

## **Sensorveiledninger for HGO4080 og HGO4090**

Programrådet i samfunnsgeografi vedtok i sitt møte 13.mars 2019 (sak 3 (20/2019) forslag for sensorveiledninger for HGO4090 og HGO4080. Mindre justeringer ble foreslått. Endelig oppdatert tekst for sensorveiledninger presenteres her.

Oppfølging:

- Sensorveiledningene settes som O-sak i sakskart for programrådsmøte 3.april 2019.
- Sensorveiledningen publiseres i emnesider og andre relevante programsider omgående.
- Nødvendige endringer i emnebeskrivelser presenteres til vedtak i møte 3.april 2019.
- Engelsk versjon av karakterbeskrivelser for masteroppgaver i samfunnsgeografi skal lenkes opp i sensorveiledninger.

Jgg

22.03.2019

### **Tilleggsnotat:**

Programrådet i samfunnsgeografi tok opp i sitt møte 11.september 2019 Sak 10 (59/2019) Omfang på masteroppgaven. Programrådet valgte å justere dagens omfang for masteroppgavene HGO4080 og HGO4090. For HGO4090 blir det 40000 ord +/-25%. For HGO4080 blir det 24000 ord +/- 25%. Både emneside og sensorveiledning oppdateres, og oppdatert emnebeskrivelse vedtas i programrådsmøtet 9. oktober. Dette vil gjelde for alle oppgaver som leveres inn fra og med 1.januar 2020.

Jgg

23.09.2019

**Course code:** HGO4090 Master thesis, 60 credits

**Type of examination:** Master thesis and oral examination

<https://www.uio.no/studier/emner/sv/iss/HGO4090/index.html>

The master thesis constitutes independent academic research and the core of the master's degree programme in Human Geography. The master's thesis prepares students for developing and carrying out an independent academic research project. Students gain experience in the use of research methods and in linking theory to empirical evidence. Students develop their theses under the guidance of an academic staff member.

High academic quality in terms of formulation of the research question, argumentation and presentation of the material is required of all master's theses in human geography. The independent research should be conducted with an expected input that corresponds to the credits that the Master's thesis are allocated. The assessment of the individual thesis must take into consideration the required workload involved in the production of the thesis.

### **I. About the 60-credits Master Thesis in Human Geography**

The fulfillment of HGO4090 implies the delivery of a master thesis for evaluation and an adjusting oral examination on the thesis and its topic.

The 60-credits master thesis reflects research carried out over the period of two semesters. Students are encouraged to start working on the thesis in the second semester, allocating time corresponding to a 10-credits course workload. The workload increases to 20-credits the third semester, and full-time workload (30-credits) in the fourth (final) semester of the programme.

### **II. Criteria for evaluating a 60-credits master thesis in Human Geography**

The evaluation of a master thesis is based on an overall assessment of the thesis as academic work. The following criteria should be considered in evaluating a 60-credits master thesis in human geography:

Aim of the thesis – Problem statement

- The aim of the research should be clearly formulated. The thesis should have clear and limited research questions.
- The student should address the scientific relevance of the study (theoretically, methodologically and/or empirically), as well as its relevance for the discipline and/or society.

→ *Does the thesis have a clear aim/research question(s) and focus?*

Theory and previous research, literature review

- The thesis should include a review of the relevant research field, providing a critical assessment of previous research on the chosen theme/topic.
- The thesis should be informed by a selected theoretical framework/point of departure, concepts and model of analysis. These should be presented in a coherent and argumentative way, explicitly indicating how they contribute to address the research questions.

→ *Does the thesis demonstrate a satisfactory overview of the research field?*

→ *Is there a critical discussion of the literature presented?*

#### Methods and the reliability and validity of the data

- The thesis should include a detailed presentation of the method(s) used, explicitly stating the reasons for the choice of methodology.
- The student should explicitly address the strengths and weaknesses of the methods chosen.
- The thesis should provide an exact account of how the data may be influenced by problems during data collection.
- A discussion of ethical issues of the data gathering process should be provided.
- Detailed explanation of how the data are treated/analyzed.
- If the thesis does not include primary data collection, there should be a critical review of information sources.

→ *Does the thesis demonstrate a satisfactory use of methods?*

→ *Is there a critical discussion of the methods used?*

#### Analysis

- The analysis should be done in a systematic, logical, sophisticated and independent manner.
- There should be a clear “red thread”, i.e. link, between research questions, theory, method and the use of the data.
- The interpretation of the empirical material presented in the thesis should be informed by and based on a critical assessment of the chosen theoretical framework.
- The findings should refer to the data collected.
- The research questions should be answered explicitly and fully.

