

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

Course code and semester-year: SGO2500-H22

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

Generally, demonstrating critical thinking and good structure in writing are signals of a stronger paper.

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 sustainable development.

Core issues of international development, 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 and placed in the context of global sustainability. Given this context, the course takes a closer look at the impact of North/South relations for the global South in two vital sectors with strong links between nature and society: food and energy. The awareness of a spatial perspective to development problems and processes will enable students to identify and understand the impact of regional and global processes on people's lives in specific places.

About specific questions/tasks:

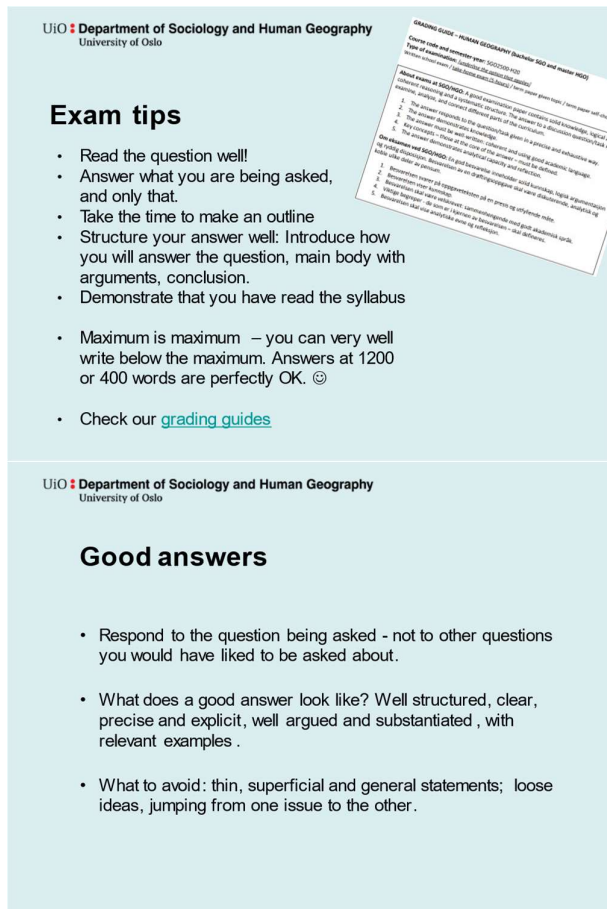
Students need to answer one question from Part I (long answer) and two questions from Part II (short answers) to pass the exam, that is, a total of three answers. Failure to do so implies failing the exam.

First part – the long answer is 50% percent of the grade; second part (2 short questions) is 50% (25+25%)

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.

The questions below are presented with headlines and in italics – as presented to the students.

Advice given to the students in class (note max = max):



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Exam tips

- Read the question well!
- Answer what you are being asked, and only that.
- Take the time to make an outline
- Structure your answer well: Introduce how you will answer the question, main body with arguments, conclusion.
- Demonstrate that you have read the syllabus
- Maximum is maximum – you can very well write below the maximum. Answers at 1200 or 400 words are perfectly OK. ☺
- Check our [grading guides](#)

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Good answers

- Respond to the question being asked - not to other questions you would have liked to be asked about.
- What does a good answer look like? Well structured, clear, precise and explicit, well argued and substantiated , with relevant examples .
- What to avoid: thin, superficial and general statements; loose ideas, jumping from one issue to the other .

About grading and grading scale at UiO:

[Grading and grading scales - University of Oslo \(uio.no\)](#)

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: QUEEN ELIZABETH

When Queen Elisabeth died 8th September 2022, she was still the monarch of 15 countries, *although many countries had gained independence since she took over the British throne in 1952. The article in TIME below suggest that the Queen's death is an opportunity to revisit the legacy of British colonialism.*

Using the concepts and approaches you have learned in the course, write an essay to help us understand how colonialism / imperialism (1) shaped the development of the so-called Global South 2) as well as relations between the Global North and South. You can provide examples (maximum 1500 words).

Below is a screenshot of the TIME article, and you can find attached the whole article as a separate pdf file You do not need to read the TIME article to answer this question.

