

# HGO4203 – Sustainable urban transformations

## Course content

This course aims to explore challenges, transformations and policies related to urban sustainability. Particular emphasis is placed on the social, cultural and spatial aspects of these challenges and policies. The course involves the in-depth analysis of traditional and contemporary theories about urban sustainability and policy transformations. The course relates to urbanization and urbanism as a global process, and includes literature, insights and perspectives from different parts of the world, including the global south. The main themes covered by the course are:

- urban sustainability challenges (emissions, energy, climate and inequality)
- urban structural transformations (urbanization, land use, infrastructures, energy, spaces and flows)
- transition in urban practices and cultures (social world views, life styles, practices, institutions and path dependencies)
- urban policy transformations (policies, planning and co-creation, global, national and local)

The course offers two (2) study options:

- an internship-based option, available only for students with admission to the master's programme in Human Geography.
- a desk study option open for students of relevant master's degrees programmes

The internship option involves a minimum of 20 full working days at a designated work place in the Oslo area active in the field of urban sustainability. The internship will serve as a means of linking theories and knowledge on urban transitions and transformations to sustainability with ongoing policies and practice.

## Learning outcome

### Knowledge goals

You will be able to:

- account for and discuss key concepts and theories related to urban sustainability
- explain the relations between challenges, transformations and policies

### Skills attainment goals

- account for, discuss and critique concepts and theories in a sophisticated manner.
- connect these theories, and critiques thereof, to specific cases and concrete settings in the field.
- write a research paper relating these theories to, either (i) collected data material (qualitative or quantitative), or (ii) specific tasks, practices and policies within specific organizations/institutions working with urban sustainability.

### General competences

You will be able to:

- assess specific situations and challenges involving urban sustainability and sustainable transformations based on theoretically grounded knowledge on this field.
- communicate knowledge-based insights and analysis both verbally and in writing.
- contribute to the new creative and independent thinking about urban sustainability issues.

## Admission

This course is part of the master's programme in Human Geography. Students with admission to the master's programme in Human Geography can choose ~~between the~~ [internship option, or the desk study option](#) (contact your student advisor) ~~or the internship option~~. Students from other relevant master's degree programmes can only apply for admission to the desk study option of this course as [guest students](#).

### Internship option (for students with admission to the master's programme in Human Geography only)

- Internship is dependent on admission to the master's programme in Human Geography.
- Host institutions, work assignments and the number of available internships may vary from semester to semester. The number of placements available for the course might vary accordingly. In case of too many applications per place, some applicants may have to choose the desk study option, without internship.
- The 20 days of internship have to be scheduled throughout the semester in agreement with the host institutions.
- Applicants cannot be employed by the host institution in advance of the internship.

### How to apply for the internship option?

- The opening date for applications is **December 7**. You must fill out [this application form](#) (it is not possible to register for this course in StudentWeb)
- Due to the limited number of places, applications will be processed in accordance to the principle of 'first come, first served'. The application form will be closed when the available places are filled up. The final closing date for applications is **December 14**.
- You will receive an answer on your application within December 16, and must accept the offer within one week.
- If you do not reply nor decline, the offer will go to the next applicant in line.
- New offers will be sent out after the deadline until all available places have been assigned.

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**Commented [PG2]:** This date may also be changed accordingly, maybe December .

## Prerequisites

### Recommended previous knowledge

This course builds on [SGO2302 - Environment and society](#) ([SOSGEO2301 - Environment and society](#)), [SGO2100 - Bygeografi og urbanisme](#) and [SGO3500 – Byers struktur og utvikling](#) at the bachelor level in Human Geography. However, sitting examinations in these courses it is not a prerequisite for taking this course.

## Teaching

Teaching in this course is seminar-based. It also includes an internship option for students admitted to the master's programme in Human Geography.

### Compulsory instruction and coursework

- Participation in the seminars is compulsory. Valid absence is allowed for a maximum of 2 seminars.
- [It is compulsory to give a presentation on the urban sustainability strategies of the internship host \(or another institution or actor, for students following the desk study option\)](#)
- The internship option includes a minimum of 20 full working days at a designated work place, which is mandatory.

Completed and approved compulsory course work is valid as long as the course is offered. Students who have failed to complete the compulsory attendance cannot take the exam.

### 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](#)

As the teaching involves laboratory and/or field work, you should consider taking out a separate travel and personal risk insurance. [Read about your insurance cover as a student.](#)

### 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 for HGO4302 is a research paper addressing a research question related to two of the four themes of the course. The course coordinator will assess and approve the research question, ~~a reading list and~~ empirical basis for the paper within a set deadline. The empirical basis for the paper will be (i) collected data or information for the ~~desk study academic~~ option, or (ii) experience and information gathered during internship for the internship option. [The reading list may be based on both the list of recommended reading for this course and other literature.](#)

The length of the research paper is ~~maximum 14-15 pages~~ for the ~~desk study academic~~ option and ~~10-11 pages~~ for the internship option (plus notes and references), ~~using 12 point letter size and a spacing of lines 1 1/2.~~

[Examiner guidelines](#)

### Submit assignments in Inpera

**Commented [PG3]:** Words instead?

**Commented [JGGN4R3]:** 14 p = 5600 words, 15p = 6000 words... these are very lengthy papers. I suggest 5000 words for desk study option, 4000 words for internship option.

**Commented [PG5]:** Words?

**Commented [JGGN6R5]:** Yes.

You submit your assignment in the digital examination system Inpera. [Read about how to submit your assignment.](#)

### **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**

- [Illness at exams / postponed exams](#)
- [Resitting an examination](#)

### **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.