

GRADING GUIDE – HUMAN GEOGRAPHY (bachelor SGO and master HGO)

Course code and semester-year: SGO2500-H21

Type of examination: [underline the option that applies]

Written school exam / take-home exam (5-hours) / term paper given topic / term paper self-chosen topic

About 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.

Om eksamen ved SGO/HGO: En god besvarelse inneholder solid kunnskap, logisk argumentasjon og ryddig disposisjon. Besvarelsen av en drøftingsoppgave skal være diskuterende, analytisk og koble ulike deler av pensum.

1. Besvarelsen svarer på oppgaveteksten på en presis og utfyllende måte.
2. Besvarelsen viser kunnskap.
3. Besvarelsen skal være velskrevet: sammenhengende med godt akademisk språk.
4. Viktige begreper - de som er i kjernen av besvarelsen – skal defineres.
5. Besvarelsen skal vise analytiske evne og refleksjon.

About this course:

The course discusses fundamental issues and trends that explain the differences and multiple relations between the global North and South, conveying empirical knowledge and critical perspectives on global development. Issues such as globalisation, population growth and basic needs, the flows of people and capital, urban-rural spaces are addressed from the perspective of the global South. The awareness of a spatial perspective to development problems and processes will enable the students to identify and understand the impact of regional and global processes on people's lives in specific places.

About specific questions/tasks:

Students need to answer one question from Part I (long answer) and two questions from Part II (short answers) to pass the exam, that is, a total of three answers. Failure to do so implies failing the exam.

The questions are formulated around selected news briefs and tweets, and students are asked to discuss specific issues based on what they have learnt in the course throughout the semester. The aim is that students will be able to apply their knowledge to interpret the world around them. The questions are formulated in such a way that students are given room to structure their answer on their own. Good answers are those explicitly making use of basic concepts and approaches.

PART I - LONG ANSWER

Choose 1 of the 2 questions presented below and write an essay of maximum 1500 words based on what you have learned in the course. Start each answer with the question number.

Question 1:

Taking the BBC article as a point of departure, discuss the relationship between climate change and development. Using the concepts and approaches you have learned in the course, help the reader understand (1) whether or not India's net zero pledge is important to fight climate change and (2) how the pledge relates to international climate justice (maximum 1500 words).

- The main task is to discuss the relationship(s) between climate change and development, taking India's pledge to act on climate change as an entry point.
- Key for a good grade is the recognition of two distinct relationships between climate change and development: (1) differentiated contributions to and (2) differentiated impacts of climate change on developing and developed countries.
- Differentiated **contributions**: developing countries have generally contributed far less to the problem than developed countries, i.e., they have historically emitted fewer greenhouse gases. It's possible to dive into different ways of measuring carbon emissions: national aggregate vs. per capita. Therefore, one could argue that what matters most for addressing climate change are the emission cuts by developed countries like the US or Australia.
 - However, calls for reaching global net zero emissions by mid-century now require all countries to cut their GHGs, regardless of these differences. Students can discuss that over time, the emissions of some developing countries – like India – have been growing and will be increasingly significant in the future. From this temporal and dynamic perspective, India is becoming a major GHG emitter and its commitment to net zero is important to fight climate change.
 - Students can also discuss the important signaling effect of India's pledge for other developing countries, who might follow suit with their own net-zero pledges.
 - There are important connections between (potentially costly) emission reductions and a developing country's economic growth trajectory: the role of energy (costs), the prevalence of fossil fuel resources in many developing countries (e.g., coal in India), and the need for investments in renewable energy industries.
- Differentiated **impacts** of climate change: Students should recognize that developing countries tend to be hit harder and sooner by the impacts of climate change, and often lack the capacities and resources to deal with these challenges. Climate impacts can negatively affect countries' abilities to develop or even destroy prior development gains.
 - Students can discuss the need for international solidarity, e.g., in the form of climate finance, technology and capacity building, to help developing countries address climate impacts. Climate justice would require such support.
 - Students can also discuss that it is in the interest of developing countries to fight climate change, i.e., to avoid future climate impacts, through international agreements.
- Differentiated contributions to and impacts of climate change generate conditions of climate injustice, raising questions about addressing these historical inequities. Key issues concern: who should reduce emissions how much and how soon, and how much climate finance (and other support) should be provided by developed countries to the developing world.
- The article invites a focus on India, and students are welcome to use India as a single case study throughout their essay. However, they can use other examples of developing countries as well.
- More general answers earn a C. Higher grades require that the student demonstrates good level of critical reflection and actively links relevant examples to a discussion of the relation between climate change, development and international justice.
- Ref. mainly chapter 6 textbook.

