



EHS- Erasmus Policy Statement (Overall Strategy)

About University College Stockholm

Theology and Human Rights

University College Stockholm/Enskilda Högskolan Stockholm (EHS) offers programs at undergraduate and postgraduate levels in both Theology and Human Rights. EHS offers ThD programs in Systematic, Biblical and Pastoral Theology, and in Eastern Christian studies as well. ThD studies can be conducted in English, while other courses are offered in English to varying degrees. EHS is the major provider of Theology and Human Rights education in the Stockholm region.

The School

EHS was founded in 1993 after the merger of two institutions that both started in 1866, namely the Theological Seminary at Lidingö and the pastoral education at the Bethel Seminary in Bromma. In 2016, the university was able to look back on a 150-year educational tradition and in its current organizational form celebrated the 25th anniversary during the academic year 2018/2019.

EHS gives training to some 600-700 students annually, in both full-time and part-time courses. The School welcomes students from a variety of denominational and non-denominational backgrounds, in a climate of academic rigour, international contact, and challenging issues.

Most courses are in Swedish, but every spring semester EHS offer a full time program in English for which international students are invited to apply. In particular, students from our international academic partners are invited.

A wide network of international academic and other institutional contacts provides a resource-base for international exchanges for students and professors. EHS also have a flow of international guests, students as well as visiting scholars.

EHS is a non-governmental university college owned by the Uniting Church in Sweden. It attracts students from all over Sweden, not just from the Stockholm region. A significant number of full-time students are candidates for the ministry in the Uniting Church, the Church of Sweden (Lutheran), as well as in the expanding orthodox churches. The university college is a member of Stockholm Academic Forum (17 universities and the City of Stockholm) and also a member of The Association of Swedish Higher Education Institutions, an organization for institutional cooperation on a voluntary basis (16 universities, 18 university colleges and 4 university art colleges).

EHS is growing strongly and the president is now assisted by three vice presidents, each responsible for a department. Stockholm School of Human Rights is the designation for EHS programs in Human Rights, while Stockholm School of Theology is the designation for two Theology departments, Department for Religion and Christian Theology, and Department for Eastern Christian studies.

EHS offers higher education and research of the highest scientific quality. The university college receives a state grant and the courses are eligible for student loan funding. EHS has externally funded research projects and also conducts education assignments to businesses and organizations of various kinds.

Courses in English- Spring Semester

Each spring semester EHS offers a full-time program in English for which international students are invited to apply. In particular, students from our international academic partners are invited. The courses are examined either at the master's level or at the bachelor's.

Research at University College Stockholm

Research at EHS is extensive and conducted in the two main fields of the School: Theology and Human Rights. EHS offers ThD programs in Theology, as well in Human Rights in collaboration with other universities. Nearly all lecturers/professors at EHS have a ThD and a considerable part of their time allocated for research and development of skills. Research is conducted both individually and in the form of broader joint projects over several years. Researchers at EHS are regularly involved in major projects funded by national research councils, foundations, or other sources. EHS undertakes various research projects, surveys, and investigations, for different clients, in addition to regular research and teaching activities. EHS is part of international networks for higher education, such as Erasmus and Nordplus, and has various international contacts that also include research collaboration. Research at EHS is usually published as articles in scholarly journals or in monographs. Some research is available in the Stockholm School of Theology's series, *Studia Theologica Holmiensia*.

Research program on Human Rights

Issues that are raised in the research include, for example: the responsibilities of the religions and understanding of human rights, how human rights are perceived in the north-south/west-east relationship, religious freedom as a principle and practice, diversity, values and human rights, human rights and new technologies.

The Research Program on Human Rights and Peace-Building at Stockholm School of Human Rights investigates both the theoretical and the empirical dimensions of the relationship between human rights and peace building. This Research Program comprises both smaller projects and large-scale, global studies, dealing with human rights and peace building, the tension between different types of rights, reconciliation as a political concept and similar themes. <https://www.ehs.se/node/253>

The international strategy can be summed up thus:

EHS works with internationalization, a work where subject relevance, educational and cultural challenges as well as broadened, international, perspectives within one's own education and contributions to collaborative academic environments are fundamental characteristics.

The subjects of Theology and Human Rights could be said to be international by definition, in the sense that their emergence and application in education, research and social life has never taken place with the nation-state as a starting point or subject-theoretical boundary. Theology, with its long history, has been a phenomenon that has constantly interpreted its outside world based on each epoch. The same can be said of the subject of Human Rights, whose philosophical roots are centuries old, but whose historical practice was institutionalized in international conventions and institutions only during the 20th century. It is therefore not only natural but also necessary for a

college with these two subjects and profiled study areas, to have different forms of cooperation with institutions and environments outside their own country, outside their own national frame of reference. The latest example of this is that EHS currently has training programs with people who intend to work in various services within the increasingly prominent Eastern Church environments in Sweden - from the Balkan countries, the Middle East and Africa.

