

Seminar for PhD supervisors focusing on research ethics

09:15-09:20 Welcome by the Research Dean, professor Tore Nilssen

09:20 **Research ethics**

Elisabeth Staksrud, professor (Dept. of Media and Communication, UiO), head of NESH

09:20-10:00 Introduction to NESH, national ethical guidelines and its role versus NSD – Q&A

10:00-10:15 Break

10:15-10:40 CASE: from NESH (discussion in groups)

10:40-11:00 Report back from groups

11:00-11:10 Break

11:10-11:30 Informed consent – issues to consider

11:30-12.30 **Lunch**

12:30 **Research integrity in the role as supervisor**

*Bjørn Ramberg, professor (HF), Research Ethics Committee UiO
Knut Ruyter, professor (TF), Science Ombud*

12:30-12:40 Introduction: What we hope to achieve.

12:40-13:20 Advisor preparation: What I wish I'd been told.

13:20-13:30 Break

13:30-14:10 CASE: Co-authorship

14:10-14:20 Break

14:20-15:00 CASE: Adjudication committee

Reading list:

Ethical guidelines for supervisors

<https://www.uio.no/english/about/regulations/ethical-guidelines/ethical-guidelines-supervisors/index.html>

The basic norms of science: the so-called CUDOS norms

<https://www.forskningsetikk.no/en/resources/the-research-ethics-library/systematic-and-historical-perspectives/research-values/>

Extracted summary from Matthias Kaiser:

«In 1942 the American sociologist Robert K. Merton formulated what he considered to be the basic ethos of science, i.e. its normative foundation (Merton 1973). His four primary norms are:

1. **Communalism** (the demand for communal possession of scientific knowledge; public knowledge).
2. **Universalism** (the rejection of any preferential rights to science; everyone has an equal opportunity irrespective of social background, nationality, etc).
3. **Disinterestedness** (independence from special interests).
4. **Organized Scepticism** (the demand for systematic criticism of scientific claims).

Later on he added a fifth norm:

5. **Originality** (rewards in the form of special recognition are awarded to those who first bring to light new knowledge).

In light of the preceding comments regarding the scientific academies and the scientific revolution, it is easy to see that Merton's 1st, 2nd and 4th norms are inspired by this history. It is, however, a slightly different case with the 3rd and 5th norms, and at the outset there is reason to believe that they stem from more recent times. The norm of disinterestedness seems to be clearly inspired by Max Weber's (1864–1920) postulate of value neutrality. This can be related to the expectation that science should be objective in the sense that it is not steered by subjective values and prejudices, and provides balanced presentations.

Merton's norm of originality serves to remind us that an adequate understanding of the social dynamics of science must include the established system of scientific credit. We find the norm of originality explicitly expressed in the PhD regulations of most universities.»

Academic co-authorship guidelines

International Committee of Medical Journal Editors. Defining the Role of Authors and Contributors (often called the Vancouver criteria)

<http://www.icmje.org/recommendations/browse/roles-and-responsibilities/defining-the-role-of-authors-and-contributors.html>

Authorship should be based on the following four criteria:

- Substantial contributions to the conception *or* design of the work; *or* other acquisition, analysis, *or* interpretation of data for the work; **AND**
- Drafting the work *or* revising it critically for important intellectual content; **AND**
- Final approval of the version to be published; **AND**
- Agreement to be accountable for all aspects of the work in ensuring that questions related to the accuracy or integrity of any part of the work are appropriately investigated and resolved.

Research ethics committees (Norway). Guidelines for research ethics in the social sciences, humanities, law and theology.

<https://www.forskningsetikk.no/en/guidelines/social-sciences-humanities-law-and-theology/guidelines-for-research-ethics-in-the-social-sciences-humanities-law-and-theology/>

Read § 25:

25 Co-authorship

Researchers must observe good publication practice, respect the contributions of other researchers, and observe recognised standards of authorship and cooperation.

Academic publishing is critical for ensuring that research is open and accountable. At the same time, publishing raises different ethical challenges and dilemmas. The research community is characterised by strong competition and great pressure to publish, which often puts pressure on recognised norms of research ethics. For example, the norm of originality may easily conflict with the norm of humility, and differences in authority and power may easily come into conflict with integrity and impartiality. Co-authorship is also linked to the distribution of responsibilities among different contributors.

