SGO2200 midterm evaluation fall 2024

Sverre J. Herstad

About the course

This course studies how economic globalization and technological change interact in shaping development at the level of regions and countries. The overall objective is to paint a broad picture of the major changes going on in the world economy and the key actors making these changes happen – and introduce students to key concepts and theories used in economic geography to analyse these processes.

The evaluation

There were 39 students registered for the course in 2024. From these, we received 11 responses to a web-based questionnaire asking students to describe three positive and three negative aspects of the course. This equals a response rate of 28 per cent.

Results

Generally, the respondents highlight that the topics covered in the course are interesting and timely/particularly important given current events and developments in the global economy. It is also noted that what is learnt here is an important supplement to what is taught in other human geography courses. Having one single textbook is noted as positive, and lectures are generally seen as well-prepared with useful information provided in an accessible format. In particular, the respondents emphasize how the seminars have worked very well, providing spaces for learning with a friendly atmosphere where it is safe to ask questions and discuss.

On the more negative side, the respondents have also noted that the main lecturer at times might be a bit difficult to understand and should consider talking more slowly and using a microphone. The topic(s) covered are complex; meaning that more time should be spent in the first lectures on clarifying key concepts and throughout the course on ‘guiding’ and helping students zoom in on what is the essence. The respondents also seem to agree that newer examples, and in extension readings of a more recent date, should be introduced. The part of the syllabus that is supplementing the main textbook should be revised and shortened as it is quite extensive, diverse, and complex as is. Finaly, the ‘compressed’ nature of the course with exam Early November is highlighted as negative.

Conclusion

The input received in the evaluation underscores the importance of a revision of the course to reinforce/strengthened aspects noted as positive and account for those noted as negative where the latter in structural terms concerns foremost the relationship between the main textbook and the supplementary readings. Having the exam early in the semester remains a highly problematic consequence of limited school exam capacity at UiO, in particular given how the topics and literature of the course demand time for reading and reflecting.