

## GRADING GUIDE – HUMAN GEOGRAPHY

**Course code and semester-year:** HGO4401 – Autumn 2023

**Type of examination:** Term paper self-chosen topic

**General criteria for exams at SGO/HGO:** A good examination paper contains solid knowledge, logical and coherent reasoning and a systematic structure. The answer to a discussion question/task must examine, analyze, and connect different parts of the curriculum.

1. The answer responds to the question/task given in a precise and exhaustive way.
2. The answer demonstrates knowledge.
3. The answer must be well-written: coherent and using good academic language.
4. Key concepts – those at the core of the answer – must be defined.
5. The answer demonstrates analytical capacity and reflection.

### About this course:

HGO4011 – Democratization and civil society in developing countries – examines the dynamics and forms of democratization in developing countries, with special emphasis on the politics of democratic transition, 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.

The course draws on interdisciplinary literature and debates, while also foregrounding political geographic approaches and contributions. The course is designed to give a broad overview of the field and a theoretical basis for master degree studies in human geography within the field of democratization and civil society in developing studies.

The learning outcomes for the course are:

**Knowledge.** Students shall attain: (1) A good overview of key theoretical issues and debates on democratization/autocratization and civil society in developing countries; (2) 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: (1) Ability to understand and critically assess theoretical and contextual literature on democratization/autocratization and civil society in developing countries. (2) Ability to write an academic review paper at an advanced level within the course topic.

**Competences.** Students shall attain: (1) Critical reflexivity around the form, substance and political dynamics of democratization/autocratization and popular participation/representation in developing countries; (2) Reflexivity around theoretical strategies and challenges of doing research on democratization and civil society in the Global South.

**About the exam:**

The course assessment is based on a term paper that students work on throughout the semester.

The topic for the term paper is decided by each student in consultation with the course instructor and must be within the thematic focus of the course. Students are encouraged to seek advice from the course instructor on the topic, structure, and literature for the term paper. The maximum length of the term paper is 4000 words (plus references and notes).

The students are expected to formulate a research goal/research question for the term paper and examine this based on available scholarly literature. The paper can have a theoretical or empirical orientation, or a combination of both, but it is important that the purpose is clearly formulated, and the paper is structured and argued accordingly. The students are expected to draw on the readings and lectures in the course. They can also bring in additional literature, but this is not a requirement. The grade is set based on the student's ability to produce a high-quality paper that answers the specified aim (see the general criteria for exams at HGO above).