→ *Is the argument made well formulated and anchored in the presented material?*

→ *Is the analysis well done? Does the thesis demonstrate appropriate, independent and critical analysis?*

#### Conclusions

- The conclusions of the study should be formulated in a clear and concise manner, highlighting the main findings of the research as well as the contribution to the discipline.
- The findings should be discussed in a wider theoretical and empirical perspective.
- Suggestions of policy implication of the findings and future research may be given.

→ *Does the thesis answer its own research questions?*

→ *Does the thesis contribute to the research front?*

#### Structure and form

- Does the thesis have a well organized and logical structure?
- Is there any unnecessary content in the thesis outside of the “red thread”?
- Does the thesis apply the theoretical framework presented? Is the use of concepts consistent?
- Does the thesis comply with established scientific norms and formal rules regarding referencing in academic writing?
- Does the thesis comply with the formal requirements established by the master’s programme in Human Geography?

### **III. Formal requirements for the 60-credits master thesis**

The following requirements apply for 60-credits master theses:

- Course work equivalent to 60-credits must be completed before delivering the thesis for evaluation.
- The length of a 60-credit master's thesis is maximum 40 000 words +/- 25% including everything (cover page, summary, table of contents, preface, reference list, annexes, figures, acronyms, etc.).
- The thesis will include a summary of 1-2 pages, to appear after the cover page.
- The master thesis must be page numbered, and include a table of contents and list of references.
- Font size 12 points, line spacing 1 1/2.
- Projects involving the use of personal information must be registered at Norsk senter for Forskningsdata (NSD), se [https://nsd.no/personvernombud/meld\\_prosjekt/meldeskjema](https://nsd.no/personvernombud/meld_prosjekt/meldeskjema)

#### *About the cover page of the thesis*

The cover page must include the following information:

- Full title of the thesis
- Full name of the student
- Semester (Spring/Autumn), year of delivery
- Study programme, department, faculty, university
- Word count (total)

#### *About the length of the thesis*

- Theses that exceed the word limit will be rejected, and a new submission deadline will apply.
- If there is a need to deviate from the maximum word limit, the student must, together with his/her supervisor, apply to the head of studies three weeks before the submission deadline. The application must be academically justified.
- Theses with extensive quantitative and/or GIS material tend to be shorter in length. This will be taken into consideration and will not detract from the evaluation of the thesis. It is the quality of the content, not the number of words that is evaluated.

#### **IV. Guidelines for the oral examination**

The oral examination takes place after the thesis has been graded.

The aim of the adjusting oral examination is to engage into academic dialogue with the candidate on the basis of the master thesis. The evaluation committee will provide general feedback on the thesis and address both strengths and weaknesses of the work, as well as potential areas in need of clarification.

Once the oral examination is completed, the evaluation committee can adjust the final grade of thesis as a result of the oral examination, either one grade up or one grade down. Adjustments apply normally in situations where the committee is in doubt about the grade most appropriate for the thesis, or when the thesis is at the edge of another grade. Deviation from this rule must be justified by the committee in written form.

Students can request to know the grade of their thesis at the beginning of the oral examination. Unless it is explicitly requested by the student upon arrival, the committee will proceed with the oral examination first and inform the student of the grades for both the thesis and oral examination at the end of the proceedings.

**Course code:** HGO4080 Master thesis, 30 credits

**Type of examination:** Master thesis and oral examination

<https://www.uio.no/studier/emner/sv/iss/HGO4080/index.html>

The master thesis constitutes independent academic research and the core of the master's degree programme in Human Geography. The master's thesis prepares students for developing and carrying out an independent academic research project. Students gain experience in the use of research methods and in linking theory to empirical evidence. Students develop their theses under the guidance of an academic staff member.

High academic quality in terms of formulation of the research question, argumentation and presentation of the material is required of all master's theses in human geography. The independent research should be conducted with an expected input that corresponds to the credits that the Master's thesis are allocated. Delimitation of the study in order to complete it within the time frame is part of the challenge. The assessment of the individual thesis must take into consideration the required workload involved in the production of the thesis.

### **I. About the 30-credits Master Thesis in Human Geography**

The fulfillment of HGO4080 implies the delivery of a master thesis for evaluation and an adjusting oral examination on the thesis and its topic.

A master thesis of 30 credits is an option for students who wish to carry out independent academic research of a lesser scope compared to a 60 credit master's thesis. The 30-credits master thesis reflects research carried out over a period of one semester. Students are encouraged to start planning for their thesis topic/project in advance, but are expected to engage on full-time workload (30-credits) in the fourth (final) semester of the programme.

Lesser scope refers to how comprehensive the academic work required for the individual research project is. Independent research of a minor scope involves:

- More limited research questions and/or narrowly defined research topic.
- More focused and selective review of relevant literature and analytical framework.
- More reliance on secondary sources.
- More limited fieldwork and/or primary data collection.

