



PECOS '22

Information catalog for new Peace
and Conflict Students

Created by the PECOS '18 Student Council.
Edited by the PECOS '19, '20 and '22' Student Council

WELCOME

A welcome message from the PECOS Student Council

Hello everyone and welcome to PECOS ☺

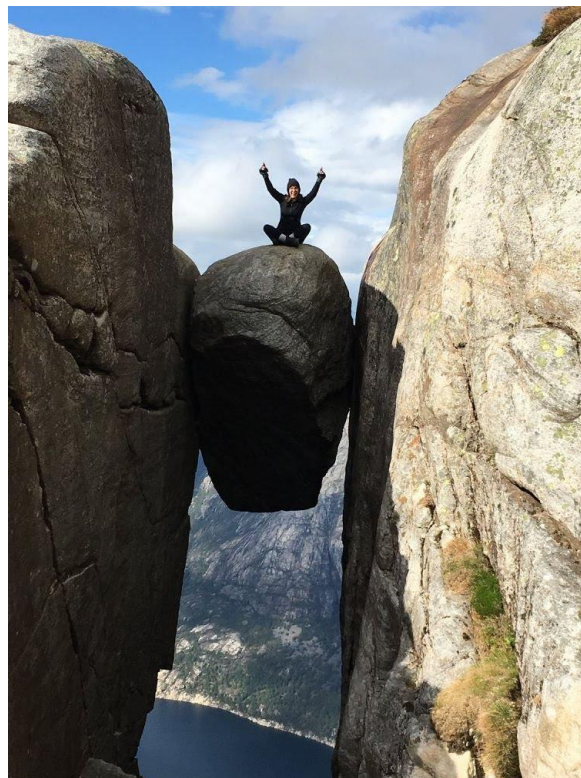
First, let us congratulate you on getting accepted into the Peace and Conflict Studies (PECOS) program at UiO!

Since all of you come from different countries, universities, academic backgrounds, and cultures, the Peace and Conflict Studies Student Council has put this small information catalog together in the hope that it will ease your transition to the University of Oslo, and answer some of your questions.

The catalog is written by current and former students and does not represent any official statement from the University of Oslo. This means that if our information differs from information given to you from the PECOS administration or information found online on the PECOS websites, you should discount our information. That being said, we think that our information is very relevant and hopefully it will work well as a student-point-of-view catalog.

If you have any questions, don't hesitate to ask. We hope that you are looking forward to the next two years in Oslo, Norway. We are very excited to meet you in August.

Best wishes,
PECOS Student Council



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PECOS Student Council of 2022



WHERE TO DIRECT YOUR QUESTIONS

Overview

If you are unsure you can always ask a second year student. We went through the same courses as you, and probably will be able to answer many of your questions. We are always more than happy to help.

The PECOS administration cannot answer questions about social life, housing etc. Instead ask:

<http://www.uio.no/studier/kontakt/knutepunktet/>

<https://www.sio.no/en/>

Two key people

Joakim Erma Møller is the new programme coordinator for PECOS. You can ask him questions about courses with the prefix PECOS. Links to his email and office hours will be available later in the summer.

Målfrid Braut-Hegghammer is the program manager. If you have any questions regarding the general direction of the program, you can ask her. Her e-mail can be found here: <https://www.sv.uio.no/isv/english/people/aca/maalfrbr/>

WEBSITES

The University of Oslo uses many different websites to keep you informed about the daily course schedule and exams. You can normally use the same username and password for all websites. Here is a short guide.

PECOS websites

You are likely familiar with these websites from when you were applying to the program. As soon as you start studying you will most likely mainly be using the PECOS program structure sites. Here you will find information about each course, for instance syllabus, exam information etc.

<https://www.uio.no/english/studies/programmes/peace-master/structure/2022>

Email

This is the university e-mail. Each student is assigned their own e-mail address and access to Outlook. As a student it is your responsibility to check this email regularly. Here you will receive e-mails from the administration, professors etc. You can either access your email through the Outlook-app or the link below.

<https://mail.uio.no/owa/auth/logon.aspx?replaceCurrent=1&url=https%3a%2f%2fmail.uio.no%2fowa%2f>

Canvas

This website is mainly used by professors to upload slideshows from class, texts or other documents. Sometimes you need to upload documents or term papers here, too. Each course has its own respective page that both the professor and students have access to. The PECOS-programme also has its own Canvas-page where you can find info about PECOS-events, internship and work opportunities, and other useful information related to the programme.

<https://uio.instructure.com/>

Mine studier (My studies)

Mine studier is mainly used for your course schedule. Here you will be able to see your timetable and homework/assigned readings. Sometimes you will receive messages here too, for instance if a class is cancelled. It also has useful links to other websites and applications you might need for your student life.

<https://minestudier.uio.no/nb/index.html>

Inspira

Inspira is a digital examination website. Here you log in with your university account and make your browser suited for examination. You will have to upload term papers here as well. And many school exams will take place here on a computer in a special building, not located on campus.

