

HGO4604 - Labour geographies

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Schedule, syllabus and examination date

Choose semester

- Autumn 2013
- Autumn 2011

Course content

In this course, you will learn about the economic geographies of labour. As globalization and economic restructuring drives flexibilisation of firms and deregulation of labour markets, this have spurred a renewed interest in labour issues in economic geography over the past couple of decades. The course draws inspiration from the labour geography tradition and its focus on the agency of workers, i.e. their capability to make a difference. But workers' ability to engage with and resist changes that affect them is circumscribed by structural conditions: employer strategies of labour control, forms of state regulation and technological change. Through readings, presentations and discussions, you will learn more about labour regulation and labour resistance in very different contexts.

The course places particular focus on four analytical concepts – *agency*, *regime*, *power* and *fragmentation* – which will enable you to understand the relationship between labour strategies and structural conditions from a geographical perspective. In addition, the course

will use the concepts above to explore a series of themes, such as domestic work, the politics of consumption, temporary agency work and digitalisation.

Learning outcome

Knowledge

You will learn

- to understand the spatial nature of the global labour market, both in specific applied circumstances and on a more abstract level.
- to acknowledge how labour shapes contemporary globalization, and to understand how economic restructuring impacts on working conditions and labour rights.
- to understand the complex relationships between labour markets, their regulation and the strategies of firms and workers at different geographical scales.

Skills

You will be encouraged

- to apply spatial concepts to your analysis, to better understand and explain unevenness, difference and power relations in the world of work.
- to assess the relevance and applicability of theories and concepts from human geography and other social sciences to explain labour markets and workplaces in the global economy.
- to actively engage in written, oral and conversational discussions on the geographies of labour through seminar activity.
- to demonstrate your knowledge and skills by producing an independent academic text (course assignment).

General competences

This course will enable you

- to apply critical thinking and a geographical sensitivity to a fast-changing world economy, as seen from the standpoint of workers.

Admission

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.

If you are not already enrolled as a student at UiO, please see our information about admission requirements and procedures.

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 students student adviser must be attached to the application.
- there are available places in this course.

If you already have completed our Master's programme in Human Geography and want to take additional master courses, please read this: [Hospitanter ved ISS](#).

Prerequisites

Recommended previous knowledge

The introductory course in economic geography SGO2200 (*Economic globalisation and regional development*), or a development-oriented course with a labour focus such as SGO2500 (*North-South Development*) and SGO3300 (*Sør i en globaliserende verden*).

Overlapping courses

- 10 credits overlap with SGO4502 - Development Theory Course 2 (discontinued)
- 10 credits overlap with SOSGEO4604 - Work and workers. Global perspectives

Teaching

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

Teaching is based on an introductory lecture, 4 concept seminars and 5 thematic seminars. In the seminars, students are expected to prepare by watching video lectures and reading texts from selected resource banks. The teaching is a combination of teacher presentations and student discussions and exercises. Seminar exercises are to be uploaded onto Fronter in advance of each seminar.

Preparing and presenting a group exercise for each of the four concept seminars is a compulsory requirement. Valid absence such as illness etc. must be documented by a medical certificate. Completed and approved compulsory course work is valid until the course is no longer offered. Students who have failed to complete the compulsory course work cannot take the exam.

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

Absence from compulsory tuition activities

If you are ill or have another valid reason for being absent from compulsory tuition activities, your absence may be approved or the compulsory activity may be postponed.

- Report absence from or the need for a postponed deadline on a compulsory tuition activity

Curriculum

Rather than a specified curriculum list which forms the basis of a school exam evaluation, SGO4604 provides the students with a set of resource banks for each seminar. This resource bank forms the basis on which to prepare the student exercises. Taken together, the resource banks also define the thematic focus of the course.

Examination

Term paper.

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 (see Curriculum above). The maximum length of the term paper is 15 pages (plus references and notes), using 12 point letter size and a spacing of lines 1 1/2.

Use of sources and citation

You should familiarize yourself with the rules that apply to the use of sources and citations. If you violate the rules, you may be suspected of cheating/attempted cheating.

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.

Explanations and appeals

It is recommended to request an explanation of your grade before you decide to appeal.

Appeal

- Appeal about grades
- Complaint about formal exam errors

Explanation

The deadline to request an explanation is one week after the grade is published. For oral and practical examinations, the deadline is immediately after you have received your grade.

The explanation should normally be given within two weeks after you have asked for it. The examiner decides whether the explanation is to be given in writing or verbally.

Ask for explanation of your grade in this course:

- term paper

Resit an examination

If you are sick or have another valid reason for not attending the regular exam, we offer a postponed exam later in the same semester.

See also our information about resitting an exam.

Withdrawal from an examination

If you wish to withdraw from the exam you must do so in Studentweb at least two weeks prior to the deadline. Failure to do so will be counted as one of the three opportunities to sit the exam.

Special examination arrangements

Application form, deadline and requirements for special examination arrangements.

Evaluation

The course is subject to continuous evaluation. At regular intervals we also ask students to participate in a more comprehensive evaluation.