All 30-credits master theses should include both analytical and empirical elements. The balance between these elements reflects the type of study the student chooses to undertake. Accordingly,

- Basically empirical studies should be informed by conceptual clarification.
- Basically theoretical studies should include empirical examples.
- A mixed- type of study will include both conceptual clarification and empirical examples.

### **II. Criteria for evaluating a 30-credits master thesis in Human Geography**

The evaluation of a master thesis is based on an overall assessment of the thesis as academic work. The following criteria should be considered in evaluating a 30-credits master thesis in human geography:

#### Aim of the thesis – Problem statement

- The aim of the research should be clearly formulated. The thesis should have clear and limited research questions.
  - The student should address the scientific relevance of the study (theoretically, methodologically or empirically), as well as its relevance for the discipline and/or society.
- *Does the thesis have a clear aim/research question(s) and focus?*

#### Theory and previous research, literature review

- The thesis should include a focused and selective review of the relevant research field, providing a critical assessment of the chosen material.
  - The thesis should be informed by a focused theoretical framework, concepts and model of analysis. These should be presented in a coherent and argumentative way, explicitly indicating how they contribute to address the research questions.
- *Does the thesis demonstrate a satisfactory overview of the research field?*  
→ *Is there a critical discussion of the literature presented?*

#### Methods and the reliability and validity of the data

- The thesis should include a detailed presentation of the method(s) used, explicitly stating the reasons for the choice of methodology, including strengths and weaknesses.
  - If primary data is collected, the thesis should provide an account of how it may be influenced by problems during data collection, as well as a discussion of ethical issues.
  - If the thesis does not include primary data collection, there should be a critical review of information sources.
  - Detailed explanation of how the data are treated/analysed.
- *Does the thesis demonstrate a satisfactory and reflective use of methods?*

#### Analysis

- The analysis should be done in a systematic, logical, sophisticated and independent manner.
  - There should be a clear “red thread”, i.e. link, between research questions, theory, method and the use of the data.
  - The interpretation of the empirical material presented in the thesis should be informed by and based on a critical assessment of the chosen theoretical framework.
  - The findings should refer to the data collected.
  - The research questions should be answered explicitly and fully.
- *Is the argument made well formulated and anchored in the presented material?*  
→ *Is the analysis well done? Does the thesis demonstrate appropriate, independent and critical analysis?*

#### Conclusions

- The conclusions of the study should be formulated in a clear and concise manner, highlighting the main findings of the research as well as the contribution to the research field.
  - The findings can be discussed in a wider theoretical and empirical perspective.
  - Suggestions of policy implication of the findings and future research may be given.
- *Does the thesis answer its own research questions?*  
→ *Does the thesis reflect on its contribution to the research field?*

#### Structure and form

- Does the thesis have a well organized and logical structure?

- Is there any unnecessary content in the thesis outside of the “red thread”?
- Does the thesis apply the analytical framework presented? Is the use of concepts consistent?
- Are the examples provided relevant to the theoretical discussion?
- Does the thesis comply with established scientific norms and formal rules regarding referencing in academic writing?
- Does the thesis comply with the formal requirements established by the master’s programme in Human Geography?

### **III. Formal requirements for the 30-credits master thesis**

The following requirements apply for 30-credits master theses:

- Course work equivalent to 90-credits must be completed before delivering the thesis for evaluation.
- The length of a 30-credit master’s thesis should be maximum 24,000 +/- 25% including everything (cover page, summary, table of contents, preface, reference list, annexes, figures, acronyms, etc.).
- The thesis will include a summary of 1-2 pages, to appear after the cover page.
- The master thesis must be page numbered, and include a table of contents and list of references.
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- Study programme, department, faculty, university
- Word count (total)

#### *About the length of the thesis*

- Theses that exceed the word limit will be rejected, and a new submission deadline will apply.
- If there is a need to deviate from the maximum word limit, the student must, together with his/her supervisor, apply to the head of studies three weeks before the submission deadline. The application must be academically justified.
- Theses with extensive quantitative and/or GIS material tend to be shorter in length. This will be taken into consideration and will not detract from the evaluation of the thesis. It is the quality of the content, not the number of words that is evaluated.

### **V. Guidelines for the oral examination**

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The aim of the adjusting oral examination is to engage into academic dialogue with the candidate on the basis of the master thesis. The evaluation committee will provide general feedback on the thesis and address both strengths and weaknesses of the work, as well as potential areas in need of clarification.

The evaluation committee can adjust the final grade of thesis as a result of the oral examination, either one grade up or one grade down. Adjustments apply normally in situations where the

committee is in doubt about the grade most appropriate for the thesis, or when the thesis is at the edge of another grade. Deviation from this rule must be justified by the committee in written form.

Students can request to know the grade of their thesis at the beginning of the oral examination. Unless it is explicitly requested by the student upon arrival, the committee will proceed with the oral examination first and inform the student of the grades for both the thesis and oral examination at the end of the proceedings.