<https://www.uio.no/studier/eksamen/inspira/>

Student web

This website is mainly used to sign up for courses and to receive exam results. Exams

are anonymous and you will need to use a candidate number instead of your name – the number as well as the exam place can also be found on student web.

<https://studentweb.uio.no/studentweb/login.jsf?inst=FSPROD>

Library (Oria)

The library websites are used to search for books or articles that you need to download for class. If you log onto the library websites from the university internet you will have access to a wide range of free articles. It is also possible to use a library VPN login (found at ub.uio.no) to login from home.

<http://www.ub.uio.no/english/index.html>

UiO Frontpage

When you go to UiO's frontpage you will find a section called "Services and Tools" where there are links to all the university websites mentioned above.

<http://www.uio.no/english/>

STUDENT COUNCIL

The student council can also help you with some of your questions. Below is an introduction of the current members of the council. Questions to the council can be sent to: pecoscouncil@gmail.com



My name is Ina Kristiansen, and I am the current president of the PECOS Student Council, and the main person in charge of communicating the students' feedback back to the programme leadership.



Hey guys! I'm Angelica "Angie" Estevez, the Vice President of the PECOS Student Council. I'm originally from Rhode Island, USA and I studied International Relations (B.A.) at the Karlshochschule International University in Germany. Thereafter, I began volunteering in educational literacy for the U.S. Peace Corps in the Dominican Republic before moving to Washington, DC to work with various think tanks, media outlets, and non-profits. I'm looking forward to meeting each one of you and for the good times to come. Welcome to PECOS!



Hello! My name is Gabriel Lönn and I have the role of treasurer in the PECOS Student Council. I'm originally from Sweden and outside of my academic life I love traveling, hiking and going to concerts. I look forward to seeing you all in August!



My name is Vera and I am the social event planner in the council. I very much enjoy this role as I get to plan and organise events for all of the PECOS-students. Last year we arranged various social and educational events (cabin trip and Christmas table to mention some), and I look forward to all of the upcoming events this semester . Please don't hesitate to contact me if you have any suggestions for events you want to see happen!



My name is Ragnhild Dalen, and I am the PECOS Program Council representative. The Program Council is a collaborative body with overall academic responsibility for political science and Peace and Conflict Studies (PECOS). The council adopts program changes, curricula, learning outcome descriptions and exam arrangements. As a representative of PECOS, I represent the opinions of PECOS students on ongoing issues, and have the opportunity to add issues to the agenda important to us in PECOS.



My name is David Camacho Largo and I am responsible for guidance and communication between the Student Council and the international students. Part of my tasks is answering questions regarding housing, police appointments and any doubt an international student might have.



My name is Kristin Lowater, and I'm the SVSU-representative for the PECOS student council. SVSU is a council consisting of representatives from each study programme, and work together to communicate the students' wishes and complaints to the faculty.

WHAT TO PACK?

Sofie Vilhelmsen (edit. Kaitlin Preusser)

Besides all the things you normally pack when moving, it might be good to include:

- o A sleeping bag (Norwegians REALLY love cabin trips and outdoor life)
- o Outdoor clothing
- o You may need copies of various documents for visa reasons (depending on your country). You can find more information [here](https://www.udi.no/en/)
- o Warm winter clothes and waterproof shoes
- o Also, if you are going to live in SiO housing, you will arrive to a room without duvet, pillows and Wi-Fi router/ethernet cable



NAVIGATE NORWEGIAN BUREAUCRACY

Indigo Trigg-Hauger

One of the most frustrating things in Norway will be the levels of bureaucracy you have to navigate.

Getting registered with the police and activating your visa is different for each country of origin. Once you do that

however, you can get a person number or ID number (not a D number, that's something different), which you need for almost everything important (bank account, tax card, health care). Your person number isn't given automatically on your visa card. To get it you will have to go to Skatteetaten (the tax office) to report your move to Norway. Make sure you check the website to see what documents you need (usually things like passport, ID card, housing contract, school offer etc.). When you report your move, you will be registered in the system and receive your ID number. (But remember, some of this information is different if you are from the EU/EEA versus the rest of the world, so best to double check.)

With that number, you can now open a bank account. One of the easier options is Skandiabanken. The website is unfortunately only in Norwegian, but it is one of the fastest options for foreigners (3 weeks approximately, versus 7-10 like others). Get a Norwegian-speaking friend to help!¹

¹ The waiting time for bank accounts varies a lot and sometimes others are faster. Tipp: Call the different banks and ask about that. DNB's

Once you have a bank account, you will get your bank-ID. This is not just for logging into your bank account. You need this for healthcare and other websites. You can request different kinds of bank ID (on your phone or codes on cards for example). It's also possible to get MinID login cards without having a bank account, but this ID is different from bank ID. (It's ridiculous, I know.) Here is a page with a comprehensive list: <http://eid.difi.no/en>

Now that you have ID codes, you can also create a profile on www.helsenorge.no, where you can choose your doctor, make appointments, and see your healthcare details. This applies even if you use SiO health services.

