

PROGRAMME DESCRIPTION FOR THE PHD PROGRAMME IN GEOGRAPHY 2017/2018

Approved by the Faculty of Social and Educational Sciences 21 April 2017

Admission requirements

The admission requirement for the PhD programme in Geography is a master's degree/graduate study (hovedfag), M.Phil. in Development Studies or equivalent education that the faculty has approved as a basis for admission. A grade point average of B or better from the master's degree programme or equivalent education is required. Applicants with lower grades may be admitted if they can document that they are suitable candidates for a PhD programme. In special cases, applicants with a background other than a master's degree or equivalent in geography may be admitted. Such applicants may then be required to take specific training / qualification courses as a condition for admission. (see Section 5 of the PhD Regulations)

Applicants must document that they have full funding, that is, funds for living expenses and working capital.

The Department of Geography assesses applications for admission to the PhD programme continuously.

Introduction

The aim of the PhD programme in Geography is to prepare PhD candidates for a career in research and higher education, as well as for other work that requires advanced scientific expertise and analytical skills.

The final course plan for the PhD programme is drawn up in consultation between the candidate, the supervisor, and the department depending on the subject of the thesis and the candidate's individual needs and wishes. (see Section 2 of the PhD Regulations)

Learning outcomes

The purpose of the PhD programme in Geography is to develop the candidate's qualifications for work that sets high standards for scientific competence. The main component of the programme is an independent piece of research at a high scientific level. The organized academic training is intended to support the candidate's work with the doctoral thesis and to contribute to the required academic depth and breadth, enabling further development of the candidate's independent and reflective relationship to his or her own research and that of others, as well as the role of research in a broader context.

A student who has completed the PhD programme has achieved the following learning outcomes, defined in terms of knowledge, skills and general competence:

Knowledge

The graduate

- is in the forefront of knowledge in the discipline of geography and masters the theory of science and the methods of the subject area
- can evaluate the appropriateness and application of different methods and processes in research and academic development projects
- can contribute to the development of new knowledge, new theories, methods, interpretations and forms of documentation in the discipline

Skills

Candidates

- can formulate research questions for, plan and carry out research and scholarly development work
- can carry out research and scholarly development work of a high international standard
- can handle complex academic issues and challenge established knowledge and practice in the discipline of geography
- can make decisions on scientific grounds supported by a complex documentation base
- can provide teaching in the subject area based on their own research

General competence

Candidates

- can analyse problems in the natural and/or social sciences from a spatial perspective
- can identify and take a position on relevant and ethical issues and exercise their professional work with integrity
- can lead research projects within specified limits and participate constructively in more complex interdisciplinary research projects
- can communicate research and development work through recognized national and international channels.
- can participate in debates in the field in international forums

Duration, scope and level

Degree

The PhD programme in Geography leads to the degree of *Philosophiae Doctor*.

Scope and workload

The degree comprises 180 credits in total, and the nominal length of study is 3 years. The programme is structured as a full-time course of study. The estimated workload for the programme is 40–42.5 hours per week.

Level

The programme of study is in the third cycle in the Norwegian Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning.

Host faculty and department

The Faculty of Social and Educational Sciences is the host faculty, and the Department of Geography is the responsible unit.

Programme structure

The PhD programme consists of the following elements:

- project description
- scientific and academic dissemination
- organized academic training
- thesis

Project description (see Section 5.2 of the PhD regulations)

The project description must provide an explanation of the thematic area, research questions, and the choice of theory and methodology. The description of the research project should normally total between 8 and 10 pages.

Academic dissemination (see Section 5.2 of the PhD regulations)

Candidates must present their PhD work at academic conferences, at research courses and in the department's research seminar.

Organized academic training (see Section 8 of the PhD Regulations)

In the application, the candidate must provide a plan for completion of the organized academic training in consultation with the supervisor(s). It is recommended that the training be completed early in the programme. To pass the courses, the candidate must have a grade of B or better. On their own initiative, candidates must register for assessment in courses by the specified deadlines. For procedures for enrolment in courses and approval of external training/courses, see the Faculty's website.

The organized academic training component must cover at least 30 credits in total. Applications to make changes in the approved training plan must be decided by the Department based on the supervisor's recommendation.

The academic training component includes 3 elements:

- Philosophy of science, 10 credits
- Methodology, 5-10 credits
- Theory/substance, minimum 10-15 credits.

The Department works in partnership with other Norwegian and Nordic departments to organize researcher training in geography. Courses organized in other disciplines or that are interdisciplinary are approved to the extent they are relevant to the candidate's work. The number of credits granted for the individual course will be determined based on the length of the course and the scope of the candidate's contribution, preferably by the institution that organizes the course. The Faculty approves the individual candidate's required academic training based on the recommendation of the supervisor and the department.

Compulsory courses

Course code	Title	Credits	Semester
SFEL8000*	Philosophy of Science for the Social Sciences	10	Autumn / spring
GEOG8000** or GEOG8001**	Theoretical Perspectives in Geography 1	10	Autumn
	Theoretical Perspectives in Geography 2	5	Autumn

* See the information from the Faculty of Social and Educational Sciences (PhD programme description in sociology). Other equivalent courses may be approved upon application.

** Every year, the Department of Geography organizes the research courses GEOG8000 / GEOG8001 1 and 2. Upon application, one can replace this with another course of the same scope, which deals with key geographical issues. The courses are held on condition that at least 3 participants enrol. If there are fewer participants, the member of the teaching staff responsible for the course will decide whether the courses should be organized as reading courses instead.

Elective courses

Course code	Title	Credits	Semester
GEOG8523	GIS Data Capture and Mapping 2	10	Autumn*
	National research courses		Autumn / spring
	International research courses		Autumn / spring
	Individually selected syllabus **		Autumn / spring

* the course is held on condition that at least 3 participants enrol. If there are fewer participants, the member of the teaching staff responsible for the course will decide whether the courses should be organized as reading courses instead.

** Upon application, an individual syllabus may be approved as part of the training programme. Evaluation takes place through written work.

Thesis (see Section 10 of the PhD Regulations)

The requirements for the thesis and the rules for assessment are specified in the Regulations for the PhD degree at NTNU. If the thesis consists of several shorter works (normally 3-5 articles / book chapters), the candidate must be the sole or first author of at least half of them.

Learning methods

In the PhD programme, candidates encounter many different learning methods, such as lectures, various types of seminar, individual academic supervision, supervised group work as well as project and research work.

Forms of assessment

Required coursework or other academic training

PhD candidates must pass all courses in the approved training plan, in accordance with Section 8 of the PhD Regulations. The form of assessment is adapted to the content of each course, normally through assignments/papers, which are assessed as passed/failed.

Trial lecture and public defence

An assessment committee will assess the quality of the academic thesis, trial lecture and public defence of the thesis (disputation); see Section 14 of the PhD Regulations.

Internationalization

The candidate is expected to participate in international conferences and present his or her work there. It is recommended that the candidate spend time with an international collaborative partner as part of the PhD programme.

Entrepreneurship, innovation, and innovative thinking

The PhD programme is based on a relevant research question in social and physical geography. In his or her PhD work, the candidate links theory and empirical evidence, and learns to apply research methods to investigate the relevant problem formulation. Together with the research results, such competence forms the basis for innovative thinking about research methods, theory and development in the candidate's own field of research.

Career opportunities/further study

A completed PhD degree qualifies the graduate for leadership positions in business, management, higher education and research. Academia is often regarded as the most common career path for doctoral graduates, but a large proportion of our candidates go on to work in public-sector administration and in the private sector.