

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

Course code and semester-year: SGO2200 spring 2021

Type of examination: [underline the option that applies]

Written school exam / take-home exam / 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.

About this course:

This course provides a broad overview of economic globalisation and technological change, and implications for regional development. The main textbook "Global Shift" by Peter Dicken (2015) is supplemented by selected journal articles to provide in-depth insight into specific theories and cases. Given the complexity of the topic covered and the defined learning objective that is capacity to analyse, reflect and discuss, the examination questions are formulated to allow critical thinking and reflecting.

About specific questions/tasks:

Six-hour long form home assignment in Inpera. The students are to answer all three questions. The three weight equally in the final grade. The exam text specified that students should feel free to make cross-references between their answers to individual questions and/or use examples even though neither is expected.

Use of references

The exam text specified that in-text citations are optional with the exception of cases where literature is cited or paraphrased. In such cases, citations are expected. A reference list is not required.

Question 1:

What is meant by a change in techno-economic paradigm? Define and discuss economic globalisation in light of the techno-economic paradigm that is currently evolving and make comparisons with the previous paradigm.

Guidelines

According to Perez (2010), techno-economic paradigms build on technological revolutions and are best practice models 'for the most effective ways of using the new technologies within and beyond the new industries'. In line with this, Dicken (2015) state that changes in techno-economic paradigms involve fundamental change the style of production and management. Perez (2010) and Dicken (2015) both discuss the interrelatedness of globalisation (functional integration of economic activities across national boundaries) with the evolving ICT-based paradigm. A general account of this paradigm in comparison with the previous mass production oriented Fordist paradigm is expected. For a high marking to be given, students must elaborate on how the shift from the previous to the current paradigm has affected the organization of production, and thereby economic globalisation.

Question 2

On page 338-340, Dicken (2015) emphasises that over-dependence on a narrow economic base is a significant challenge for many underdeveloped countries. Briefly describe what is meant by having a narrow economic base, and use evolutionary theories presented in the course to discuss the challenge it poses for upgrading/diversification.

Guidelines

Dicken (2015) focus on worsening terms of trade for underdeveloped countries specialised in agricultural or other natural resource-based exports, thereby pointing to the need for such countries to diversify into/upgrade to higher value-added economic activities. The marking should reflect the ability of candidates to activate other readings on the curriculum that deal more generally with how and why the current composition of industrial activities in places affect the capacity to diversify/upgrade.

Question 3:

Fagerberg, Lundvall & Srholec (2017:454) emphasise that 1) building 'the innovation system' is not only important for economic development in general, but also 2) for the possibility of benefitting from linkages to the global economy. Briefly describe what is meant by an 'innovation system' and proceed to discuss the two components of this statement

Guidelines:

To describe what innovation systems are, candidates can look to Sæther, Isaksen & Karlsen (2010) for a more precise definition than provided in Fagerberg et al (2017) who focus on their roles and outcomes in the form of national 'capabilities'. Students who present the related concept of 'network developmental state' introduced by Block (2008) must be awarded. In their discussion of the first statement, candidates need to provide a general account of how and why economic development depends on technologies, knowledge and skills that is developed, and diffuse, in the economy through interactions between various types of actors. Extensions into discussions of 'co-evolution' between actors and institutions draw strongly in the direction of a high marking. Finally, the students are expected to discuss how innovation systems affect the possibility of benefitting from linkages to the global economy. Fagerberg et al (2017) focus specifically on how country 'capabilities' affect benefits from backward GVC integration. To move beyond this, candidates can draw on Meyer & Sinani (2009) who focus on how the level of development affect benefits from inward FDI and/or Dicken (2015) on how the nature of the local economy more generally affects positions in GPNs and benefits from them. Ability to do so should be awarded with a high marking.