

Course coordination for HGO4080 / HGO4090 Master's thesis

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Background

- The master programme in Human Geography offers two options for the master thesis, either a 30 credit thesis (HGO4080) or a 60 credit thesis (HGO4090)
- Some regular activities have been established in support of the master thesis:
 - Overnight cabin trip with focus on thesis topic and social integration. This will be replaced by a one-day seminar in 2019
 - Presentation of staff and research in Human Geography to new students
 - Submission of statement on thesis idea (mandatory activity within HGO4011)
 - Assigned preliminary thesis advisor based on thesis idea statement
 - Thesis supervision contract (end of 1st semester/beginning of 2nd semester)
 - Seminar at the beginning of the second semester with focus on project design
 - Master thesis exams, with individual commissions for each thesis (one internal and one external examiner).
- There are no assigned course coordinators for HGO4080 and HGO4090, the listed activities are handled by the head of teaching in Human Geography

In comparison: SOS4090

- SOS4090 – Masteroppgave i sosiologi
 - Four supervision seminars in parallel groups during the 1st and 2nd semester of the master degree
 - Mandatory participation in 3 out of 4 seminar
 - Each student is required to present the thesis project to the group for discussion two times, once in the 1st semester and once in the 2nd semester
 - Each student is also required to function as commentator two times, once in the 1st semester and once in the 2nd semester

Proposal

- Human Geography should consider appointing a course coordinator for HGO4080/HGO4090
- The responsibilities of course coordinator would include:
 - Design, coordination and participation in teaching activities related to the thesis
 - Academic coordination of thesis supervision
 - Academic coordination of master thesis exams

Two key restrictions

- Activities within HGO4080/HGO4090 should be kept at a manageable level, both for staff and students. The activities should support rather than compete with other course and thesis work within the master program
- Activities within HGO4080/HGO4090 should be coordinated with HGO4010 Qualitative Methods and HGO4011 Philosophy and methodology of human geography in order to avoid double work, both for staff and students