For graders: Link to article <https://time.com/6212772/queen-elizabethcont-ii-colonialism-legacy/>

- The students should start with clarifying their understanding of the question, and the answer can be solved and structured in many ways.
- Students should provide some conceptual understanding of what colonialism is as well as how the two separate but related issues impact on the two issues (1 development and 2 relations)
- The focus of book and lecture is on colonialism, but the question also alludes to the difference and linkages between colonialism and imperialism. Stronger candidates should be expected that the student reflects on both.
- Definitions/concept
 - Colonialism. Came in waves (mercantile, industrial and late colonialism), in different forms, in different period of times and across spaces.
“colonialism is essentially a political process” and involves some form of direct control/rule by a colonial power over other territory/people.
Students should note different drivers in different contexts and times (economic, political, migration) and consequences (for relations) for the countries involved.
Newer debates on “post-colonialism”, “neo-colonialism” and “decolonialisation” should be mentioned
 - Imperialism. – overlap with but is not equal to. It is about power and influence, but not necessarily through political control.
 - The two concepts (and the colonial powers’ interests) link to *development thinking, ideas and strategies*: political ideas in the centre reflected through ideas and legitimization of colonial conquest (racism not least) (– which can also be reflected in the birth of “development” as both strategy for relation, and as scholarly discipline)
- (1): development of the global South can have two components: a) the development of the geographical concept or description of a group of countries – b) and the development within these countries
 - As a geographic concept

- Terms about the global South has shifted over time, (developing countries, third world countries etc), today a “lump” of “former colonies”
 - However - there are problematic and inconsistency between the “former colonies” as equal to “the global South” (as especially settler colonies – USA, Australia, Canada - are often considered in the north) – but general idea is “global South” as “former colonies”
 - Internal issues of countries in the global South
 - Colonial power enforced state formation and institutions into the colonies, i.e. created by “outsiders” and without local legitimacy (ex: the state itself, education system, transport system, administrative/legal/judicial, certain economic activities (slavery, industrial)
 - as the same time as local institutions and relations were (partly or selectively) broken.
- 2) relations between the north and South
 - Concrete relations
 - Demographic effects (ex. settler colonies, slavery and other movement of people – then and now)
 - Trade relations (labour, natural resources, markets and other)
 - Power imbalances rooted in colonialism (in terms of international relations and institutions as well as resource control- the very strong candidates can link to Armine’s lectures on institutions)
 - Thinking/understanding
 - Ideology (ex. depicting “the other” in racist terms.) Has shifted over time – but also exists in parallel – shapes motivation/legitimation of relation (and “development”)
 - (modernism, dependency theory, (both focus on economic issues) bottom-up) –...and into sustainable development – where nature is included
- Geographies/examples:

The headline given “Queen Elizabeth” may be confusing, but the students should read the text well: We are not interested in the queen as such, and examples can be taken from other geographies /colonial powers/times). However, reference to her reign and death could give context and be used as example/s – if so, the British colonialism and imperialist relations should be mentioned. A student could also chose to look at mercantile or Spanish forms of colonialism – or other. I emphasised British relations in Africa.

QUESTION 2: LOSS AND DAMAGE

Loss and Damage (L&D) was a major topic in this year’s international climate negotiations (COP27). Considering the (abbreviated) article by the World resource Institute and the three Tweets included below to discuss Loss and Damage through a North-South development lens: what does it mean, why is it contentious, and which principle of international justice could apply? (Why) Is there a special responsibility for countries like the UK to fund loss and damage? Include a discussion on the link between L&D and ‘people and development’ – why should L&D funding consider “especially women and children”?

To answer this question please read the extracts from an article by the World Resource Institute below (also provided as an attachment) as well as the three Tweets on the topic of a Loss and Damage fund.

(For orientation: the article that was added to question two contained open links. The students have been told not to open them, but it could be something to think about when grading.)