Do all of this registering as soon as possible and your life in Norway will be much easier.

white card for young people is also a popular account option for students in Norway [Edit. Katharina Vogt].

PRACTICAL THINGS WHEN LIVING IN OSLO

Sofie Vilhelmsen (edit. Kaitlin Preusser)

When you move to a new country there are of course many practical things that you need to sort out. Here is a short guide to some of them.

Visa and police registration

Since all of you come from different countries the visa requirements and police registration vary from person to person, I won't specify that here. However, Knutepunktet will inform you about this during their orientation week starting August 15th.

<https://www.uio.no/english/studies/international-students/events/orientation-day.html>

You can also find more information at the Norwegian Directorate for Immigration (UDI).

<https://www.udi.no/en/>

Open a bank account

As mentioned above, opening a bank account can take some time. So it is a good idea to get started as soon as you have the required ID-number. Some common banks are:

<https://sbanken.no/>

<https://www.dnb.no>

<https://skandiabanken.no>

Get a cell phone number

Getting a SIM-card is relatively easy. However, not all phones work with European SIM-cards, e.g. many American phones have this problem. The most common providers in Norway are:

<https://telia.no>

<https://www.telenor.no/privat/>

<https://ice.no/> (cheapest)

<https://mycall.no>

Unfortunately, most information is in Norwegian, so ask a Norwegian-speaking friend to help you.²

² Also, most providers don't offer subscription options if you don't have a ID number but only a pre pay option (which have less beneficial conditions) [Edit. Katharina Vogt].

Find an apartment

It can be quite hard to find an apartment in Oslo, and many new students sign up for the university housing system (SiO housing). <https://www.sio.no/en/housing>

If you would like your own apartment in the center, most postings are in Norwegian. But you can use Google-translate to get a general idea about the content, and then write them in English. Almost all Norwegians speak English very well, so that won't scare them away. However, there are many students searching for apartments in July, August and September. Don't be discouraged if they don't write you back, as it is not common to answer all the apartment messages. Try:

<https://www.finn.no/realestate/lettings/search.html?filters>
or <https://hybel.no/bolig-til-leie/oslo/>

Health services

As a student at UiO you have access to SiO health services, which includes doctors, dentists, and counselors.

<https://www.sio.no/en/health-services/>

Working in Oslo

The easiest way to find information about this is at the University of Oslo's Career Services. They hold workshops covering

topics such as job/tax rules for foreigners and how to find jobs in Norway as a non-Norwegian speaker.

<https://www.uio.no/english/studies/career/workshops.html>

Jobs are also listed on webpages (again in Norwegian) such as:

<https://www.finn.no>

<https://www.nav.no/no/Person>

LIVING IN OSLO

Laurence Herzog (edit. Kaitlin Preusser)

This part of the catalog will give you some insights into daily life in Oslo. Here you will find out about the best places to buy groceries, to go for a hike and to get a good cup of coffee.



Where to buy groceries?

It is no secret – Oslo is expensive. However, with some good advice you can significantly reduce your daily expenses. To get an idea of the possible expenses that await you here in Oslo visit the page of UiO about “[budget and cost of living](#)” or check out the homepage of [Numbeo](#), where you will find a price list of the most important products.

Grønland

The first advice you will hear from everyone here in Oslo: “Go to Grønland!” Well, the majority isn’t always right, but in this case, it is in fact a good piece of advice. In Grønland, you can find all you need - fruits, vegetables, meat, pita bread, hummus, dry Italian cookies etc. There are different shops you can go to: most of the shops are located close to the t-bane station “Grønland” (there is a big one in the pedestrian area just next to the station), but you will also find several shops around “Brugata” or along “Storgata,” including Asian food stores. These shops are a lot cheaper than all the other supermarkets.

Supermarket chains

Next to the smaller shops there are several supermarket chains here in Oslo. Here is a list of the best-known shops:

- Rema 1000 (discount)
- Kiwi (discount)
- Bunnpris (discount)
- Extra (discount)
- Coop prix (discount)
- Meny (supermarket)
- Coop (supermarket)
- 7-Eleven (convenience)
- Narvesen (convenience)
- Joker (convenience, open on Sundays)

If you are a foodie and in search of specific ingredients go to Jacobs or walk along Ullevål street where you can find different specialty shops.

Transport

Ruter is the company that is responsible for all means of transport in Oslo. However, for longer distances you will have to check the homepage of Vy, the train company. The easiest way to move around in Oslo is to buy a monthly Ruter-Card for zone 1 through the Ruter app or at a ticket booth. With this travelcard you can take any train,

tram, bus or ferry within the first zone. And don't forget: as soon as you have your student card, you can buy a ticket with the student discount. Make sure to also download the app "Studentbevis" since the transportation control officers will ask to see it if you have purchased a student ticket. It is not enough to only have the plastic student ID card since you have to prove you have paid the semester fee which is shown in the app.

