

# Opasraportti

## HuTK - Future Studies 2009-2011 (2009 - 2011)

### Futures Studies

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### Admission requirements

Futures Studies is an open subject for all attending students of the University of Oulu.

### Study guidance

Study guidance is provided by University Lecturer Erkki Urpilainen, tel. +358-8-553 3305, email [erkki.urpilainen\[at\]oulu.fi](mailto:erkki.urpilainen@oulu.fi).

### Overview of the subject

The starting point of Futures Studies is in many respects the same as that of knowledge about society in general: it is based on our need to enlarge the amount of visible moral choices and to give a meaning to the choices we make in the present. However, these choices always depend on past development and on our earlier choices. One can think that in some cases we can follow the traces of choices and their consequences far back - perhaps even hundreds of years. Moreover, the choices we make now are always connected to the information available at the moment of decision-making, as well as to the images of the future we have. Information and knowledge, used by society and private individuals in their choices, are for their part dependent both on history, culture, values, and the personal level of learning, character and experiences of the actor.

The objective of Futures Studies is to invent, evaluate and suggest possible and probable future and to help people to go through different options in order to be able to make decisions on what the future they want would be like. This way it is possible to make effective plans to facilitate the best possible future to come true. In their work, futures researchers make use of research results and findings gained in other fields of science, and make conclusions on what different possible, probable and preferable states of the future there are facing us.

The future cannot be directly researched. It does not exist in the present in the same ways as the present and the past. Instead, it does exist in the present as intentions, which we can study. We can also study such facts and phenomena which bear an influence on the future. Neither is the future predestined. We can research the alternative paths of development, as long as we bear in mind that the different end results have a different level of probability. Since it is possible to affect the quality of the future through single choices, it is naturally important to define, what kinds of choices lead to the best and most acceptable future state. This is why value discussions are so important in Futures Studies.

The courses of futures studies are organized by Finland Futures Academy (FFA), which is a national education and research network in the field of futures studies for universities. The network is coordinated by Finland Futures Research Centre at Turku School of Economics.

## Courses

The Futures Studies package comprises four courses:

- 1) 700710P How Can We Explore the Future? 6 credits
- 2) 700711P Futures Research Methods 8 credits
- 3) 700712P Futures Research in Practice 3 or 8 credits
- 4) 700713P Changing Futures Theme / Summer School 3 or 8 credits

# Tutkintorakenteisiin kuulumattomat opintokokonaisuudet ja -jaksot

700713P: Changing futures theme, 5 op  
 700712P: Futures Research in Practice, 3 - 8 op  
 700711P: Futures research methods, 8 op  
 700710P: How can we explore the future?, 6 op

## Opintojaksojen kuvaukset

### Tutkintorakenteisiin kuulumattomien opintokokonaisuuksien ja -jaksojen kuvaukset

#### 700713P: Changing futures theme, 5 op

**Voimassaolo:** 01.08.2005 -

**Opiskelumuoto:** Basic Studies

**Laji:** Course

**Vastuuyksikkö:** Faculty of Humanities

**Arvostelu:** 1 - 5, pass, fail

**Opettajat:** Urpilainen, Erkki Juhani

**Opintokohteen kielet:** Finnish

**Leikkaavuudet:**

ay700713P Changing futures theme (OPEN UNI) 5.0 op

**Voidaan suorittaa useasti:** Kyllä

**ECTS Credits:**

3 or 8 credits

**Language of instruction:**

Finnish

**Learning outcomes:**

The aim of the course is to give students a deeper understanding of Futures Studies.

**Learning activities and teaching methods:**

FFA organizes together with Finland Futures Research Centre an annual summer course parallel to the international conference.

The teaching structure of the Summer Course follows the current topic of the Conference and the students are expected to participate in the Conference presentations and workshops. The summer course is offered in English. The course (3 credits) can also be completed by writing an essay.

**Recommended optional programme components:**

700710P, 70711P

**Assessment methods and criteria:**

Participation in the Summer Course and an essay

**Grading:**

0-5

**Person responsible:**

Erkki Urpilainen

## 700712P: Futures Research in Practice, 3 - 8 op

**Voimassaolo:** 01.08.2005 -

**Opiskelumuoto:** Basic Studies

**Laji:** Course

**Vastuuyksikkö:** Faculty of Humanities

**Arvostelu:** 1 - 5, pass, fail

**Opettajat:** Urpilainen, Erkki Juhani

**Opintokohteen kielet:** Finnish

**Voidaan suorittaa useasti:** Kyllä

**ECTS Credits:**

3 or 8 credits

**Language of instruction:**

Finnish

**Learning outcomes:**

The aim of the course is to give students a deeper understanding of the rhetoric of futures studies relating to various methodological approaches. The idea is to study one or a few methods in depth and also to learn how to design scientific inquiry and to argue for methodological choices.

**Learning activities and teaching methods:**

Multiform studies including contact, intensive and distance learning.

**Recommended optional programme components:**

700710P and 700711P

**Recommended or required reading:**

Study materials are adapted to the learning environment.

**Assessment methods and criteria:**

Essay

**Grading:**

0-5

**Person responsible:**

Erkki Urpilainen

## 700711P: Futures research methods, 8 op

**Voimassaolo:** 01.08.2005 -

**Opiskelumuoto:** Basic Studies

**Laji:** Course

**Vastuuyksikkö:** Faculty of Humanities

**Arvostelu:** 1 - 5, pass, fail

**Opettajat:** Urpilainen, Erkki Juhani

**Opintokohteen kielet:** Finnish

**Voidaan suorittaa useasti:** Kyllä

**ECTS Credits:**

8 credits

**Language of instruction:**

Finnish

**Learning outcomes:**

The aim is to provide students with the ability to understand and use various methods and methodologies in Futures Studies. Students will familiarize themselves for example with Scenario process, Delphi method and Soft Systems Methodology.

**Learning activities and teaching methods:**

Multiform studies including contact, intensive and distance learning

**Recommended optional programme components:**

700710P

**Recommended or required reading:**

Study materials are adapted to the learning environment

**Assessment methods and criteria:**

Essays and written examination

**Grading:**

0-5

**Person responsible:**

Erkki Urpilainen

**700710P: How can we explore the future?, 6 op****Voimassaolo:** 01.08.2005 -**Opiskelumuoto:** Basic Studies**Laji:** Course**Vastuuyksikkö:** Faculty of Humanities**Arvostelu:** 1 - 5, pass, fail**Opettajat:** Urpilainen, Erkki Juhani**Opintokohteen kielet:** Finnish**Voidaan suorittaa useasti:** Kyllä**ECTS Credits:**

6 credits

**Language of instruction:**

Finnish

**Learning outcomes:**

The course offers the basic knowledge of Futures Studies. The various methods of Futures Studies as well as the historical and philosophical background of this field of knowledge are the main content of this course.

**Learning activities and teaching methods:**

Multiform studies including contact, intensive and distance learning.

**Recommended or required reading:**

Study materials are adapted to the learning environment.

**Assessment methods and criteria:**

Essays.

**Grading:**

0-5

**Person responsible:**

Erkki Urpilainen