All the following components are required for a high grade:

- **Definition** of loss and damage – climate impacts beyond adaptability (providing examples is a plus when on the cusp between A and B)
- Discussion of **North-South contentions**: countries in the global North have predominantly caused climate change (measured by their cumulative GHG emissions), while countries in the global South are suffering most of the (early) impacts, including L&D → concern of international justice
 - Could add arguments about colonial history – exploitation of resources in the global South enabled development in the North, contributing to global inequality, doubly burdening the global South
 - Developing countries (esp. small island states) have called for some form of responsibility from developed countries for L&D since the climate negotiations began in the 1990s, but developed countries have successfully suppressed the issue – keeping it off the negotiation agenda – until 2013; only in 2022 have we seen a first agreement on a L&D fund (promises of financial flows to countries suffering L&D)
 - Could add arguments that developed countries have resisted similar calls for financial support for the global South in other climate policy arenas as well (e.g., adaptation), and when funds have been promised, they are often not made available in time or in full,
- Discussion of **principles of justice** and selection of one with at least one argument for the choice made (it doesn't matter which one is chosen), examples include:
 - Polluter pays
 - Fair burden sharing – relative to a country's contribution to climate change
 - Relative to a country's economic size (capability)
 - Protecting the most vulnerable – prioritizing some countries in the provision of help based on a set of principles and definitions of vulnerability
 - Procedural justice – decision-making process rules, inclusion, transparency
- Answer whether and why certain countries (like the UK) might have a **special responsibility**; students could answer either way but have to present one or two good arguments:
 - Yes, because of their role as colonial/imperial powers
 - Yes, because of their current role in the global economy (i.e., benefitting from economic activities in the global South)
 - Yes, because of GHG emissions
 - No, because there was no knowledge/intention related to climate change during colonial/imperial periods
 - No, because actions of past governments cannot be attributed to today's governments
 - No, because there are no (legal) obligations to pay other countries with taxpayer money
- **People and Development**: any argument that reasonably links development with a focus on individuals to loss and damage (e.g., that women and children are particularly vulnerable)

groups that deserve special consideration in development policy, therefore this also needs to inform L&D funding and how it's structured, e.g., special funds dedicated to supporting these groups).

- This is a tricky question. Students who do well here probably deserve a higher grade.

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: ACTOR CONNECTIONS


The tweet below refers to an open World Bank meeting with representatives from governments, international institutions, private sector and civil society discussing how to mobilise “the trillion of dollars in financing needed to transition to a low-carbon economy”. The statement from the meeting says that “Private sector influencers ... stressed the clear business case for climate action and the crucial role of the private sector in the low-carbon transition. The event concluded ...by calling “for more public and private finance to fight climate change”.

Describe the connections between international organisations, private sector and government in addressing green transition and sustainability, considering possible cooperation and confrontation points.

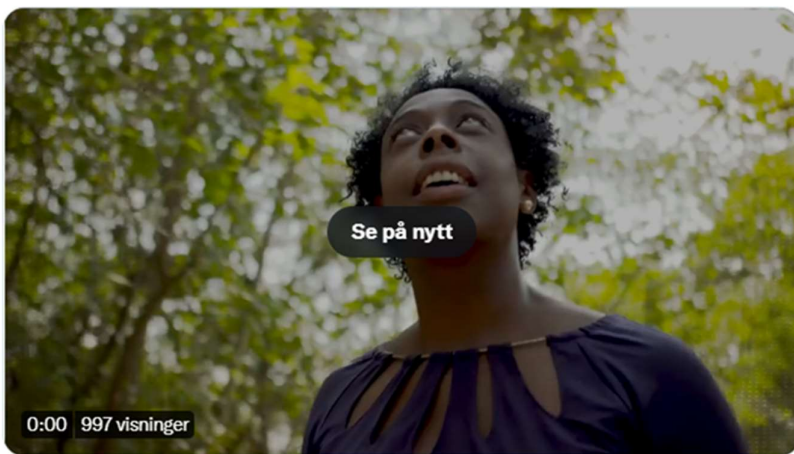


World Bank Climate 
@WBG_Climate

...

“A low-carbon economy can still generate wealth, security and prosperity for all.” - Rosane Santos, Sustainability Director, Iguá S.A. in  #Brazil, highlights the importance of understanding the connection between business & nature.

 #VoicesForClimate: wrlld.bg/hfIT50HfJZa



10:30 p.m. · 25. des. 2021 · Hootsuite Inc.

