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HGO4011 - Philosophy and methodology of human geography

Course description

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Schedule, syllabus and examination date

Choose semester

- [Autumn 2017](#)

Course content

This course is a compulsory component of the master's degree in human geography. The course covers the history and methodology of human geography with the aim of facilitating the development of the student's own research project for the master's degree. The course consists of three parts, the first of which presents the main lines of development and key concepts in the history of human geography. The second part discusses general strategies for establishing knowledge – realism, 'ideal type' methodology and grounded theory. The last part highlights three methodological

alternatives: individual case studies, comparative analysis and quantitative modelling. Lectures and seminars focus on the history and methodology of human geography generally, while emphasis is also placed on relevance to the student's own master's degree project. However, this course does not cover more specific choice of methods.

Learning outcome

Knowledge

You will:

- learn about the history of human geography with a focus on the main lines of development and key concepts
- learn about general strategies for knowledge production and overarching methodological alternatives

Skills

You will be able to:

- account for and discuss concepts and approaches in the history and methodology of human geography with a high degree of precision and reflection
- write advanced-level, independent texts about the history and methodology of human geography within stated time limits
- develop a general project description for an independent research project

General competence

You will be able to:

- critically analyze strategies for acquiring knowledge of human geography
- make an independent choice of methodology in your work on the master's thesis

Admission

Admission to the course is dependent on admission to the master's degree programme in human geography. Students with admission to the programme or to

individual courses must each semester [register which courses and examinations they wish to sign up for in StudentWeb](#).

If you are not already enrolled as a student at UiO, please see [Admission](#).

Overlapping courses

This course overlaps with the following courses: [SGO4011 - Tenkning og metodologi i samfunnsgeografi](#), [SGO4000 - Faghistorie og vitenskapsteori](#) – last offered in autumn 2007 (discontinued) and [SGO4001 - Faghistorie og forskningsdesign](#) (discontinued)

Teaching

The course is taught at the University of Oslo, Blindern, or if relevant, at other teaching premises in Oslo.

Course tuition consists of a combination of lectures and seminars. For an overview, please refer to the detailed teaching plan on the semester page.

Compulsory instruction and coursework

You are required to submit a project description. If you fail to do so, you will not be allowed to sit the examination. The completed and approved compulsory activity will be valid for the entire period the course is offered.

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](#)

Access to teaching

A student who has completed compulsory instruction and coursework and has had these approved, is not entitled to repeat that instruction and coursework. A student who has been admitted to a course, but who has not completed compulsory

instruction and coursework or had these approved, is entitled to repeat that instruction and coursework, depending on available capacity.

Examination

The exam is a one-week home exam. The maximum length of the home exam is 6000 words (excluding references).

The exam question will be available from 10.00 am on the day of the exam and must be submitted at 2.00 pm 7 days later.

~~Portfolio assessment.~~

~~Written examination (3 hours).~~

~~The Faculty of Social Sciences is responsible for conducting the examination, which is held at the University of Oslo, Blindern, or if relevant, at other examination premises in Oslo.~~

~~Assessment is based on a combination of portfolio assessment and written examination (3 hours). The portfolio assessment accounts for 60% and the written examination for 40% of the grade. The portfolio must include two texts that answer questions on the history and methodology of human geography. The two texts must be a maximum of 7.5 pages each, written in Times New Roman, font size 12 and spacing 1.5. The list of references comes in addition. The portfolio is awarded an overall grade. The individual texts in the portfolio are not graded separately.~~

~~Both the written examination and the portfolio assessment must be passed in the same semester for the grade to be valid.~~

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](#).

~~Examination support material~~

~~Students may use dictionaries at this exam. Dictionaries must be handed in before the examination. Please read regulations for dictionaries permitted at the examination.~~

Language of examination

The examination text is given in English. You may submit your response in Norwegian, Swedish, Danish or English.

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 against 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 an explanation in this course:

- [Home exam](#)
- ~~[School exam](#)~~
- [Portfolio](#)

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

It is possible to take the exam up to 3 times. If you [withdraw from the exam](#) after the deadline or during the exam, this will be counted as an examination attempt.

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.