To find the quickest routes or to buy tickets online, download the Ruter apps!³

Bars and cafés

There are a lot of different bars and cafés to discover in Oslo. Here is just a short list with some of our favorites you can use as a good starting point:

Kulturhuset (bar, café, events)

³ We also recommend *Bysykkel*, a public bike sharing system with many stations all over the city. It is especially interesting if you live in the city center. Check their prices and facilities on their homepage <https://oslobysyssel.no/en> [Edit. Katharina Vogt].

Fyrhuset Kuba (bar)
Himkok (bar)
Café Sara (bar)
Revolver (bar, events)
Blå (bar, club, events)
Café Sør (bar, café, events)
Izakaya (bar)
Oslo Mekaniske Verksted (bar, café)
Pust (café)
Tim Wendelboe (café)
Supreme Roastworks (café)
Stockfleths (café)
Mesh (café, events, coworking space)
Fuglen (café)
Ugla (café, bar)
Henrik Ibsen (café)
Heimatt (café)

There are also many student-run cafes/bars around UiO campus which are much cheaper, usually located in the basement of faculty buildings.



Hiking

There are many different beautiful spots to hike around Oslo, like the area around Sognsvann, Holmenkollen or Frognerseter.

There are also many homepages, such as <https://ut.no>, to get some inspiration for new hiking adventures. Another good idea for hiking enthusiasts is to join the “fjell”-club at the university which organizes regular hikes, climbing excursions and training. And if you just need good advice or if you are looking for a hiking buddy, write a post on a Facebook-page such as “Oslo hiking & outdoor adventures” where thousands of fellow students can help you out.

THE NORWEGIAN ONE-NIGHT STAND⁴

By Indigo Trigg-Hauger

International students all over Oslo are having their hearts broken by Norwegian “friends.” Here’s how to avoid it.

I thought I had cracked the Norwegian friend code. I had joined multiple clubs and student organizations, I had formed study groups, I had gone on cabin trips with my study program classmates. But weekend after weekend, I noticed something strange: I would attend a party or two on Friday and Saturday, enjoying the camaraderie and friendliness of intoxicated Norwegians. But every Monday I was left feeling lonely, an emotional hangover after a weekend of fun.

What was this phenomenon? The Norwegian friendship one-night stand.

Maybe you’re like me, going out every Friday with the confidence of an international student who is ready to take on these cold Norwegians. You know the drill: you can speak a little Norwegian when you’re drunk, you’ve got a pre-party lined up, and you can afford exactly two beers. But you’re still about to get your ass handed to you, because the new friend who just poured out his heart to you and unexpectedly and generously offered you one of his extra beers is not in it for the long haul. Neither is that woman who you just talked to for an hour about her latest relationship, or the girl who helped you find your lost shoe. You thought this was the beginning of a beautiful friendship, when it was in fact a friendship one-night stand.

When you see each other in the school cafeteria on Monday, they will not respond to you waving. If you say hello, it will be as if you exist on different planes in separate dimensions. And if you do somehow manage to get them to acknowledge you, it will be as if the night never happened, no matter how well you thought it went.

⁴ When reading the things about Norwegian social life and customs, please keep in mind that these are exaggerations and that Norwegians can be open and out-going as well and that they are mostly more than happy if you ask them if they want to hang out or say hi to them in the hallway ;). Also they are mostly friendly and polite [Edit. Katharina Vogt].

These “friends” only wanted a night of fun, no strings attached. But then how are you supposed to make friends? Native Norwegians make friends in primary school and never let go. It takes a lot to break in, and the only way is to beat them at their own game.

Norwegians’ primary driving instinct is embarrassment and shame. Everything they do or don’t do is in order to minimize these feelings. So when they see you, they’re remembering the night (if they do in fact remember it) with a lot of “fylleangst,” or “anxiety about their drunkenness.” They have no desire to revisit whatever secrets they divulged to you, so don’t bring it up. You know, and they know you know, but no one needs to say it out loud.

Try to hang out with friends of friends. It will make you seem less threatening the day after, and also increases the chances you will encounter them again, helping to build a connection in contexts other than confessional “1-AM-post-beer-kebab-shop.”

Finally, be ubiquitous. If possible, make friends in your workplace or study program, so they can’t avoid you. The regularity of your presence will make it more embarrassing to ignore you than to finally give in and embrace this burgeoning friendship.

The quest for Norwegian friends is long and arduous. But the day you have a normal conversation after a night out is the day you’ll know you did it.

Originally printed in Universitas, 31. March, 2017.

<http://universitas.no/nyheter/62286/the-norwegian-one-night-stand>

SOCIAL CUSTOMS IN NORWAY

Indigo Trigg-Hauger

Norwegians really love their personal space. If there is a space next to someone on the bus, it doesn't mean they want you to sit there or talk to them under any circumstances. Small talk with strangers is not just frowned upon – it's a sign of being slightly insane.

Generally, Norwegian social customs are all about sticking to yourself. For example, this means:

People rarely hold the door for each other. Don't be surprised if they're frequently slammed in your face.

At parties, you are expected to bring your own alcohol. People will not share (but if they do, it means you're very close friends for life).

