POSTGRADUATE STUDIES IN FUTURES STUDIES

Futures Studies is a new emerging field of research. As the future does not exist yet, the field studies the future projections of and discontinuities in past trends and current views of the long-term future. Futures Studies is interested in the probable futures, possible futures and preferred futures. As a societal action, futures studies aim to serve private and public decision-makers by outlining alternative long-term strategies in a changing operational environment. As an academic field of research, Futures Studies generates knowledge of the ways and processes of how individuals and organisations deal with the uncertain future. Typical research questions in the field are focused to the epistemology of knowledge about the future, the methodological development of futures studies tools and analyses of alternative futures of a clear topic or a more general theme. Futures Studies is an interdisciplinary field, where rather wide topics are analysed and the results and approaches of more traditional disciplines meet.

In the Postgraduate studies, the doctoral candidates will deepen their understanding and skills in Futures Studies in order to be able to act as independent researchers in the field of Futures Studies. At Turku School of Economics, a wide range of research topics have been carried out in the field of Futures Studies. You can specialise in, for example, business foresight, the future of energy and environmental issues, education, large scale socio-economic transitions, future consciousness and futures studies methodology.

General postgraduate studies are carried out by following the instructions in the Study Guide of TSE.

In the Elective postgraduate studies, the aim is to deepen understanding of the particular contents and/or methods of one’s research topic. The student will present a list of planned courses and write down the reasoning of the selection to the Professor. The course list will be negotiated and refined (if necessary) with the Professor, who finally approves the list.

The following Postgraduate courses are organised annually:
- Futures Studies as a Tool for Long-term Strategic Planning
- Research Seminar
- Summer School & Summer Conference

The following Postgraduate courses are organised once in two years:
- Philosophical, Methodological and Pragmatic Approaches to Scientific Futures Research
- National Foresight in Finland and Other Countries

The following postgraduate courses can be studied individually regardless of year (please negotiate with the teacher before studying):
- Futures Studies Literature
- Directions in Futures Studies Methodology
NB: All courses need to be finalised before submitting the Doctoral Thesis to the pre-examination process.

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**COURSE DESCRIPTIONS**

**FUTS9004 FUTUJ1 Philosophical, Methodological and Pragmatic Approaches to Scientific Futures Research, 3 cr**

**Persons in charge**
Sari Söderlund, Sirkka Heinonen and Petri Tapio

**Objectives**
The aim is to explore a variety of sciences in the context of futures research and reinforce futures studies approaches and methodologies as part of scientific research. Doctoral candidates are provided with tools of understanding the nature of futures research as a scientific discipline, its concepts and methods.

**Content**
The course provides doctoral candidates with readiness in understanding the philosophical foundations of futures research, especially ontology and epistemology. Understanding futures knowledge and rules that validate scientific knowledge generation in the field is essential. Discussions about multiple ways of including futures research as a part of the dissertation are included in the course.
Languages of instruction
English or Finnish

Further information on teaching methods
The course consists of a pre-assignment and lectures (3*8h). The pre-assignment is based on a given literature combined with individual learning and elaboration of a presentation. Candidates’ presentations are followed by discussions and issue-specific lectures.

Planned time for teaching
Period II

Modes of study
Individual learning and presentation, lectures, literature, a Quality Report

Further information on modes of study
Throughout the course students reflect their own scientific field and earlier studies in the context of futures research.

Evaluation
Pass/fail

Study materials
1. A selection of books and articles, e.g. by Wendell Bell and Alan Musgrave
2. Special Issue: The Delphi Technique. Technological Forecasting and Social Change. 78(9): 1487-1720.
4. A more specific list of books, articles and discussions is delivered before lectures.

Recommended year of study
First year, autumn.

Further information
The course is offered as a part of post-graduate courses by the Finland Futures Academy (FFA) at the Finland Futures Research Centre (FFRC) and University of Turku UTUGS transferable skills education programme.

FUTS9005 FUTUJ2 Futures Studies as a Tool for Long-term Strategic Planning, 4 cr

Person(s) in charge
Petri Tapio

Objectives
The doctoral candidates will understand the role of futures studies as applied research that helps business, public and non-governmental organisations to shape their long-term strategies.

Content
The doctoral candidates will learn various ways long-term strategies can be outlined in organisations. They will distinguish between the needs of various organisations – public, private and non-governmental ones. The optional roles between the futurist, stakeholders and decision-makers will be addressed as well as various methods suitable to specific circumstances.

