

Sexual and reproductive health and rights

Course, UIO, 2018.

Date

26 February to 1 March

Monday and Tuesday:

Eszter Kismodi, Legal rights researcher, Geneva will take us through recent issues in the SRHR agenda, at Oslo University College (details to follow) Eszter Kismodi has held this course several times before here in Norway. She was the human rights advisor to WHO's program on reproductive health, in the time when Johanne Sundby was on their board (terminated 2016). She is also an author of many policy papers on reproductive rights. The students will be exposed to "state of the art" controversies in the international debate, and learn both how to analyze dilemmas, and provide evidence for policy change where needed for improvement of public health. .

Tuesday afternoon:

Sex education and the rights of young people (Sex og Politikk, Johanne)

This is one of the controversial themes in reproductive rights, and also the theme for a big international conference in Oslo December 2017, lead by UNFPA. Norwegian sexual health education has a world-leading framework for such education. Norwegian researchers are also world leading in analyzing dilemmas in sex education internationally related to the HIV epidemic. The students will get to know a rights based framework for youth sexual health

Wednesday:

Case study. Pregnant women and substance abuse. The rights to have a child and the rights of the child, when the mother is on rehabilitation using methadone or similar.

In 2017, the Norwegian government has set down a committee to provide consensus based evidence for how to treat substance abusing patient on medically assisted rehabilitation (methadone) with a view on the toxicity of opioids on the unborn fetus and the wellbeing on the mother. Johanne Sundby and other scholars were part of the committee. The students will learn how to evaluate research based evidence in a variety of scientific fields, in order to produce evidence based policy in a balanced way.

Reidun Førde: Ethics – where there is a conflict between the health of the mother and the fetus

Kirsten Sandberg: Legal and rights issues around treatment and forced treatment, as well as child protection laws

Gabrielle Welle Strand: Health services for substance abusing rehabilitation og pregnant women, what is the evidence

Group work and Panel discussion

Thursday:

Legal framework and the rights issues – international and national (Anne Hellum). This session will introduce the students to the international agreements around human rights, both political and social rights, and see how these relate to Norwegian and international patient rights and service delivery dilemmas. The students will understand more about human rights analysis and the “right to health”; and how shortcomings are addresses scientifically.

Religion and SRHR (Anne Stensvold)

Religious doctrines are influencing health decisions in reproductive and sexual health. In order to understand the cultural and religious background for some of the controversies, the religious history of sexuality and reproduction is analyzed. Moral dilemmas are important drivers also in providing care and interpreting research.

Violence against women; and sexual abuse, especially minors (Cynthia Wagamathi and Johanne Sundby)

Violence and sexual abuse has recently been debated heavily. The epidemiology demonstrates that the prevalence is higher than expected, especially among dis-privileged and vulnerable populations. Sexual abuse and especially sexual abuse of minors are contributing factors to lifelong mental disease and suffering. The students will be exposed to the research methods that have been used to map the magnitude of violence and sexual abuse, and will understand how these issues are linked to mental health, care provision and the law.

Case studies

The course will end by a complex case discussion in groups (the case presentations are used before, in several contexts in Norway, South Africa and Greenland),

Exam

The M.Phil students will write a short report on main points relating to the cases presented.

The Phd students have to write an essay as an exam – the student essay should choose one SRHR dilemma of their choice (ex. abortion, sex education, violence, LGTB, prenatal diagnosis, etc) and a particular setting, and discuss how this dilemma is addressed, in the law, care provision and human rights framework in this setting, and argue for a particular point of view for a policy. The student should draw upon published evidence for their argument.