

2020

### Guidelines for examiners, HGO 4605

The students shall write a paper that answers one of the two exam questions. Each of the two exam questions contains a number of sub-questions to guide the students into the respective topic.

The guidelines here are course specific and subject specific. They come in addition to the general grading system of the department.

#### The following applies to both questions (papers):

- The paper shall not exceed 6000 words, excepting the list of references
- The students shall demonstrate good knowledge of the relevant literature in the syllabus. In addition, they may include material from other scholarly publications if this helps them in highlighting their points
- The empirical examples could be from the syllabus, other academic sources or cases that have attained media attention
- Reflections over theoretical stands (or points of departure) in the literature that they use and over the empirical data that they present should be honored
- It is of course an advantage if the students include more aspects than those that are mentioned below, but these aspects have to be clearly relevant to the exam questions

#### Question 1

Make an account of different understandings of institutions in the chains and networks perspective. Discuss how and why attention to institutions matters in explaining economic and social upgrading, downgrading and development. Use empirical examples. What do you consider the strengths and weaknesses of the chains and networks perspective in analyzing development?

#### Guidelines:

Among the different understandings of institutions in the chain and networks perspective are organizations, regulations and standards, and norms and values. The students should be able to link norms and values to the concept of embeddedness. With reference to Neilson and Pritchard, the best students will be able to explain how institutions can be understood and operationalized at different analytical scales and what conditions implementation of for example international regulations at the local scale. All students should define social and economic upgrading, downgrading and development. The best students may comment on the relationship between the three. They students may for instance draw on the articles of Coe al (2004), Gereffi and Lee (2016), and Horner et al. (2018) in discussing how institutions matter to economic and social upgrading and downgrading. The best students may also link the discussion to studies of innovation which do not apply the chains and networks approach as such, such as Sæther (2014). The last sub-question is open for reflections, but they can draw on some of the points McGrath mentions in her critique of the GPN approach.

**Question 2:**

What characterizes the new phase of the global economy starting in 1980s? Briefly discuss possible signs of an emerging shift to an even newer phase. What are the opportunities and barriers for economic and social upgrading when chains and networks are shortening and regionalizing and why? Use empirical examples. What do you consider the strengths and weaknesses of the chains and networks perspective in analyzing economic and social upgrading and downgrading?

**Guidelines:**

The first question regarding the new phase should be relatively easy. All of the students should be able to mention several reasons for the claim. The best students may also discuss the importance of some of the reasons they list. The students should be commended for referring to meta-theoretical explanations of the shift of manufacturing activities to the global south (and global east). The question regarding an even newer phase is more difficult due to little material on this in the syllabus. The question is included to assess analytical capabilities. In discussing signs of a shift to an even newer phase, most students should, however, be able to point to the shortening and regionalization of chains and networks (Barrientos et al. 2016). Gereffi (2014) and the literature on South-South relations are also relevant. Students who refer to counter reactions to processes to economic globalization should be commended on doing so, as this is not explicitly addressed in the syllabus. The students are expected to define economic and social upgrading and downgrading. The discussion of possibilities and barriers could address: whether more buyers to choose between result in better leverage in the chains and networks, whether shortening and regionalization render access to more appropriate technology and more appropriate products for the market in question, whether shortening and regionalization render less pressure for ethical production and less pressure for higher standard production etc. The last sub-question is open for reflections. McGrath (2018) may be a source of inspiration.