

Dr Cecilia Lundholm

University of Stockholm

Students' learning and conceptual change – some emerging issues on emotions and values

Thursday 13th March 2008 14:15 pm to 16:15 pm

For more than a decade, there has been an increasing interest in understanding conceptual change and the ways motivation, emotions and values are an important part of this process, and questions raised concern how do the cognitive and affective interact? This research focus, which has been termed 'hot cognition' and the 'warming trend' in conceptual change, also acknowledges the social context for generating insights into students' learning. The seminar will present findings from Lundholm's past and current research within this field where students are viewed as active constructors involved in meaning-making who come to understand the curriculum as well as the social and cultural setting. Results show that students' prior knowledge, values, professional aims and conceptions of society can cause difficulties in understanding, for example, economics. From an educational view, an important point is that students' learning difficulties can be as much due to issues of values and their conceptions of the social and cultural setting, as to cognition.

Cecilia Lundholm was awarded her PhD in September 2003 and is a researcher in the Department of Education, Stockholm University, where she is a member of the Conceptual Development research group (www.ped.su.se/rcd). Her research interest concerns students' learning and the way values and emotions are part of the learning process. Currently she is involved in researching students' learning in the subject of economics at the Business School of the University of Staffordshire. Learning about the environment in informal settings is another interest, and projects on knowledge and knowledge acquisition in natural resource management, financed by the Swedish Research Council are on-going. This research is being carried out in collaboration with colleagues from Systems Ecology at the newly instated Stockholm Resilience Centre (www.stockholmresilience.su.se), funded by MISTRA.