

Course Outline KULIS

Course title	Research ethics
Date/duration	Tuesday, 15-17
Lecturer	Univ.-Prof. Dr. Michael Fuchs
Teaching language	English
ECTS	5

Contents

Ethical questions arise when habits of action become disputable, because moral imperatives are neither obvious nor uncontroversial. Ethical reflection is also needed if such habits do not exist yet and action enters new territory. Science and research are fields of actions which aim at creating new territory: they are groundbreaking. Therefore, many ethical questions arise with scientific and technological innovations. Whether and how to apply new energy systems, how to deal with the worldwide data network or whether animal organs are to be implanted in humans, all these are ethical challenges which derive from research. Research ethics in the narrow sense shall, however, be understood as a field of ethical reflection which refers to the research itself, its methods, means and objectives. Three different dimensions constitute a reasonable classification of research ethics: Firstly, the internal rules of science and research as science, secondly, the rules of research as a process that intervenes with the world, for example in the sense of an experiment or a field study and thirdly, the question concerning the objective of research as a question of the moral assessment of possible applications.

Learning outcomes

This seminar is intended to assist students in developing a better understanding of the importance of ethics in science and research; to facilitate a room for free discussion on (real or fictitious) cases of scientific misconduct (fabrication and falsification of data, plagiarism, conflicts of interest, authorship issues, etc.), and to offer an overview of existing guidelines. Moreover, the seminar will provide a set of criteria for assessing ethical dilemmas in research on human beings and will be a place to discuss goals of research and science in society.

Teaching and learning methods

Presentations, discussions.

Course preparation

To be defined in the first meeting.

Additional literature

Assessment (%)
(methods of examination, requirements for awarding credit points)

Two case presentations (oral) (50%), one written case discussion (50%).

Contact details (lecturer)