You will have to make the first move if you want to be friends with a Norwegian. They can seem very shy, indifferent, or cold, but they really are open to making new friends. It just takes some effort.

But even though all of this is normal in Norway, it doesn't mean you have to conform. Norwegians understand that many other cultures are friendlier, more talkative, more outgoing, etc. Just be yourself – but don't expect reciprocation, because you'll be disappointed. Norwegians are not trying to be rude, cold, exclusionary, or mean. This is just how they try to be polite: by infringing on other people's lives as little as possible.

If you want to have an easier time making friends with Norwegians and understanding the culture though, learning Norwegian is the best way. Although everyone speaks English, knowing enough to have a basic conversation will go a long way toward integration, and creating a feeling of being at home here. There are Norwegian language classes at UiO, plenty of café meetings where people practice with

each other, many fun Norwegian-language TV series, books, and movies, and of course

clubs where you can join a new activity and practice speaking.

THE NORWEGIAN ART OF AVOIDANCE

When being considerate is all about inconveniencing others

By Indigo Trigg-Hauger

I'll never forget the first time a Norwegian snuck up on me – or at least, the first time I noticed. I was standing in the grocery store contemplating what kind of milk to buy, which was taking a little longer than normal, since I had to parse the Norwegian labels. I decided, grabbed my milk out of the case, turned around – and realized there was someone standing right behind me.

I felt bad for blocking their way, as they were clearly waiting for me to move, but I was also creeped out. Why couldn't they have just asked me to move? Little did I know this was going to be a regular part of my life in Norway.

It doesn't only occur in the dairy aisle though. When strolling down the sidewalk, bicyclists will sometimes ride immediately behind me, the way too narrow for them to go around me, yet they insist on nearly hitting my heels. They ride without a sound, the bell on their handlebars clearly just decorative.

These things are not meant to be infuriating though, even if that's the result. Norwegians are under the impression that if they don't talk to anyone, everyone will be happier. And certainly that is the case when one goes to the movies, visits a church, or attends a silent meditation retreat. It does not apply when words are the only way to alert someone to your presence, making life easier for all involved.

Bus riders are the best example of this. Commuters in Oslo would not speak to each other if their lives depended on it. If there are two seats available, they will always take the one on the aisle, just so that they don't have to – God forbid! – interact with someone who might sit in the other one when it is time to disembark.

Rather, leaving the window seat open seems the most prudent choice to them. Instead however, this results in two inconvenient options for their fellow riders: either try to get past this person in order to sit down, thereby forcing social interaction nonetheless, or simply standing and leaving the seat open, causing a jam throughout the bus as several people leave seats open. The resulting sardine can mean everyone else has to stand far too close to their bus riders. And naturally the middle of the bus is never utilized either, for similar reasons. The fear that one might have to make others aware of one's existence is unbearable.

And yet, there is something tempting about this art of avoidance. One day I found myself standing behind someone in front of the dairy section, waiting impatiently. I could have asked them to move with just a polite "unnskyld." But I wouldn't want to bother them.

Originally printed in Universitas, 26. May, 2017.

<http://universitas.no/nyheter/62441/the-norwegian-art-of-avoidance>

SOCIAL ACTIVITIES ON CAMPUS

Laurence Herzog

In this section, you will get a brief introduction into the student life on campus.

Associations

Associations are an important part of Norwegian student life! At UiO there are

more than 450 different associations and organizations which offer great opportunities to get to know new people and have a fun time next to your studies. [Here](#) you find the list which includes all the different associations. If you are interested in joining one of them, visit their homepage or Facebook-page and contact them. Normally you can join the associations at any time in the semester.

If you want to be a member of a sport association that is part of [OSL](#), the Oslo Student Sports Club, you will need to sign

up for membership on the national homepage [Min Idrett](#). For more information on how to sign up, check out the homepage of OSI or ask a member of the association you would like to join.

Fitness

If you are looking for a good location to do training and different kinds of sports, take a look at the homepage of [SIO Athletica](#). As a member, you have access to all their centers and group activities. In the five different clubs that are spread throughout the city (with one on Blindern campus), you not only find a large gym area with cardiovascular and weight training, but also swimming areas, tennis and squash courts, football fields and so on. Moreover, they also provide personal training and physiotherapy for an additional fee. The easiest way to get a member of SIO Athletica is to go to a counter in one of the clubs.

Bars, cafés and cafeterias on campus

There are many bars and café at Blindern where you can get a nice cup of coffee or a well-earned beer after a long day of

studying. You find all the cafés and bars on the homepage of [SIO](#). We can recommend *U1*, the bar in Eilert Sundt hus, where you find the cheapest coffee on campus (8 NOK!!) and *Escape*, a nice bar with concerts and other activities at Forskningsparken. Another popular location is [Chateau Neuf](#), the main location of the Norwegian Student Society, which is located next to the t-bane station Majorstuen. They organize many events such as film evenings, discussion panels, concerts and parties. Moreover, they have their own café/bar on the ground floor of the building, and another café/bar upstairs.

