

SOS 2603 Fall 2020 Assessment guidelines

Short answers.

Outline and discuss briefly two (2) of the three (3) following concepts:

- a) **Decommodification**
- b) **Comprehensive school system**
- c) **Welfare chauvinism**

A)decommodification

Discussed in lectures by Mjøset, Birkelund and Byrkjeflot. See especially Gøsta Esping-Andersen (1990) and Pauli Kettunen (1999/2013:23). Lectures by Byrkjeflot (19.8.) Mjøset (26.8.) and Birkelund (14.10. particularly slides 14-19) are relevant. A short answer could point out some of the paradoxes associated with the term, e.g. that the Nordic labor markets may both contribute to commodification and decommodification of labor at the same time. Also it is also relevant to discuss the feminist critique of the decommodification thesis.

B) Comprehensive school system

Discussed in Wiborg 2004 and in Mjøset lecture Oct. 7.

Comprehensive school system: Typical of countries with strong state church, state dominance and commitment to equality: "instead of different types of schools existing in parallel, a common structure was developed for all children and young people extending as far up in the educational system as possible" (Telhaug et al 252), "all-through system of education from grade one to nine/ten with mixed ability classes for nearly all" (Wiborg 2004, 83) Mjøsets lecture (Oct.7.) focuses on how the Nordic countries built comprehensive systems. Especially slide nr 13-17. A short answer may outline historical preconditions and bring in some comparative perspectives.

C) Welfare chauvinism.

The concept was introduced and discussed in Birkelund lecture (23.10.) based on Cappelen/Midtbø reading.

Cappelen/Midtbø (2016:692): "the relationship between immigration and welfare preferences may also occur through so-called welfare chauvinism rather than wholesale retrenchment. A welfare chauvinist does not necessarily want to reduce benefit levels, but is instead more concerned about restricting immigrants access to these benefits.

They find indications that welfare chauvinism is more common in Norway (p695) and that women are more welfare chauvinistic than men. A short answer could present the concept and discuss how it is being used in scholarship and public debate, as well point out some relevant data.

Essay

Discuss one (1) of the following (3) topics:

1) Stein Kuhnle argues that the Nordic model is an ambiguous but useful concept. In the lectures and readings to the course you will find different interpretations and perspectives. Gøsta Esping-Andersen introduced the social democratic welfare regime concept in 1990. Others have used concepts like social democratic capitalism or the cultural construction of Norden to describe similar social phenomena. Discuss different perspectives on development trajectories in Nordic societies and/or their current status as models.

Byrkjeflot discussed the different uses of the term Nordic model and how historical trajectories and narratives matters for the argument. Kuhnle puts emphasis on political processes in his explanation for the Nordic model. He does not refer to the model as social democratic unlike Esping-Andersen (1990) social-democratic welfare regime or Mjøset 2020: 32) ; who at least have two variants of a social democratic model. Byrkjeflot as well as Mjøset has discussed Kuhnle's argument in their lectures and also compared it with other views of the Nordic model, such as the Esping-Andersen approach (1990) and the cultural-historical school (Sørensen and Stråth 1997) also discussed in Mjøset (2020). Several articles are relevant, like Mjøset 2020, Byrkjeflot 2001, Kettunen 1999 and 2013 and Andersson 2009 and 2016. See also Byrkjeflots lecture 19.8. and Mjøset 26.8.

An essay may relate Kuhnle's argument and alternatives to the other views presented in the literature presented above. It will be appreciated if the student can contrast at least two ways of understanding the Nordic model or Nordic development paths and also say something about the implications of the various interpretations. The question is rather open, however, so there may be other creative ways forward in the writing of this essay.

2) The Nordic countries responded in different ways to the immigration crisis in 2015. It has been argued that there is a relationship between how the respective societies view citizenship and how they organize efforts to integrate immigrants.

Compare citizenship in at least two countries , with special reference to the importance for debates on the welfare state. You can choose two Nordic countries , or compare one Nordic country with a Non-Nordic country you know.

Ponce presented updated information on differences in his lecture 2.9. although only briefly due to time limits. Byrkjeflot therefore brought up the issue once more in the final lecture Oct. 28. and reminded the audience about some of the issues Ponce had presented.

Sources:

Hagelund, Anniken and G. Brochmann 2009. (HB09)

Brochmann, Grete and I. Seland 2010. (BS10)

Overlapping terminology in HB09/BS10):

Principle of national identity	Ethnos	Demos
Understanding of nationhood	Ethnic	Civic
Naturalization principle	Jus sanguinis	Jus soli/jus domicilis
Brubaker's classic comparison	Germany	France

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An essay should use one or more of the pairs presented in tables above placing Denmark on the ethnos side and Sweden on the demos side with Norway in between. Then they may compare two of them, or compare one of them with a country of their own choice. Since Asian countries are generally to the ethnos side, Sweden would be a good choice for comparison, but some candidates might feel they know Norway better. Since France's tradition is to the demos-side, Denmark would be a good case for comparison. The main thing, however, is that the comparison is as systematic and comprehensive as possible. The 2010 article is a bit old but the information provided in it was updated in the lectures by Ponce and Byrkjeflot and by referring to a more recent article from Brochman and Midtbøen (2020).

Variation in Scandinavian citizenship policies

	Sweden (most lenient)	Norway (in the middle)	Denmark. (toughest)
Dual citizenship	Yes, since 2001	Yes, as jan.1. 2020	Yes, since 09/2016
Time of residence required	5 years (but hemvist principle)	7 years	9 years
Required skills	None (abandoned in 1980) (but committee recommends changes)	300 hrs of Norwegian or exam, test abt Norw. society	Citizenship tests, language requirements, economic self-sufficiency, oath of allegiance
Citizenship ceremonies	Yes, voluntary	Yes, voluntary	Yes, mandatory handshakes

Source: (Ponce lecture 2.9.2020)

3) The Norwegian Prime Minister, asked Norwegians to make more babies «There are too few children born in this country for the Norwegian welfare model» she said. Discuss the relationship between welfare states, gender equality and fertility

The development of fertility rates and the explanations for the fall in the Nordic rates was discussed in Lappegårds lecture (sept 9.) . The welfare state and its impact on gender equality was commonly used a few years ago as argument for why the Nordics had a somewhat higher fertility rate than many other nations. A key argument was that there is a positive relationship between high fertility rates, high gender equality and an advanced welfare state. Has there been any changes in Nordic welfare states that may explain the falling fertility rates or do we need to bring in other variables in order to explain this development?

The assignment refers to Lappegårds lecture but can also draw on Ellingsæters lecture and readings 16.9. since dual arner/dual career models will be relevant. An essay may relate the changes in fertility rates to current developments and use different perspectives in the readings to bring forth different hypotheses and explanations.