Question 2:

The following extract from a blog by Anna Walnycki and Tucker Landesman discusses the relation between efforts to achieve sustainable cities in the global South and issues of poverty and inequality. Using the concepts and approaches you have learned in the course, write an essay to help us understand (1) the challenges to urban development in the global South and (2) how these are framed and addressed by the brown and green agendas for sustainable urban development. You can provide examples (maximum 1500 words).

- The main task is to address the overall theme of **urban development** in the global South, with the challenges of sustainable cities and poverty and inequality as an entry point.
- Students are expected, first, to engage in an explicit discussion of the main feature of urban development in the global south: **urban informality**. This can be tackled from different angles, but should include formal/informal housing development, property rights, slum formation, precarious living conditions. Students can discuss among others:
 - The relation between urban informality, housing shortage, housing location, access to income generating opportunities and transportation time/costs.
 - Why many low-income communities prefer to live in a slum close to the city centre (or wherever the jobs are) despite having access to better, cheaper housing in the peripheries.
 - The lack of institutional and financial capacities of local governments to control rapid urban growth in the South and provide sufficient affordable social housing in good locations.
 - The raising income inequalities which exclude many from the formal housing markets.
- A second issue students need to address is the difference between the **brown** (developmental) and **green** (environmental) **agendas** for sustainable urban development. The guiding principles of agendas as well as the type of policies/measures they call for should be explicitly addressed.
 - Students should mention how in principle, these two agendas contradict each other, but as suggested by the blog article, sustainable urban development is only possible when both the brown and green agendas are addressed.
 - A good answer can also discuss (i) how cities in the Global North tend to focus their development on the green agenda to reduce CO₂ emissions and achieve carbon neutrality. They do this, for example by building density, promoting low-emission transportation and reducing consumption. (ii) On the other hand, in many cities in the Global South there are informal settlements with inadequate living conditions and access to basic services, such as electricity, sanitation, transportation. The main planning strategies there follow the brown agenda and focus on the development and extension of infrastructure and provision of housing. These actions promote social justice, but may also lead to increased CO₂ emissions.
- The use of relevant examples either from the blog, the syllabus or other sources should be rewarded.
- General discussion of urban development in the global south and the brown and green agendas gives a C. Answers explicitly highlighting the connections between these two issues will be rewarded. Higher grade if the student demonstrates good level of critical reflection and actively engages with relevant examples to illustrate the argument.
- Ref. mainly chapter 9 textbook.

PART II – SHORT ANSWERS

Choose 2 out of the 3 questions presented below and write a short essay of maximum 500 words for each of the chosen questions based on what you have learned in the course.

Question 3:

To be able to respond to Malika Bilal's tweet about the legacy of colonialism, you need to be aware of what colonialism involved. Write a short essay discussing how colonialism shaped the development of the global South (maximum 500 words).

- The starting point for this answer is a discussion of **colonialism** as a historical process marking the socio-economic and political formation of societies across the world. The process is closely related to the expansion of capitalism through various forms of territorial control in Latin America, Africa and Asia since the 1500s.
- Students are expected to discuss how colonialism influenced or shaped the development of countries in the global south: these can include political institutions and different forms of colonial rule, economic structures and the organization of production, trade and finance, the civilizing mission of the European colonizers vis-à-vis native populations.
- Reference to the different phases of colonialism is not necessary but should be rewarded. However, this cannot replace the issues mentioned in the previous point.
- Although not expected, relevant examples from the course or elsewhere should be rewarded.
- General overview of the above gives a C. Higher grade if the student demonstrates good level of critical reflection on the relation between colonialism and the challenges former colonies faced in a post-colonial context.
- Ref. chapter 2 textbook.

