

# SGO4401 – Democratization and Civil Society in Developing Countries

[Course content](#) - [Learning outcome](#) - [Admission](#) - [Prerequisites](#) - [Overlapping courses](#) - [Teaching](#) - [Examination](#) - [Evaluation](#)

## Course content

This course examines the dynamics of democratization in developing countries, with special emphasis on representation of people and the role of civil society. The first part of the course focuses on contemporary institutional changes and academic debates on democratization, governance and citizenship in the Global South. The lectures and readings point to the global spread of formal democracy and neoliberal governance, but also the prevalence of depoliticization and flawed popular representation and participation. Following from this, the second part of the course focuses on efforts towards more substantive democratization, examining the interplay between political spaces and actor strategies to pursue diverse issues and interests. The lectures and readings especially highlight the role of civil society and social movements in political representation; the changing character and politics of trade unionism; the role and strategies of critical journalism, and material and symbolic practices within political networks. The course draws on interdisciplinary literature and debates, while also foregrounding political geographic approaches and contributions. The course is thus designed to give both a broad overview of the field and a theoretical basis for master degree studies in human geography within the field of democratization and civil society in developing studies.

## Learning outcome

### Knowledge

Students shall attain:

- A good overview of key theoretical issues and debates on democratization and civil society in developing countries
- A good understanding of political geographic approaches to and selected contextual cases of democratization and civil society in developing countries

### Skills

Students shall attain:

- Ability to understand and critically assess theoretical and contextual literature on democratization and civil society in developing countries
- Ability to write an academic review paper at an advanced level within the course topic

### **Competences**

Students shall attain:

- Critical reflexivity around the form, substance and political dynamics of democratization and popular representation in developing countries
- Reflexivity around theoretical strategies and challenges of doing research on democratization and civil society in the Global South

## **Admission**

This course is a part of the Master's program in Human Geography.

Students in other master programs may apply to be accepted as guest students. Please note that the following special restrictions apply: • applicant must be admitted to a master program.

- this course will be taken as a part of their Master's degree. A confirmation from the student's student adviser must be attached to the application.
- there are available places in this course.

Students who are admitted to study programmes at UiO must each semester register which courses and exams they wish to sign up for in StudentWeb.

International applicants, if you are not already enrolled as a student at UiO, please see our information about admission requirements and procedures for international applicants.

The examination in this course is not available for external candidates. Only students admitted to the course may sit for the examination.

## **Prerequisites**

### **Recommended previous knowledge**

An introductory course in political geography or politics and development, for example SGO2400 (Politisk geografi) or STV 2310 (Politics and Development)

## **Teaching**

This course is taught at the University of Oslo, Blindern campus. Other locations in Oslo may be used.

The lectures are given in English.

Teaching takes place throughout the semester, as outlined in the course plan.

## **Examination**

Assessment is based on a term paper that students will work on throughout the semester. The topic for the term paper is decided by each student in consultation with the course instructor(s), and must be within the thematic focus of the course. The maximum length of the term paper is 6000 words (plus references and notes).

When submitting the term paper students are required to submit a [compulsory statement regarding plagiarism](#)

Any take home exam or essay etc. handed in at the University of Oslo may be checked for plagiarism by use of the Ephorus text recognition software.

## **Examination support material**

No examination support material is allowed.

## **Language of examination**

The students can choose whether they will write the paper in English, Norwegian, Swedish or Danish.

## **Grading scale**

Grades are awarded on a scale from A to F, where A is the best grade and F is a fail. Read more about [the grading system](#).

Examination results are available in StudentWeb three weeks after the date of submission, if no other information is given on the semester page of the current semester.

## **Explanations and appeals**

[Explanations & appeals at the Department of Sociology and Human Geography](#)

## **Resit an examination**

You can usually resit an exam, but the conditions depend on whether you had a valid reason for absence from the regular exam. Read more about [resitting an exam](#).

## **Special examination arrangements**

Students may apply for access to alternative exam resources or exam forms on the basis of chronic illness and/or special needs that create a marked disadvantage to other students in the exam situation. Mothers who are breastfeeding may apply for extra time to complete the exam.

Application-forms for special examination arrangements on school-exams should be sent to The Faculty of Social Science. Applications for special examination arrangements on other exams should be sent to the institute who organises the course.

## Evaluation

Feedback from our students is essential to us in our efforts to ensure and further improve the high quality of our programmes and courses. All courses are subject to continuous evaluation. At regular intervals we also ask students on a particular course to participate in a more comprehensive, periodic evaluation of this course.

**Comment [KS1]:** I wonder if this should be deleted since the exam is a term paper, not school exam?