

INTRODUCTION TO NORWAY

Credits: 6 ECTS

1 INTRODUCTION

Introduction to Norway is a course intended to help foreign students at Sør-Trøndelag University College to develop knowledge and understanding of different aspects of Norwegian history, politics, culture and contemporary society at a foundational academic level.

This basic knowledge should also contribute to better educational and social output from the study period at the students' home faculties and improve students' integration into the mainly "Norwegian cultural" study environments at the faculties. The course also provides an arena for inter-cultural communication and better understanding of student's own societies, values and cultures. As the language of lectures and other study activities is English, students also develop their proficiency in written as well as spoken English. Basic English reading and writing abilities is a requirement for those attending the course.

The course is open to all foreign students studying at Sør-Trøndelag University College for shorter or longer periods. The department of History and Social Studies at the Faculty of Teacher and Interpreter Education are responsible for the course. Required study effort is stipulated to be approximately 160 hours of effective studying. This is the equivalent of 4 weeks full time effort.

2 ORGANISATION

Teaching is organised in seven teaching sessions, each of which will normally involve a full day programme. These will include lectures, discussions, in-class excersises, local field excursions and paper presentation seminars in which students have to present a paper (which is given preliminary feed-back).

The course is offered both in the spring and the autumn term. Basic information on all course activities and requirements will be given at an information meeting early in the term.

The language of the course is English.

The main channel of communication and contact between students and between students and the academic staff is *It's learning* (a learning management system). Students are supposed to get basic information about and access to It's learning at their home faculties. Students are expected to log on to It's learning *regularly* to keep themselves well informed.

3. CONTENT AND TARGETS

The academic content of the course is divided into three main parts

a) An introduction to Norwegian history, geography and politics

The main contents of this part is:

- Norwegian history with main emphasis on modern political and social history. A priority is given to elements which might provide understanding of the development towards the modern welfare state and the contemporary political culture and political landscape
- Norwegian topography, demography, climate and natural resources with special emphasis on distinctive elements which might provide explanations on important social, political and economic developments.
- Norwegian politics including the development of different parties and political traditions. A special priority is given to the development of the Norwegian democracy and the political and administrative system.

b) An introduction to Norwegian present day society and economy

The main contents of this part is:

- The economic growth of the Norwegian society after World War II with special emphasis on the development of the welfare state and the development of the modern oil and gas economy.
- The political economy of contemporary Norway
- The foreign policy and foreign relations of Norway
- Childhood, education and educational system in Norway

c) An introduction to culture and values in Norway

The main contents of this part is:

- Religions and values in Norway. Egalitarianism, widely believed to be an important “Norwegian” value, is particularly emphasised.
- Languages and literature in Norway
- Ethnic minorities in Norway with a particular emphasis on the Sami Population

The priority given to each of these three major content areas might vary a bit from semester to semester. More detailed information on priorities are given at the information meeting. It is expected that students should be able to describe and discuss the elements mentioned above at a foundational academic level. It is also expected that students should be able to compare Norway and their home countries within the core themes of the course.

Further details on the knowledge and understanding targets within each of the three main content areas will be announced at the information meeting and at the lectures.

4. OBLIGATORY REQUIREMENTS

- Participation at the info-meeting
- Participation in 6 out of 7 full lecture- and activity days
- One oral presentation (draft paper)
- Participation in the course evaluation

Extraordinary circumstances might legitimate a slightly lower attendance at lecture and activity days. This might be situations involving

a) sickness/health problems

or

b) mandatory attendance or work requirements at the home faculties (at Sør-Trøndelag University College) at the same time as Introduction to Norway activities are going on

If such situations occur, confirmation from a doctor or confirmation from your home faculty must be presented.

In all such cases the student must present some kind of compensational work (a written assignment or an oral presentation).

5. EXAM AND GRADING

The final grade is calculated as a weighted average of the two following component parts

a) A paper (49%)

b) An individual exam (written, 3 hours) (51%)

The paper is written under academic supervision of a member of the department staff. Information on the formal and academic requirements of a) and b) will be given at the information meeting. Introduction to Norway uses the standard ECTS grading system A-F where E is the lowest passing grade.

Both a) and b) must be given a pass grade in order to obtain a final grade and the ECTS points.