

HGO4401 – Democratization and civil society in developing countries

Level
Master

Credits
10

Teaching
This course will be offered Spring semester 2022

Teaching language
English

Course description

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Course content

This course examines the dynamics and substance-forms of democratization in developing countries, with special emphasis on the politics of democratic transitions, deepening and decline. The first part of the course focuses on drivers and modalities of democratization and representation. This is followed by a section that examines the contemporary forms and dynamics of autocratization – democratization in reverse – and the sources of resilience and resistance against autocratization. The last part of the course studies international engagement in democratization and peacebuilding and the links between democratization/autocratization and (il)liberal peacebuilding. Throughout the course there is a focus on the interplay between key political actors (elites, political parties, civil society organizations) and their political spaces (institutions, discourses, alliances etc.) and how these relations produce and transform democracies/autocracies. Primary attention is given to popular actors in civil society and their political strategies.

contemporary institutional changes and academic debates on democratization, peace and citizenship in the Global South. The lectures and readings point to the global spread of formal democracy, but also the prevalence of depoliticized democracy and hybrid (semi-authoritarian) forms of rule. Following from this, the

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Learning outcome

Knowledge

Students shall attain:

- A good overview of key theoretical issues and debates on democratization/[autocratization](#) and civil society in developing countries
- A good understanding of political geographic approaches to and selected contextual cases of democratization/[autocratization](#) and civil society in developing countries

Skills

Students shall attain:

- Ability to understand and critically assess theoretical and contextual literature on democratization/[autocratization](#) 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/[autocratization](#) and popular [participation](#)/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](#).

[Master specialisation in didactics for social science in the Teacher Education Programme \(Lektorprogrammet\)](#) – please see the link for information regarding admission.

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 [4000](#) 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

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

- [Explanation of grades and appeals](#)

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.