If you have any questions regarding the student life at UIO, it is a good idea to post it on the Facebook page: [International Students at The University of Oslo \(UiO\)](#) where fellow international students can share their experience with you.



PEACE RESEARCH FORUMS AND SEMINARS

Sverke Saxegaard

As you have chosen to study Peace and Conflict Studies I assume you are of a curious inclination. Extracurricular forums, seminars, debates and talks on interesting and relevant topics is an important part of the student experience. These are the places to go for inspiration, up to date empirics and theories, and a great way to be social. You will probably discover that it is much easier to bring a Norwegian to some sort of event than to just invite them out for a drink. Additionally, most events are free, and often include free food of some sorts. What follows is a list of organizations who organize or host interesting events and some bigger events of interest.

Peace Research Institute Oslo **PRIO**

PRIO is an international interdisciplinary research institute of Peace Research. They arrange lots of seminars, book launches, talks, and bigger events. A clear majority of the events are in English, and they are almost always open for the public. The events normally take place at Hausmanns gate 3. Their events are available at:

<https://www.prio.org/Events>

The Norwegian Nobel Institute

The Nobel Institute serves as the secretariat for the Nobel Peace Prize. Sometimes they arrange meetings, lectures and seminars. As the Nobel Peace Prize is internationally renowned you can expect events of high academic quality. Their offices are located at Henrik Ibsens Gate 51. You can find a calendar of their events at:

<https://www.nobelpeaceprize.org/Events>.

Norwegian Institute of International Affairs **NUPI**

NUPI is a research institute for international relations. They arrange events almost every week in a range of relevant topics. A clear majority of the events are in English, and they are almost always open

for the public. Most events will be held at their offices at C. J. Hambros Plass 2. To browse the possibilities, visit:

<http://www.nupi.no/en/events>

The Norwegian Atlantic Committee **DNAK**

DNAK is a politically independent organisation with a goal to contribute to increased knowledge and debate about Norwegian foreign-, defense-, and security policy. They arrange seminars and conferences. Some of them will be in English. The best way to see what they do is to follow them on Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/Atlanterhavskomiteen>

Youth Atlantic Treaty Organisation **YATA**

YATA is the Youth-, and young professional organisation of DNAK. They host seminars and workshops just as DNAK and collaborates tightly. Be aware, even though the calendar is in Norwegian, many events will be in English. The best way to find the events are to follow “YATA Oslo” on Facebook or go to:

<http://yata.no/events-category/arrangementer-oslo/>

University of Oslo -related events **UIO**

The University of Oslo hosts a number of events that might be interesting for Peace and Conflict Studies Students, such as guest lectures, debates, dissertations and so on. A full calendar of the English language events is available at:

<http://www.uio.no/english/about/news-and-events/events/>

Agenda and Civita

Agenda and Civita are the competing think-tanks for the “right” and the “left” of Norwegian politics. They host a number of interesting debates, seminars, lunch, and breakfast meetings. These are primarily in Norwegian unfortunately, but once in a while they will have events in English.

As a rule of thumb: If the event text is in English the event will be. Their events can be found at:

<https://tankesmienagenda.no/arrangementer/and>

<https://www.civita.no/arrangementer>.

The House of Literature

The house of literature (Litteraturhuset in Norwegian) is located at Wergelandsveien 29 and is a hotspot for debates, seminars, book launches and so on. They also have a

nice bookshop and an expensive bar/restaurant. Many events you find will be hosted here. Again, look for English language in the event. A calendar of events can be found at:

<http://www.litteraturhuset.no/program/>

The House of Culture

The House of Culture (Kulturhuset in Norwegian) is a bar/café/concert arena at Youngsgate 6. A number of events and debates will be held here. Most events will be in Norwegian, but once in a while you will find your English language gem. They always host great election night vigils (valgvoke in Norwegian).

Their program can be found at:

<http://kulturhusetioslo.no/hvaskjer/>

Big events that might be of interest:

- o The UiO festival in May
- o Oslo Freedom Forum in May
- o The Nobel Peace Prize Forum in September
- o NORSEC in April/May
- o Human Rights Human Wrongs film festival in February
- o PRIO annual Peace address in September



ACADEMIC CULTURE AND EXPECTATIONS

Victoria Ramm Henriksen (edit.
Kaitlin Preusser)

Welcome to Norway! With this section the PECOS Student Council hopes to give you a smooth introduction to Norwegian academic culture, which might be very different from what you are used to. We will present some dos and don'ts as well as some tips and tricks for you to have an easier transition to life in Norwegian academics.

You're on your own – learn to deal with it!

In Norway we practice a mantra: “you are responsible for your own learning”, which implies that you need to rely on yourself to a great extent. This influences the way classes are taught, how you get information, and many other aspects of life in Norwegian academics.

Getting information and getting started

When you arrive in August, the program council will give you a brief introduction of what to expect from the master’s program, classes etc. However, you are still expected to find out most of the details on your own. Compared to other universities you don’t get emails or other information provided to you, and you are responsible for remembering and keeping deadlines on your own. By using the university [webpages](#), you can find out most of what you wonder by a few clicks. If after thoroughly searching the web pages you still cannot find the information you need, or an answer to your question, you can email the administration or the relevant professors. However, professors are almost

always only responsible for teaching and may not be able to help you with administrative questions such as where to hand in your paper, word counts, locations for lectures and exams and so on.

