Course evaluation SOSGEO2032 Environment and Society Spring 2026

Changes from last year:

The course has had a change of course convenors since 2025: Cedar Patterson replaced Karen O`Brien after her retirement and has convened the course together with Vilde Blix Huseby. Most of the syllabus has been kept unchanged, with some exceptions. The number of lectures was cut from 11 to 10, and the number of seminars from 8 to 7. The cChallenge has remained as a component of the course, but due to last year's experiences with several smaller reflective writing pieces, we returned to one mandatory reflective writing piece on the cChallenge. Cedar and Vilde have held most lectures, with Erlend Kok as guest lecturer in one lecture. Cedar has also been seminar leader, together with Ural Kafle and Peder Blümlein.

Seventy students signed up for the course, with 56 students taking exams (school exams)

Feedback from students:

We gathered feedback from students following a standard evaluation form adapted for the course in Nettskjema after the completion of the lecture series (20 responses). Cedar and Ural also collected feedback in the seminars.

The majority of students (around 3/4) report in the Nettskjema that they are satisfied with the quality of lectures and seminars. Qualitative feedback is mixed, with some students reporting they found the lectures too surface-level and not theoretical enough, while others found them too technical or hard to follow. Similarly: some reported they liked Peer & Share and discussions during lectures, or would even have liked more of it, while others disliked such exercises and found it too much.

Part of this may reflect the heterogeneity of the student body taking this course, with students from several disciplines at the Faculty of Social Sciences as well as students from The Facultyr of Humanities and the Faculty of Natural Sciences. There are also quite a few exchange students every year. Quite a lot of students taking this class are BA-students in Development and Sustainability with a specialization in human geography. They have already taken courses like *SGO2500 – North/south development: Energy transitions* and other similar courses, and take *SGO2250 – Sustainability Transition, Innovations and Social Change* in parallel with this course – while this course is listed as recommended previous knowledge for SGO2250. While this group has already gained significant knowledge on the topic, other students take this course as their first introduction to sustainability, climate and environmental issues. Any future changes in this course should consider the heterogeneity of the student body.

For seminars, many students report that they would like to be more challenged and/ or that did not learn so much, while seminar leaders on the other side report that the students show up without having read the syllabus. The cChallenge has also this year worked quite well. Not everyone likes it, but several students find it engaging, and more than half reporting it made them think differently about change. The students are also in general happy about the size and content of the syllabus.

Recommendations for next year:

- Keep the cChallenge, if possible, and if new course convenors would like it. Due to budgetary cuts, the amount of teaching in this course will be reduced from spring 2027, with none or few seminars. Consider providing information about cChallenge in first lecture, and having one seminar following up on the cChallenge after completion.
- The syllabus now reflects both sociological and human geographical perspectives. As this is a SOSGEO-course, both perspectives should be present no matter who is the course convenor
- Any future changes in this course should consider the heterogeneity of the student body, spanning from a high level of knowledge to newcomers to the topic.

June 2026,
Vilde Blisx Huseby and Cedar Patterson