Group 1. 10-12 am, Room D255. Camilla Elmhorn.
Group 2. 2-4 pm, Room D255. Sandra Hellstrand.


Seminar assignment for session 5.
1. Write an individual essay (2 pages maximum, 1.5 line spacing, and font size 12), based on the relevant literature, answering the following questions:

- Describe and analyze the characteristics of the Swedish social insurance system and how they changed during the period 1930-1970.
- Discuss the prerequisites for the reforms and critical choices/conflicts along the road.

The assignment should be uploaded on the student platform Mondo (https://mondo.su.se), “Resources”/assignment seminars” no later than 8 am on 24th June.

Session 6. 26 June, 10-12 am. The basis of entitlement. Pernilla Jonsson
Lecture on class, gender and the ethnic dimension of the welfare state, where four countries are singled out for comparison. The lecture also includes short excursions in the historical aspects of the development of the Swedish welfare state according to gender.


**Session 7. 30 June. Seminar. Gender, and ethnicity in a comparative perspective.**

*Group 1. 10-12 am, Room D255. Camilla Elmhorn.*

*Group 2. 2-4 pm, Room D255. Sandra Hellstrand.*


**Seminar assignment for session 7.**

1. Write an individual essay (2 pages maximum, 1.5 line spacing, and font size 12), based on the relevant literature, answering the following questions:

   - What is the basis of entitlement?
   - How does the different types of welfare models (means tested, universal, income related) affect who is included and to what extent? What is the relationship with gender division of labor and access to labor market?

2. Prepare to discuss the following question at the seminar (this does not need to be included in the essay):

   - If you are Swedish: Reflect on the effects of the special position the class-based interests have received in the corporative Swedish Model, basis of entitlement, and inclusion in the welfare state?

   - If you are not Swedish: What are the main differences and similarities between the welfare state model and basis of entitlement?

**Session 8. 2 July, 10-12 am. Challenges and retrenchments. Room B413.**

**Pernilla Jonsson**


Information on the requirements for the final paper is provided. The deadline for the final paper is Friday 9 July, 8 pm. The papers are to be uploaded on the student platform Mondo (https://mondo.su.se) “Assignment”/”final paper”.
Session 9. 7 July. Seminar: Critical reflections, past and present.
Group 1. 10-12 am, Room F347. Pernilla Jonsson.

Group 2. 2-4 pm, Room F342. Sandra Hellstrand.


The seminar invites the students to critically reflect on the development of the Swedish model, retrenchment, and future challenges.

Prepare to discuss:

- What were the challenges of the welfare state from the 1980s and onwards?
- How were they met? Retrenchments? Differences between groups in society?
- Future challenges?

Compare the development in Sweden with your own country/other countries, in reality, and in the discourse.

Session 10. 11 July. Final seminar.

Group 1. 10-12 am, Room F347. Pernilla Jonsson.

Group 2. 2-4 pm, Room F347. Sandra Hellstrand.

Choose an aspect in your final paper that you want to elaborate on – something you find surprising, especially important, interesting or provoking. Prepare a 4-minute talk.
**Grading Criteria:**

**A.** The student demonstrates an excellent ability to analytically describe the characteristics of the Swedish model in an international and Nordic perspective and to make a well structured and analytical account for the formation and transformation of the Swedish model in an historical perspective. She/he also shows the ability to critically discuss and problematize the gender and ethnicity aspects of the Swedish model.

**B.** The student demonstrates a very good ability to analytically describe the characteristics of the Swedish model in an international and Nordic perspective and to account for the formation and transformation of the Swedish model in an historical perspective. She/he also shows the ability to critically discuss and problematize the gender and ethnicity aspects of the Swedish model.

**C.** The student demonstrates a good ability to describe the characteristics of the Swedish model in an international and Nordic perspective and to account for the formation and transformation of the Swedish model in an historical perspective. She/he also shows an ability to discuss and problematize the gender and ethnicity aspects of the Swedish model.

**D.** The student demonstrates a satisfactory ability to describe the characteristics of the Swedish model in an international and Nordic perspective and to account for the formation and transformation of the Swedish model in an historical perspective. She/he also shows some ability to discuss and problematize the gender and ethnicity aspects of the Swedish model.

**E.** In spite of certain shortcomings/misunderstandings the student demonstrates a sufficient ability to describe the characteristics of the Swedish model in an international and Nordic perspective and to account for the formation and transformation of the Swedish model in an historical perspective. She/he shows some ability to discuss and problematize the gender and ethnicity aspects of the Swedish model.

**Fx.** The student demonstrates a weak ability to describe the characteristics of the Swedish model in an international and Nordic perspective and to account for the formation and transformation of the Swedish model in an historical perspective. She/he shows an insufficient ability to discuss and problematize the gender and ethnicity aspects of the Swedish model. As a whole, the student’s performance is insufficient and has to be revised/complemented for the student to pass the course.

**F.** The student is unable to demonstrate the characteristics of the Swedish model in an international and Nordic perspective and shows a poor ability to account for the formation and transformation of the Swedish model in an historical perspective. She/he does not show a sufficient ability to discuss and problematize the gender and ethnicity aspects of the Swedish model. The final paper is distinctly below the required level of performance.
**Required reading**

Books:


Articles (available through the student platform Mondo, https://mondo.su.se):