Languages of instruction
English or Finnish

Planned time for teaching
Period II

Modes of study
Lectures 4*4h, Literature, Written essay.

Study materials

**Recommended year of study**
Second year, autumn.

**FUTS9006 FUTUJ3 Directions in Futures Studies Methodology, 6 cr**

**Persons in charge**
University Lecturer

**Objectives**
The doctoral candidates will be able to deeply understand and efficiently apply the futures research method that s/he uses in the Doctoral thesis.

**Content**
The doctoral candidates will learn the history of the chosen method, various fields of applications and other methods that are close to the chosen one. They will be familiar with both empirical and methodological applications and be able to ponder openly the criticism posed towards the method.

**Languages of instruction**
English and Finnish

**Modes of study**
Lectures 2*4h about the choice of method. Negotiation with the teacher about the method and its neighbour methods. Making searches to the research literature, both in futures studies journals as well as other journals. Writing an essay.

**Planned time for teaching**
Period III

**Study materials**
1. A list of six futures studies articles published in the journals of Technological Forecasting & Social Change, Futures, and Long Range Planning, given to all students.
2. At minimum ten publications about the student’s own method and five publications of alternative methods. The exact list will be tailor-made for each student.
3. A relevant Finnish Doctorate thesis performed by using a futures studies approach, either with the chosen method or its neighbour method.

**Further information**
Recommended to be studied after the course Futures Studies Literature

**Recommended year of study**
Second year, spring.

**FUTS9010 FUTUJ4 Research Seminar, 3 cr**

**Persons in charge**
Petri Tapio and Sirkka Heinonen

**Objectives**
The doctoral candidates will learn to present concisely their research in an international environment, give and take constructive criticism into account, and defend the research logically and systematically.
Content
The doctoral candidates will present the thesis in three phases: 1) Outlining the idea and objectives of the study, preparing and performing an illustrative oral and written research plan, 2) showing a detailed method choice description and 3) presenting the results.

Modes of study
Lectures of general requirements of Doctorate theses in Futures Studies (4 h). Oral and written presentation of the Doctoral Thesis three times during the process. Commenting other candidate’s works as an opponent and as an active participant of the audience.

Study materials
Material delivered during the course.

Recommended years of study
First year autumn, second year autumn, fourth year autumn.

FUTS9007 FUTUJ5 Futures Studies Literature, 6-16 cr
Persons in charge
University Lecturer

Objectives
The student will be able to perform effective information searches in futures studies, select relevant information from less relevant as well as combine and compare themes from various publications.

Content
As futures studies is a new emerging discipline, relevant information for a study can be found in many scientific fields. The student will plan and test suitable key words in Boolean searches of the Scirus search engine and define criteria for selecting at least ten relevant research publications for the Doctorate thesis relating to the content, theory and methodology (the amount of publications depends on the amount of credits). Both directly useful to forward the thesis and more generally useful futures studies literature will be searched. The student will combine and compare themes in the found literature.

Languages of instruction
English or Finnish

Modes of study
Individual work, negotiating with the teacher. Report of the searches. Written criteria for selecting the relevant literature. Literature review. Essay combining themes from all found publications.

Further information on modes of study
Preferably carried out simultaneously with the course of Research Paper in Futures Studies as Process Writing.

Study materials
1. A form given by the teacher to be filled with combined search strings.
6. Additional 10-40 publications relevant for the student’s thesis, depending on the number of credits.

FUTS9008 FUTUJ6 Summer School & Summer Conference, 6 cr
Persons in charge
Sari Söderlund

Objectives
The aim of the course is to familiarise doctoral candidates with recent academic futures research on a specific topic or research question such as foresight management, scanning for the future, scenario building, tools and strategies for sustainable futures.

**Content**

Doctoral candidates learn about a specific research subject (e.g., food, environment, safety) combined with a selected futures studies method or approach (e.g. utopias, causal layered analyses, invariances).

**Languages of instruction**

English and Finnish

**Further information on teaching methods**

Students take part in the international conference by the Finland Futures Research Centre (FFRC) and the Finland Futures Academy (FFA) (3*8h+2*8h). They learn about the main subject and the role of scientific conferences as a part of researcher’s work: information delivery and further sophistication of new knowledge. In the context of the conference (before or after) there is a summer school whereby a specific futures research method or approach is combined with the conference subject.

