

# Welcome to KULT8850/1

Theories of Science

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KULT

# Agenda

- Today until 11.00: Intro (about the course and getting to know each other)
- A simple lunch is served at 12.00
- from 11.15 to 15.45: Jonathan on Philosophy of Science

Please remember that we meet at D139 tomorrow!

# About the course

- Why?
- What?
- How?

# Mandatory for HF but why?

1. Faculty of Humanities (and guests): No research without **critical** reflection of the **philosophical** and **socio-cultural** context of research and how it affects research process and outcomes
2. Encourage **collaboration and exchange** (in its broadest sense) across different projects and disciplines
3. Help PhD students to **navigate** their PhD projects



# What (expects you)?

1. Lectures and group work covering
  1. Philosophy and research ethics (days 1+2)
  2. Socio-cultural context of scientific knowledge production (days 3+4)
  3. Critical perspectives (days 5+6)
2. A focus on working together, getting to know each other
3. Navigational support: A crosscutting theme
  1. Navigate thorny questions of truth, objectivity, ethics, relevance
  2. To know more about history and present state of science (including what is wrong) enables you to find your place
  3. Practical relevance: Tools (e.g. a conference presentation as course assignment)

# How?

- 3x2 course days + 1 conference day
  - mandatory attendance to achieve the "why's" but life happens: keep me updated
  - if it should turn out that you are too busy this semester to be present most of the time (>75%): consider to move the course to next semester
- The 7.5 and 10 ECTS are awarded for the amount of work you have invested through reading, attending, writing and presenting
- The conference talk will in part be prepared collaboratively on course days, in addition you are expected to deliver an extended abstract (7.5 ECTS) or a short conference paper (10 ECTS), and the talk itself

# More how

- The course is organised by KULT: Department of Interdisciplinary Studies of Culture
  - Centre for Gender Research: Research on diversity, equal opportunities, and gender - days 5+6
  - Centre for Technology and Society: Science and Technology Studies (STS) - days 3+4
- We get a lot of help from other departments at the Faculty of Humanities, above all from Philosophy, eg on days 1+2

Even more how? Questions,  
needs, demands?



# Your PhD project in three sentences

- Finally! Time to do in-depth work! So much to explore, so much to learn!
- But usually, we are forced to present our PhD in a very compressed form
- And it gets even worse after handing in the thesis: What have you found out?

# 2 options

1. What is your disciplinary background and context?
2. What will you do, where, how?
3. What do you expect to be the outcome?

Or:

What is the most exciting aspect of your PhD for you? An important problem addressed by you, an innovative method, a fascinating theory, any interesting observations already?

# Some related questions

- Days 1+2: Philosophy
  - What do we know before we do our research?
  - How do we know that our research is concluded?
- Days 3+4: Socio-cultural context
  - What are the institutional, cultural, societal expectations and where do they come from?
  - How important is our research? For whom? Who decides?
- Days 5+6: Critique
  - What does our research do?
  - How does how we do our research affect the outcome?

**Group work:  
Getting to know  
each other**

# Choose one question...

...according to what interests you most:

**philosophical** aspects, things related to the **socio-cultural context**, **critique** or getting help to **navigate**?

1. **Philosophy:** Who do you think is/was the wisest person (dead or alive)?
2. **Socio-cultural context:** Which country would you like to do your PhD in if it weren't Norway? And why?
3. **Critique:** What do you think is the biggest problem with science today? And why?
4. **Navigation:** Do you have a favorite tool and why is it better than others?