

Dear program council.

We want to make some changes to SOS4100.

1) **New name**

We want to rename the course “SOS4100 – Causes and consequences of social inequalities”
The reason for that is that the current name (“SOS4100 – Social Inequality in the 21st Century: Egalitarian Norway in Comparative Perspective”) is very long and very specific. While a strong focus on Norway in a comparative perspective will still be central to the course, other aspects of inequalities are important to include. In practice, the course already has a much wider focus than this, which we have found confuses some students, and we wish to change the name so that it fits better with the course content.

Note that this course does not focus on grand theories of the fundamental causes of inequality in societies (such as Marx’/Rosseau’s emphasis on private property and the capitalist system). Our focus is rather on the determinants of who gets ahead in a given society, such as the degree of social mobility and persistence, discrimination, the education system, assimilation processes, genetics, welfare state institutions, gender roles etc., and on how they operate and their impact. Regarding consequences, we have a particular focus on both describing educational and labor market inequalities and mobility patterns with regards social origins, gender, ethnicity/race etc., and on health inequalities. We also look at the consequences of income inequality at a macro-level on various societal outcomes and if personal social mobility experience affects individuals attitudes and behaviors.

2) **Revised syllabus**

We have included and removed a small number of references in this updated syllabus. The most important change, however, is substituting the “Health Inequalities” lecture with the “Consequences of social inequalities and mobility” lecture with five new references added. In addition to this, we have fixed a few known errors in the reading list, and added a few texts to the “recommended further reading” list for some of the lectures.

3) **School exam**

Reading and understanding the syllabus is important on this course, but we have experienced that many of our students don’t engage sufficiently with the syllabus. In a previous evaluation from 2020 the majority of students only read parts of the syllabus.

We find that the current term paper examination does not sufficiently incentivize the students to read and engage with the breadth of the syllabus, as they can in practice just focus on reading texts that are directly relevant for their term paper and still do well on the exam.

We therefore want to change the examination form to a traditional 6-hour school exam that combines multiple choice questions and a long-form essay.

If the program council accepts this, we suggest that we be allowed to work out the details with the administration (and Torbjørn if necessary).

4) **Course description**

We have updated the course description to reflect the name change and the substitution of the “Health Inequalities” lecture with the “Consequences of social inequalities and mobility” lecture

Alexi and Adrian