10 Retweets · 30 Likes

The question asks the students

- To think about how international organisations can help states in green transition with the help of private sector (mentioning what tactics they use to attract private sector, also how international organisations boost public-private partnerships)
 - To discuss that very often this support comes without taking into account local contexts and resources (how international organisations just duplicate their approach and apply them to various contexts)
 - To mention the changing role of national governments in those interactions, to discuss how governments need to adapt themselves to the reality where the private world intervenes in development. More specifically, they should address how private sector assumes responsibilities (there are many) that were before only a part of the government's portfolio, such as
 - All this should be discussed with a specific focus on the green transition
 - More general answers earn a C. Higher grades require that the student demonstrates good level of critical reflection and actively links the provided tweet/example to a discussion of the relation between the mentioned actors and green transition.
 - References should be mainly to chapters 4,7 and 8 of the textbook.
-
- key argument 1: The relationship between different sectors - IOs and the private sectors can and want to support national governments (i.e., it's a positive relationship that might look different for each country)
 - key argument 2: this can be problematic, because IOs use cookie cutter approach across different countries, ignoring local and regional specificities,
 - key argument 3: the role of that state is changing, it needs to adapt to those changes, sometimes it's beneficial that the private sector takes a burden off government shoulders (which can happen in diverse ways), but other times it challenges the authority of the state.

QUESTION 4: CLEAN ENERGY

In the context of climate change and the efforts to create energy transitions towards sustainability, discuss challenges for achieving access to reliable electricity for all, and reflect upon the role of small-scale solar power for such access. You can relate the answer to SDG 7 (affordable and clean energy for all) and use specific country examples.

(the tweet referred to:;

<https://twitter.com/COP26/status/1378965629835808772?s=20&t=DJ05uBvt3idmibc9pBTyaQ>



The answer can be structured and composed in different ways, based on different parts of the readings and the lecture. An advanced answer combines issues at different scales (local, national, global), but a locally focused answer can also deserve a good grade if it is nuanced and has important points according to the descriptions below. The bulk of the material on this topic has a bottom-up, local point of view, with an eye on how national and global level processes and power relations affect people's access to electricity.

- Some initial reflections on why electricity can be important for a society is relevant. Electricity for health and education including a single bright lamp during child birth, communication, information, mobile banking/bank services, lighting for household and office work, security at night, commercial activities, water pumping, irrigation, etc. Independent and critical reflections here and on other points should be awarded.
- Sustainable Development Goal number 7 (SDG) is very unlikely to be reached in Sub-Saharan Africa, and hundreds of millions of people in this region are unlikely to have access to electricity grids or off-grid solar electricity by 2030. Frequent power outages in many parts of the Global South are also relevant to mention.
- Those who are without access to electricity tend to live in rural areas where deep poverty is widespread and the vulnerability to climate change is high. These people are also among those who have contributed the least or hardly at all to climate change. Hence, the lecture argued that reducing people's climate emissions should not be the main focus of efforts to provide access to electricity for such social groups. This argument can be discussed in independent ways and may point to other reasons for promoting renewables, such as utilizing local energy sources, creating small-scale solutions adapted to local needs, and addressing shortcomings of large-scale infrastructure, including the costs and problems of extending and maintaining grid-lines over large geographical areas.