In principle, four criteria define rightful authorship. They must all be met, as stated in the recommendations of the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (ICMJE):

1. The researcher must have made a substantial contribution to the conception and design or the data acquisition or the data analysis and interpretation; and
2. the researcher must have contributed to drafting the manuscript or critical revision of the intellectual content of the publication; and
3. the researcher must have approved the final version before publication; and
4. the researcher must be able to accept responsibility for and be accountable for the work as a whole (albeit not necessarily all technical details) unless otherwise specified. [31]

It is common practice in the humanities and social sciences to require that co-authors have actually helped write and complete the manuscript. Only those who have actually contributed to the analysis and writing of a scientific work may be credited as co-authors. In other words, it is not enough to have contributed to the intellectual work with the article in a broad sense, for example a combination of data acquisition, critical revision and approval of the end product. Other contributors must be credited or thanked in footnotes or a closing note (Acknowledgements).

All forms of honorary authorship are unacceptable. Authorship must be limited to persons who have provided significant intellectual input to the research. General guidance, provision of funding or data acquisition do not in themselves qualify for co-authorship.

An agreement must be made as early as possible in the research process, not least in large and interdisciplinary research projects, as to who will be listed as

the co-authors of a publication, and how responsibilities and tasks are to be distributed among the authors.

For those who read Norwegian please also see the new proposed ethical guidelines from NESH:

<https://www.forskningsetikk.no/aktuelt/horing-forskningsetiske-retningslinjer-for-samfunnsvitenskap-humaniora/>

Regulations for the degree of Philosophiae Doctor (PhD) at the University of Oslo

Read & 23

<https://www.uio.no/english/about/regulations/research/doctoral-degree/phdforskreng.html>

Example of supplementary guidelines from the Faculty of Theology

The following guidelines and procedure, which have been approved by the Dean, aim at securing, a) examiners that are leading scholars within the field (quality and network), and b) an impartial process and evaluation (compliance with rules; protecting the reputation of the candidate and the Faculty).

Guidelines

While common sense always needs to guide the evaluation of potential biases of a suggested examiner, the following is meant as basic criteria which need to be considered and respected.

- The examiner must not have a family or strong personal relationship with either a) the candidate, or b) the supervisor.
- The examiner must not have co-authored a scholarly work, including conference presentations, with either a) the candidate, or b) the supervisor.
- The examiner must not have been involved in the supervision of the candidate at any stage of the period when the thesis was researched/written. Further, a person that has served as an examiner of the candidate's previous academic work, such as an MA thesis, is ineligible for appointment as an examiner for the candidate's Ph.D. thesis.
- Examiners must not have had any previous close co-operation with one another, such as co-authoring scholarly works, including conference presentations.

- Other possible forms of professional collaboration between the supervisor and the examiners, or between examiners should be considered and evaluated before examiners are appointed.

Procedure

- Step 1: The Chair of the relevant research field (faggruppe) suggests to the Dean of Research at least four (4) suitable external examiners, and two (2) internal. The Chair may consult with the supervisor during this process. The Chair's suggestion must be based on a consideration not only of the best and most suitable scholars in the field, but also of possible relationships between the supervisor and those suggested, as well as any possible relationship between the candidate and all suggested examiners. Further, the Chair's suggestions must be submitted to the Dean of Research in writing, with a short description (ca. 100 words) of why a certain scholar is suggested (expertise; suitability). For each suggested examiner, contact information must also be provided (e-mail address, but a link to the university website where the suggested examiner works should also be included). After the Chair has suggested examiners, he or she has no more tasks to fulfil relative to the thesis defence process and should not be further involved.
- Step 2. The Dean of Research ranks the suggestions and begins the process of contacting potential examiners. As a potential examiner is contacted, the form "Declaration of Impartiality" must be attached to the email. It is the responsibility of the Dean of Research to make sure that the potential examiner fills out the form and returns it to him/her.
- Step 3. Once all three examiners have agreed and signed the form, the Dean of Research sends the information to the Dean for approval. At this point, the administrator in charge of thesis-defence processes is copied.