Signing up for classes

Student web is where you sign up for classes and exams each semester, and pay the semester-fee. Signing up on the student web for each semester is related to deadlines that you need to keep in mind. Always remember the deadlines, and also check the student web in good time before exams. Student web is where you find your candidate number, as well as time and location for exams. Don’t use your name if there is a candidate number available on the student web. This is due to ensure anonymity in the grading process. For more information about exams see the section “exams” below. Information about deadlines and a closer explanation of student web can be found [here](#).

Reading materials and books

Being responsible for your own learning also influences how classes are taught.

Normally you get an extended reading list at the start of each semester, which often is divided into smaller lists of expected readings for each lecture. Contrary to other universities you are also expected to find the readings on your own by using the University Library websites or Google-scholar. This is supposed to teach you how to access and search for information independently, and is a good skill to have when you start working on your master's thesis. Getting acquainted with the library early can be a huge advantage, especially since many of the books can be quite expensive (500-1000 NOK when bought at the Akademika bookstore on campus). Librarians can also help you search for journals and articles throughout the school year. Normally at the start of the semester the library organizes a "Library-course" and the PECOS student council highly recommends that you take the time participating in that course.

In addition it can be nice to know where you buy printing, which is done [online](#). You can print in the reading rooms in *Eilert Sundts Hus* second floor, and in the third floor there are some technical personnel

that can be of assistance if you experience technical difficulties in relation to the school software, printing etc. You can also print by using the library printers, located at the main library, *Georg Sverdrups Hus*. [Here](#) you can find more information about the campus.

Getting through the school year

Normally you have a limited number of classes for each course, and it is generally expected that you read and prepare in advance. Class discussion is generally regarded as good. Especially in the small PECOS classes' participation is important, and not rude. Most professors think it is more fun to teach if the students are engaged, and have lively discussions related to the readings. Otherwise, you can risk that the lectures become nothing more than a summary of the readings.

There are few tests and follow up through the year. Study groups/discussion groups can therefore be very important supplements to lectures. This gives you a chance to discuss and process information with your fellow students. You are responsible for forming study groups on

your own. It is also fairly easy to access seminar rooms in *Harriet Holters Hus* or in the University Library, where you can meet up. Early in the semester most rooms are free and you won't need to book a room. However as exams approach more students wish to book seminar rooms for study-groups, and it can therefore be smart to book a room [online](#).

Contact with professors is generally limited, and this might be a surprise for many of you. Most professors have office hours where they are available to students. Even though contact with professors is limited, it is often encouraged that students reach out to professors. Additionally, some professors question why students don't want to talk to them and use the office hours more frequently. However not all professors have published their office hours online, and in that case, you can take the initiative and ask them about it during class. If you have substantive questions, related to classes or your master thesis, you can also contact professors by email and ask for a meeting at their convenience.

Norwegian professors, like most Norwegians, are very informal. This means

that you usually address them by their name. So, don't fall into the trap of calling them "Mr./Mrs./Professor," however be aware that foreign professors might prefer other forms of address.

General information about exams

After a semester of discussions, lectures, and readings, the exams come and spook you. The section is thus devoted to giving you some general information about exams. In Norway there is very little evaluation going on through the course of the semester and normally you might only hand in one term paper and/or have one school exam for each course.

You find almost all information about exam type, rules and guidelines on the [course-page](#). The student council strongly suggests that you read these online course pages. However, when exams approach you also need to check the student web.

Additionally, it is your responsibility to make sure that your examination dates don't collide. This becomes especially important as you start choosing electives. Sometimes school-exams are held on the

same date, and then you normally need to pick one of them. It is generally no excuse to miss an exam, even if you have another exam in the same time period. The exception here is if you fall ill, but then you need a note from your doctor. More information can be found [here](#). In relation to this you might also choose electives outside the department of political science, but then you need to verify with the administration that you can include those courses as a part of your master program.

School exams

As the location for a school exam can be far away you need to check in the student web where you need to go. The University of Oslo has many buildings outside the Blindern campus and you might have to travel outside the city centre on the examination day. It is also important to be on time for the examination. If you are late you probably won't get to take the exam. Therefore, it is prudent to be at the location at least half an hour before the exam starts. You also need to bring valid ID, though normally your student ID will suffice.

School exams are given on *Inspira*, and it is encouraged to familiarize yourself with this software prior to the actual examination.

You can also benefit from bringing a dictionary to the exam; this is done by following the instructions [here](#). It is not advised to spend too much time on spell checks during the exam, as you are often pressed for time. Normally, the exam will consist of an essay question and a couple of short answer questions. Normally, the professors will advise you to write short answers on the short-answer questions. Remember to answer what you are asked, and not something else. However, if you are aiming for the top grades it can be smart to write more than one or two sentences. It can sometimes pay off to show that you understand the connection between the different lectures and readings by writing a bit of a discussion on the short answers as well. This is just advice and how you do it is totally up to you. During most Norwegian exams it is also rare to leave before the time is up, so most students stay and work until the last minute.