**Planned time for teaching**

June.

**Modes of study**

Lectures, Essay

**Further information on modes of study**

During the Summer Conference and School students listen to presentations of futures research experts coming from different parts of the world

**Study materials**

1. Conference papers.
2. A list of recommended literature, incl. books, research reports and articles.

**Further information**

The course is organised during the annual international Conference and Summer School offered by the Finland Futures Research Centre (FFRC) and the Finland Futures Academy (FFA).

**Recommended year of study**

Second year, summer.

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The course is organised during the annual international Conference and Summer School offered by the Finland Futures Research Centre (FFRC) and the Finland Futures Academy (FFA).

**Persons in charge**

Sari Söderlund

**Objectives**

After the course, doctoral candidates are familiar with rationality, methods, processes and organisations (or networks) of national foresight and they are able to draw a wider picture of national foresight activities in Finland and in other countries.

**Content**

Doctoral candidates learn about a selected national foresight case study and they contribute as actors of a concrete foresight process. Case-specific understanding is enriched by learning about national foresight activities in general, in Finland and in other countries.

**Languages of instruction**

English or Finnish

**Further information on teaching methods**

Lectures and workshops (2*8h) are planned and fitted into a selected national foresight case study. There is individual learning with recommended list of literature and a presentation given by the students.

**Planned time for teaching**

Period III.

**Modes of study**
Individual learning and presentation, lectures, literature, essay. There are case-specific, virtual and real, learning and participation modes such as expert interaction, oral or written comments, blogs, etc.

**Further information on modes of study**
A selected case study includes understanding case-specific research targets, themes, issues, discussions, questions etc. Doctoral candidates get concrete experience of participating in a national foresight process and promoting its targets.

**Evaluation criteria**
Active participation with a presentation is required

**Study materials**
5. Additionally, there is a list of recommended literature including books, research reports and articles.

**Further information**
The course is offered as a part of post-graduate courses by the Finland Futures Academy (FFA) at the Finland Futures Research Centre (FFRC). Not offered in 2013-14.

**Recommended year of study**
First year, spring.

**FUTS9011 and FUTU9002 FUTUJ8 Licenciate Thesis, 90 cr**

**Persons in charge**
Petri Tapio, Sirkka Heinonen

**Objectives**
The Licenciate thesis should demonstrate the candidate’s ability to conduct scientific research in the field of Futures Studies.

**Content**
As an alternative to the Doctoral Thesis, the candidate will carry out a research process and write a Licenciate Thesis, which is more demanding than the Master’s Thesis but less demanding than the Doctoral Thesis. It includes independent research work with a research plan and intermediary reports. The manuscript of the thesis will be given to the professor for comments. If the professor approves the manuscript, it will be submitted to examination.

**Languages of instruction**
English or Finnish

**Modes of study**
Thesis / dissertation. The thesis can be carried out in the form of monograph dissertation or compilation of research papers.

**Study materials**
See the instructions for Licenciate Thesis at the Turku School of Economics.

**Further information**
Before examination, the thesis will be submitted to Turnitin originality check in order to rule out plagiatory work. Note also, that the candidate has to accomplish all the needed postgraduate courses before submitting the thesis manuscript to the examination process. Students performing the Licenciate Thesis will accomplish the Licenciate Degree, not the Doctoral Degree.
Persons in charge
Petri Tapio, Sirkka Heinonen

Objectives
The Doctoral thesis must show profound acquaintance with the research topic and ability to produce new scientific knowledge independently in the field of Futures Studies.

Content
The doctoral candidate will carry out a demanding research process and write a doctoral dissertation, which is the most important part of postgraduate studies. It includes independent research work with a research plan and intermediary reports. The manuscript of the thesis will be given to the professor for comments. If the professor approves the manuscript, it will be submitted to pre-examination. If the pre-examination grants the publication permit, the thesis will move on to final oral defence of the work in a public examination.

Languages of instruction
English or Finnish

Modes of study
Thesis / dissertation. The thesis can be carried out in the form of monograph dissertation or compilation of research papers.

Study materials
See the instructions for Doctoral Thesis in the Turku School of Economics.

Further information
Before pre-examination, the thesis will be submitted to Turnit in originality check in order to rule out plagiaritary work. Note also, that the doctoral candidate has to accomplish all the needed postgraduate courses before submitting the thesis manuscript to the pre-examination process.