Assessment guidelines for SV9104 – Research ethics

The course in research ethics focuses on the responsibility of individuals to apply an ethical approach in their own research project. The course cuts across all disciplines at the Faculty of Social Sciences, and this will also be reflected in the exam.

The examination

The form of exam in this course is through a group presentation. The students will be split up in six predefined and interdisciplinary groups, and they will be given an assigned topic on day 1 of the course. The assigned topics involve everything from ethical responsibilities in polarized debates, to research on vulnerable groups, scientific fraud, and informed consent. Topics may also vary from year to year. Students will be given the rest of the afternoon as well as the following morning (day 2) to prepare a 15 minute group presentation that they will present to the rest of the students in the afternoon on day 2.

Requirements

In order to pass the examination, the students are expected to prepare and present a 15 minute PowerPoint presentation of their assigned topic. This semester (Fall 2020), the student presentations will conducted through a digital platform (Zoom). Students are expected to draw on literature from the course curriculum in their presentations, as well as discuss and present ethical reflections based on their specific dilemma or topic. The readings, lectures, group assignments and discussions all go together, and none is sufficient in itself for understanding this course. Special effort should be done to understand other disciplines and their strengths and challenges regarding research. Therefore we expect active participation in the discussions. Reasons for not passing the examination is lack of contributions to the group presentation (i.e. not being present during the presentation or not providing input in the preparations), or a presentation that does not meet the minimum criteria (i.e. lack of ethical reflections/discussion, not addressing key questions related to the assigned topic).

Curriculum

Books

Keane, W. (2016) Ethical life. Its natural and social histories. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Chapters

- Tranøy, K. E.: "Science and Ethics. Some of the main principles and problems" in The Moral Import of Science., 1988. London: Sigma Distribution. pp. 111-120.
- Ziman, J.: "Academic science", chapter 3 (28 pages), in Real Science. What it is, and what it means., 2000. Cambridge University Press.

Online articles/texts

- Guidelines for Research Ethics in the Social Sciences, Law and the Humanities, 2010. National Committees for Research Ethics in Norway. ISBN: 82-7682-050-6.
- Kalleberg, R.: "A Reconstruction of The Ethos of Science" in Journal of Classical Sociology, 2007. vol. 7, nr 2, s. 137-160.
- Steneck, N.: "Fostering Integrity in Research: Definitions, Current Knowledge, and Future Directions" in Science and Engineering Ethics, 2006. p. 53-74, vol.12, nr. 1.
- Merton, R. (1973). The normative structure of science. In N. W. Storer (Ed.), The sociology of science: theoretical and empirical investigations (pp. 267-278). Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.