- Proponents of large-scale solutions tend to criticize small scale solutions for being insufficient for households, while research shows that there is a large interest in these solutions among people. Statistics show that also among people with a grid connection it is common to use it in very small ways, such as for light and phone charging. Poverty is a central explanation, including low and fluctuating incomes and problems to afford more important necessities than electricity: food, medicines, school fees, transport, etc.
- The small and large scale solutions are complementary, and people demonstrate this in the way they use them. In areas with a grid more people may use solar than the grid. (Examples from Kenya, Ulsrud 2020). Solar power can be both small and large, but few people can invest in large equipment such as for pumping of water, irrigation, production, charging of larger electric devices, etc. A question for discussion is whether the government or donors should support it more. Large funding is put into the centralized grid system, but very little goes into solar power in comparison. The latter is not institutionalized and is largely viewed as the private sector's domain. This is an example of why energy transitions/energy system change tends to be slow: It is influenced by established societal structures and institutions, economic thinking and ideologies, and political and economic interests that keep up "business as usual".
- There are large social differences within local communities, and thereby large differences in access to electricity. Case studies of villages in Eastern and Western Kenya illustrated this.
- The government had installed large solar power on health clinics and schools in these areas, but maintenance systems for these had not been created – it was left to the local units, for whom it is very complicated. The latter is another example of what it entails to change energy systems/strive for energy transitions. It is a complex process where new technologies interact with changes in societal structures such as governmental institutions and their responsibilities.
- The challenges of long-term maintenance of small-scale solar including access to repair facilities and replacement batteries for household solar equipment and village scale solar power plants can be discussed.
- In the lecture it was emphasized that political and economic interests play a large role for energy transitions. Current electricity systems in developing countries have roots in structures created during colonialism and are strongly shaped by global influence during the post-colonial era. This applies also for off-grid, small scale solar power. The global financing institutions, led by the World Bank, has pushed for privatization and liberalization of electricity sectors in the Global South with arguments about improved efficiency, less corruption, more reliable electricity, access to electricity for all, investments in renewable energy technology, etc. This neo-liberal approach has created flows of financing to the energy sectors in the Global South in terms of loans, grants, investments, support for capacity building, etc. However, large flows of finance have also gone back to the Global North through payments for equipment, expertise, repayments of loans, and returns to investors. It is also difficult for companies based in the Global South to compete for financing (investments, grants, consultancy jobs, etc.) with companies with backing/headquarters in the Global North.
- As part of the neo-liberal thinking that dominates electrification processes in the Global south, such as in Kenya, private sector solar companies are expected to provide access to electricity for those people that the electricity grid is not able to serve. However, research shows that many people will not benefit from such an approach, due to very low ability to pay.

QUESTION 5: URBAN DEVELOPMENT

It is said that this year's Climate Change Conference COP27 is "the African COP". Sub-Saharan Africa has the lowest Per Capita CO2 emissions and the highest number of people without access to electricity. At the same time, this region has the fastest urbanization rate in the world. Using the concepts of green (environmental) and brown (developmental) agendas, explain the challenges of development and urbanization in Sub-Saharan Africa with regards to city planning, and infrastructure provision. Discuss the differences between development priorities in the Global South and North.



This question can be approached in multiple ways. The most important is to reflect upon how the priorities of people living in poverty and without access to basic services are much different from those in more affluent regions. Focusing on long-term environmental may not be prioritised when there are more urgent problems. This is one of the important points of debate in global climate summits such as COP27.

- Students should provide a brief definition of the green and brown agendas.
The green agenda focuses on combating the global climate problems, meeting the long-term goals for environmental sustainability, and not compromising the future generations. The measures typical to the green agenda are reduced emissions and consumption, protection of natural habitats, recycling etc.
The brown agenda focuses on the satisfaction of basic needs and the urgent issues of hunger, poverty, unaffordability, health hazards, lack of shelter. The measures are usually local and immediate and focus on serving human needs, enabling access and addressing inequalities.
- The difficult situation in Sub-Saharan Africa is that its low per-capita emissions are not consequences of environmental measures (green agenda), but 'underdevelopment' (seen from the Western perspective) and low access to electricity. Therefore. addressing basic

needs and further urban development to meet the demand for energy in this region will most likely focus on economy and the brown agenda goals, which may lead to significant increase of CO2 emissions.

- Seen from the South, focusing on climate change may be irrelevant when so many people struggle with meeting basic needs. Seen from the North, the rapid urban growth, industrialisation and development choices of the South may be seen as unsustainable and irresponsible.
- When it comes to city planning and infrastructure provisions, the decisions about transport, housing energy, solid waste etc. are important, because they usually prioritise either on satisfaction of needs or decreasing emissions / environmental sustainability. However, choosing one or the other may be counterproductive and may put some groups in danger. Planners should seek solutions that try to combine both.
- The same can be said about energy. The most polluting energy sources are often the cheapest, which puts many governments in a dilemma situation.
- The students can also discuss the issue that countries in the South are those most exposed to climate change, and debate whether or not the more polluting countries in the North should pay compensations for the environmental damages to the South. I
- The students can also make references to the Sustainable Development Goals and the New Urban Agenda to mention that they attempt to focus on both the green and brown agendas at the same time.
- Students can use examples from multiple lectures, such as on urban and rural areas and energy.