Term papers and home exams

You will normally find information about term papers and home exams on the course web page. Normally, written assignments will have a word limit and other specifications such as font specifications, hand-in date etc., and it is important that you follow the guidelines provided. If your paper exceeds the word limit, some professors might fail it. The word limit generally does not include the front page and bibliography, but you need to check on the course page that usually mentions this or ask your professor. As for referencing styles, professors might prefer different styles. However, as long as you are consistent most styles are allowed. You can read more about referencing [here](#).

Another tip for written assignments is that most professors prefer headings and subheadings. You can regard this document as an example in this regard. There are of course individual styles and preferences related to how you prefer to structure your written work, but having some sort of structure will pay off. There is of course nothing that stops you from asking your

professor what he/she prefers in this regard.

Normally you hand in written assignments in *Inspira*, and less often on *Canvas*.

Evaluations

Grades are normally published on the student web three weeks after the deadline, or examination date. You will not automatically be given an explanation of your grade, so if you want that you need to fill out a form within one week after publication of the grade. The reason why you don't get an automatic explanation is because it takes a lot of time for the sensors. However, you are entitled to an explanation if you so choose. You can also appeal or complain about your grade. If you wish to do this it is the final grade that stands and this cannot be re-appealed. It can therefore be wise to first ask for an explanation of the grade before you decide to appeal the grade.

More information on explanations of grades and appeals can be found [here](#).

STUDY AND SELF-MOTIVATION

Bård Nikolas Vik Steen

“A scholar is always made alone and sober” - according to John Adams. Unfortunately, he is probably right. Although the level of sobriety (or rather, the lack thereof) is certainly not the point at which the University of Oslo differs from other academic institutions, the feeling of being alone could be one of them. Don't worry, I am not attempting to frighten you into thinking that your time at the University of Oslo will be one spent in solitary confinement. Rather, what you should be aware of is the extreme level of independence expected of each of you. Indeed, this is perhaps the greatest difference those of you experienced with a different type of university structure will notice. It is certainly the most important thing to which you will have to adapt and I think it is the best piece of general advice I can give.

Not only does the law consider you to have 'read' any email sent to your university

email address, you are also expected to navigate the university websites to access pretty much all information. You will probably live far from the university, administration of your studies will be managed primarily by you and it is unlikely that the administration will notice if you are missing from class before you miss out on your exams.

This does not mean that it is impossible to do great things both academically and socially at the University of Oslo. What it does mean, is that in order to do so, you will have to manage all aspects of your life yourself. If you do not navigate the websites to find curriculums, schedules or examination codes, no one will do it. If you do not investigate the massive array of available student groups and sports, they will not hunt you down. If you do not seek out the student doctor, dentist or shrink, they will not come running - bone saw in hand - to examine you.

For some of you, this may have been the normal state of affairs for some time. Others will be like me when I first arrived from my studies in England. Used to having the university provide every piece of

information for me long before I had even conceived of the necessity of obtaining it, I nearly ruined a year of study because I failed to check my email. You might think it cold, you might even think it wrong, but this is simply the prize you pay for having free universities aimed at educating the entire populations – not just the elites.

Although it might be difficult to do well if you do not take responsibility for your own situation, consider this warning, indeed this entire booklet, a good sign. Those of us who came before you to join this brilliant and challenging course are very much committed to help you navigate the peculiarities of studying in Oslo. If you start by approaching your new life as a fun job in which you may study, laugh and drink, but at the same time must stay devoted to keeping your calendar in order, I am certain that you will do very well indeed.

After all, both the course, the city and the students are quite exceptional if you choose to engage with them.

FEELING OVERWHELMED?

Sofie Vilhelmsen

I hope that the information sections did not overwhelm you too much! And don't be too scared about the social life – after all you are about to start studying with several other students in the same boat as you in one of the most beautiful countries in the world.

And in case that thought is not enough to ease your nerves about moving to Norway and meeting new friends, think about all that great and beautiful Norwegian nature just waiting to be explored.

If you love the outdoors, Norway is a perfect country to live in! Not only is the country filled with beautiful fjords, mountains and lakes, it is also easily accessible, organized and home to an almost uncountable number of hiking trails. When planning your trip you might want to look at the following websites:

<https://www.visitnorway.no>

<https://www.dnt.no>



Whether you love outdoor life or not, the one thing all students learn to love is “koselighet”. A common word used in Norway is koselig, but it is impossible to translate into English. If you translate it directly from English you get the word cozy, but in Norway it covers so much more than that. It is used to describe a good atmosphere, a nice hangout or a comfortable conversation, for instance if you sit around a bonfire toasting s’mores.

So, come to Norway; meet some great people in the PECOS-program, enjoy the beautiful nature and learn what *koselig* means 😊