

HGO4401 – Democratization and civil society in developing countries

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Course description

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

Schedule, syllabus and examination date

Choose semester

- [Autumn 2017](#)

Course content

This course examines the dynamics **and substance** of democratization in developing countries, with special emphasis on **the politics of democratic transitions, deepening and decline, 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-peace**, 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-depoliticized democracy** and **hybrid (semi-authoritarian) forms of rule** **flawed popular representation and participation**. Following from this, the second part of the course focuses on efforts towards more substantive democratization, examining **the role of key actors, agendas and strategies for democratic transformation** **the interplay between political spaces and actor strategies to pursue diverse issues and interests**.

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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

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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

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 with admission to other relevant master's degree programmes can apply for admission as [guest students](#).

Prerequisites

Recommended previous knowledge

An introductory course in political geography or politics and development, for example [SGO2400 – Politisk geografi](#) or [STV2310 – Politics and development \(discontinued\)](#).

Overlapping courses

- 10 credits overlap with [SGO4401 – Democratization and civil society in developing countries \(continued\)](#).
- 10 credits overlap with [SGO4014 – Politisk geografi \(discontinued\)](#).
- 10 credits overlap with SGO314

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

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. The Maximum length of the term paper is [45 pages5000 words](#) (plus references and notes), using 12 point letter size and a spacing of lines 1 1/2.

[Examiner guidelines](#)

Use of sources and citation

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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

You may write your examination paper 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 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

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.

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