The Erasmus+ program is an important puzzle piece in the network of institutional and living contacts that EHS has long had and has with universities and research environments in other countries. For example, EHS has student exchanges in one of its two study areas with universities and institutions both in Europe, the United States, the Middle East and Asia.

In terms of content, the exchanges contribute to internationalization. There are obvious examples of this, for example with students from completely different cultural environments in the classroom, in talks etc. An interesting aspect in the whole is the more underlying planning work and the content issues that this relates to. Textbook issues, for example, are an often overlooked but important part of internationalization through teachers' discussions of perspectives, concepts and issues. We have seen examples of this in our collaboration. It is ultimately the students who become perhaps the biggest "winners" of the outcome of such conversations, through eye-opening approaches and issues in new and otherwise perhaps overlooked literature.

It should be pointed out that the internationalization work at EHS also has a design that contributes to the implementation of the goals that are closest to EHS in Agenda 2030. The long-term goal of collaboration is therefore to provide teachers and students over a longer period at both our and the exchange institutions the opportunity for knowledge in-depth and personality development experiences to create understanding and knowledge of the conditions for a democratic social development with a focus on the goals of Agenda 2030 locally and globally.

In this collaboration, the concept of "democratic social development" is broken down into some elements in particular. The goals that EHS wants to highlight in this context are:

Goal 4- To ensure an inclusive and equal education of good quality and to promote life long learning for all. Objective 10- to reduce inequalities within and between countries.

Objective 16 - to promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, ensure that everyone has access to justice and to build effective, responsible and inclusive institutions at all levels.

At EHS these goals are covered in part by the institutional cooperation that EHS engages in to strengthen teaching and research environments (Objective 4) and courses and programs in areas such as women's and minority rights, the role of civil society for democracy and conflict resolution in local communities, democratic governance, refugee issues, human rights and international law (other objectives). Individual courses at EHS also deal with climate change, the rights of indigenous peoples, peace | conflict and religion and related topics.

Exchange program gives students and teachers the opportunity for meetings and participation in teaching and studying in a new culture. It is expected to give a number of impulses to teachers to reflect on the methodological and pedagogical models of others, and give incentives for development within their own institution. The exchange expected for the students- in addition to providing new cultural experiences, is to stimulate continued commitment international issues, international development cooperation as well as a broadened academic understanding and experience.

During the years that have passed since the program began, EHS has seen how both Swedish students and teachers, as well as students and teachers from other countries, have become more internationally involved and have increased their knowledge and commitment in many areas. EHS as an institution has during these years also been able to develop the academic courses through the program.

Internationalization is not an interest or responsibility for a college, such as EHS, which stands or falls with the outcome of various project applications for funding. However, internationalization can both be strengthened as a business, developed substantively and expanded geographically by the support that external funding can entail. The ERASMUS+ program is an example of this.

There is generally a strong ambition from EHS management to strengthen international relations and exchanges. This ambition is shown in the administrative structure with special staff responsible for the international exchange program and international issues, however that it is part of all planning on all levels of the organization.

In addition to this structural basis for internationalization, EHS has developed a semester program in English consisting of courses that are of particular interest to internationally recruited students. Courses other than these can also be given in English, for exchange students or others, as an expression of EHS's prioritization of the international dimension in the university college's work, the semester is important- for both teachers and students. 2021 EHS will start a complete Human Rights Master Program in English.

To summarize: the administrative services directly affected by the ERASMUS+ program and other internationalization work (course administrator, study director, study counselor, vice presidents and president) have this as part of their employment. The teacher group has experience of teaching English for a long time, and a large part of them have experience of foreign-based teaching. From an organizational point of view, the English-language semester ensures that there is a selection of courses for exchange students, for example within the Erasmus + program, to take part in, but these do not constitute the complete range. Rather, the semester is a way of marking for all students and teachers at EHS that we have an English-language offering and it is open to all categories of students, who may consider reading a course in English. In addition, 2021 EHS will welcome to complete Master Program in English.

Our experience of the collaboration so far between EHS and ERASMUS+ is that these support functions and the increasing range of courses in English that have taken place over several years, have strengthened functioning routines for the exchange program. Overall, it works well and it is of great importance for the development and internationalization of both colleges.