

# 9202 PhD course in Theories of Culture 2024, University of South-Eastern Norway, Campus Bø

## Course description and program Spring 2024

The USN PhD program in Culture Studies includes both practical and theoretical disciplines. It builds on a broad interdisciplinary understanding of culture. The course offers participants a broad introduction to a variety of cultural theories, but it also offers the opportunity for participants to focus on the theories they find most relevant. The course considers the projects and project ideas of participants. It shows them the possibilities and limitation of cultural theories. It also emphasizes the importance of interdisciplinary approaches in their research, and the challenges it involves to work with culture in academia, as well as in practice in cultural professions.

### \* [Learning outcomes](#)

#### ***Knowledge***

- After completion of the course, the participants will have acquired insight in the cultural theories, facts, concepts, principles, and processes discussed in the course literature and teaching.
- They will be able to give a critical and independent account of various theories, and see the possibilities and limitations inherent in different theories of culture.

#### ***Skills***

The course will enable the participants to formulate and solve the problems and tasks they will encounter in their projects, whether they focus on cultural understanding, cultural policies, cultural production/aesthetic practices, or cultural education. Their proficiencies will be relevant in view of further research as well as other kinds of professional practice where analytical and critical thinking is essential.

#### ***General Competence***

The participants will learn how the knowledge and proficiencies they acquire through the course can be used in an independent way in situations where insight in cultural theory proves essential. The course will help them see cultural phenomena in a wider context, and contribute to strengthen their collaborative aptitudes, tolerance, responsibility, reflective ability and critical thinking, in research as well as professional life.

### \* Learning activities

The course includes lectures, and seminars in which participants will present their own text and comment on their fellows and take part in general discussions. Staff members involved in the course will also offer supervision.

### \* Participation/Compulsory work requirements

Prior to the course, the participants are asked to submit a short presentation of their PhD project. During the course, they will submit, and present, a draft essay.

### Course expenses

The course is free of charge. The participants must pay for the compendia if they wish them printed on paper, and for housing and meals during the course.

### \* Forms of assessment

After the course, students should submit a scientific essay, based on the text submitted during the course, as well as on course literature, lectures, seminars, supervision, and other course content. The essay should be 5000-6000 words, as well as references.

Participation in the course is graded as Approved or Not Approved; 80% attendance is a requirement to pass. The essay is graded as Passed, or Not Passed.

### \* Examination support material

All materials are permitted.

### Miscellaneous

#### \* Literature (reading list)

The new syllabus will be a revised version of last year's syllabus.

## Programme

In accord with the general idea of the PhD program in Culture Studies, this course in Theories of Culture should reach from a multidisciplinary to an interdisciplinary approach, integrating both practice and theory. It addresses students from the performing as well as the theoretical disciplines. The ambition of the course is to promote the understanding of culture as various cultural practices, and demonstrate the importance of theories in the investigation of a concrete practice. The lectures will provide surveys of the field, while concrete theoretical approaches will be taken up and discussed in relation to the participants' projects.

There will be a short, written assignment for the second meeting of the course, and a written essay as its exam. One week before the second meeting, the participants submit a sketch for the essay (max

2,000 words including references). The final essay, based on the draft, should be of 5,000–6,000 words (including references), and written in either Norwegian, Danish, Swedish, or English. Those who are enrolled in a PhD program should consider whether/how this essay may be part of their thesis (as an introductory/theoretical chapter/independent article etc.). The successful completion of the course gives 7,5 ECTS. More information concerning the assignments will be given during the course. The participants will be divided into peer groups, each with a scientific consultant. Max. 12 participants.

For more information contact PhD coordinator Jeanne Schoenwandt, [jeanne.m.schoenwandt@usn.no](mailto:jeanne.m.schoenwandt@usn.no), or Tobias Harding, [tobias.harding@usn.no](mailto:tobias.harding@usn.no), main teacher in the course.

## Digital seminars

January 25th

Zoom seminar

9:00 – 10:00 Presentation of the course, and the teachers. Presentation of the course participants and their dissertation work.

10:00 – 12:00 Professor emeritus Erling Bjurström (Linköping University): Cultural theory.

12-13 Lunch

13-14 Discussion about the lecture, and about the text by Hannah Arendt

14-16 Lecture: Professor Tobias Harding (University of South-Eastern Norway).

February 8th

Zoom seminar

9:00 – 11:00. Professor Halvard Vike (University of South-Eastern Norway): Culture and Power.

11:00 – 12:00 Discussion on the lecture, and about a text.

12:00 – 13:00 Lunch.

13:00 – 15:00 Lecture: Professor Mats Rosengren (Uppsala University). What it takes to see what one sees - rhetoric, perception, knowledge.

15-15.30 Concluding discussion.

## Seminar on Campus Bø

March 6<sup>th</sup>

Room ?

10.00-10.10 Introduction.

10.10-12.00 Lecture: Professor Inger Birkeland (University of South-Eastern Norway): Posthumanism and the concept of culture.

12.00 – 13.00 Lunch

13.00-15.00 Lecture: Associate Professor Marte Mangset (OsloMet): Knowledge, education, and power: What characterises bureaucrats?

15.00-16.00 Discussion about a text.

18.00 Free dinner for participants.

### March 7th

Room ?

10.00-12.00 Lecture: Associate Professor Iben Brinch (University of South-Eastern Norway): Place-based rhetoric and culture.

12.00-13.00 Lunch

13.00-14.00 Workshop.

14.00-16.00 Lecture: Associate Professor Kristian Bjørkdahl (University of Oslo).

### March 8th

Room ?

9.00-12.30. Discussion of student papers, with appointed commentators. Scientific consultants will be present.

12.30-13.15. Working Lunch.

13.15-14.00. Panel with the recent PhD students: Discussion on the uses of theories of culture.

14.15-15.00. Concluding discussion.

: Deadline for submission of essay (definitive version). The essay should be rooted in the course literature, lectures, and seminars. It should be of 5,000–6.000 words, scientifically formatted and including a bibliography.

**2024:** Grading (Passed/Not Passed).