Question 4:

In the tweet below the Norwegian company Yara promotes their fertilizers among local producers in Kenya, linking food security to local communities and producers. Using concepts you have learned in this course, briefly discuss the relation between agriculture, livelihoods and food security in rural areas of the global South (maximum 500 words).

- The main task is to discuss the relation(s) between agriculture, livelihoods and food security in the rural areas of the global south. The entry point here is the use of fertilizers for local food production in Kenya.
- This question can be answered in a number of ways, and students are free to structure the discussion from any of the three elements. They can also discuss these relation(s) in terms of old/persistent or newer challenges to rural development.
- Agriculture is still a major economic activity in the rural areas of the global south, but not the only source of income. In spite of their involvement in food production, people in rural areas do not necessarily experience food security. Poverty remains a persistent problem in rural areas, and families and communities combine different activities to sustain their livelihoods.
- One way of tackling rural poverty is by way of agricultural intensification, that is, increasing productivity and expanding food supply by technological means, for example use of fertilizers, pesticides, machinery or new seeds.
 - Students are not expected to enter into the discussion of the green and gene revolutions, but should be rewarded for it if relevant for the rest of the answer.
- Another way of tackling rural poverty is through land reform and land rights, with the potential of securing livelihoods by way of land tenure among small farmers and producers.
 - Students who connect the livelihoods discussion to land rights should be rewarded.

- Students are not expected to engage into a discussion of international land markets, but should be rewarded for it if relevant for the rest of the answer.
- Food security: a definition of food security is expected and should be critically assessed as a technological and market-oriented approach to the challenge of food supply.
 - A discussion of food security to global food systems and the fossil fuel economy should be rewarded.
 - A discussion of the value of food as basis for livelihoods, culture and traditions and ecological services should be rewarded.
 - Contrasting food security to food sovereignty is not expected but should be rewarded if done in an accurate way.
- Using examples to illustrate the discussion is not expected but should be rewarded.
- General overview of the relation agriculture, livelihoods and food security gives a C. Higher grade if the student demonstrates good level of critical reflection on the chosen direction and applies relevant examples.
- Ref. Clapp, Hopma & Woods, Wilson, chapter 10 textbook.

Question 5:

The four Tweets below indicate three different positions in the debate about population growth as a key cause of global environmental problems, including climate change. Using concepts you have learned in this course, particularly those related to people and development, briefly discuss these three positions, indicating which you think is right and why. (maximum 500 words)

- The key task is to identify and clearly differentiate three positions regarding the relationship between population growth and environmental decline:
 - Population growth destroys the environment (negative impact) and ultimately threatens human wellbeing too (e.g., food scarcity),
 - Population growth is not an important cause of environmental decline (no impact). What matters much more are consumption patterns. For example, most GHG emissions causing climate change are caused by very few but wealthy people. Population growth in poorer countries or among poorer segments of a country's population would not have a climate effect.
 - Both population growth and consumption patterns matter as causes of environmental decline. The balance between their contributions might differ for various environmental problems.
- Students should be able to provide concise arguments for each of these positions and clearly position themselves in this debate. There is no right or wrong answer – any position is defensible with good arguments.
- Key theories and names that should be mentioned for higher grades: Malthus (the population bomb), the Club of Rome (limits to growth), Esther Boserup, and Julian Simon.
- Students should demonstrate awareness of global population growth trends and significant regional differences.
- More general answers earn a C. Higher grades require that the student demonstrates good level of critical reflection and actively links relevant examples to a discussion of the relation between population growth and environmental decline.
- Ref. chapter 5 textbook.