



A National PhD School

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Run by a consortium of all faculties of Law and Humanities in the four major Norwegian universities, and the two major national theological institutions

Coordinated by the Faculty of Theology, University of Oslo

ATTR Guide for PhD Fellows

ATTR is a highly interdisciplinary environment. Different academic fields have specific traditions and ways of writing, which implies challenges with regard to giving and receiving feedback. Respondents should be respectful towards other fields, while at the same time trusting that they are able to contribute valuable perspectives from their own fields and expertise. Interdisciplinary and cross-disciplinary research is becoming increasingly important, both in the universities and in the dissemination and use of academic insights in society. Your participation in ATTR will help building important competence.

1. PhD Seminars

Central to all ATTR seminars are the PhD fellows' presentations of papers based on their dissertation work, with prepared responses by fellow PhD researchers. This activity is intended to promote academic quality and expediency to the fellows' research, and also to prepare for future work-life within and outside of the academia. The seminars aim to develop writing and presentation skills, abilities to identify and critically discuss issues of method and analytical perspectives. They also provide opportunities to build interdisciplinary networks.

Given the interdisciplinary nature of ATTR, the focus of discussion will be primarily on methodological matters and interdisciplinary insights, which promotes important skills both for the dissertation research and for different future career options. The PhD seminars pursue these learning goals:

Each participant will be assigned two papers to respond to. We aim to distribute the papers along with the list of groups/presenters/respondents approximately three weeks before the seminar. Participants submit their written responses to the ATTR Head of Administration, Ina Marie Ausland (i.m.ausland@teologi.uio.no) a few days before the seminar.

Paper presentation sessions

Each session in the PhD seminar lasts up to 75 minutes. The time is provisionally divided in this way:

- Presentation of PhD paper, 10–15 minutes
- Two prepared responses, 5–10 minutes each
- Open discussion for the remaining time

All PhD fellows are expected to have read all papers in their seminar group and to prepare written responses to two papers. These responses are submitted to the ATTR administration in advance of the seminar (see above). If, for some reason, the respondent should be prevented from appearing in the seminar, the written response may be read by the group leader as a backup solution. Normally, however, the responses are orally presented by the respondent during the discussion. In addition, the response would preferably be communicated in writing (perhaps in an edited form) to the presenter after the seminar.

Presenting a paper

Points to consider when preparing your presentation: Make sure that you introduce your project in such a way that the audience understands its main points and challenges, especially with regard to method. Remember that time is limited; the more precise you are, the more time for valuable responses from your interlocutors. It might be a good idea to time your

Web: <https://www.tf.uio.no/english/research/phd/research-schools/attr/> ; Mail: i.m.ausland@teologi.uio.no

Postal address: ATTR, Faculty of Theology, PO Box 1023 Blindern, N-035 Oslo, Norway

Street address: Blindernveien 9, 0371 Oslo



presentation before the seminar, in order to keep the time limits. If you wish to use a power point presentation or handouts, please contact the ATTR administration. If you submitted a “reading guide” along with your paper, it could serve to guide the focus of your presentation.

Offering a response

When responding to other fellows’ presentations, please make sure to respectfully provide affirmative as well as critical comments as you see reasonable. If possible, be specific in your praise as well as in your challenges. Try to approach your interlocutor on her or his own terms, but also to establish an outside view of the presented paper. You are expected to focus on method and analytical approaches.

2. Plenary sessions

PhD members are encouraged to take actively part also in discussion in plenary sessions, and to involve academically in the topics presented during the lectures and presentations. Two requirements are designed to promote this interaction.

Mandatory reading

The lecturers and presenters during the seminar will provide short lists of mandatory reading for each theme. PhD fellows are obliged to read these texts and to reflect on how the research, and especially the methods and analytical frameworks presented there, might be relevant for their own thesis work.

Short written reflection

Each PhD fellow is obliged to select one or two items from the list of mandatory reading, and to write a short text reflecting on how the research, and especially the methods and analytical frameworks presented there, might be relevant for their own thesis work. The document should be 1, maximum 2 pages long. It shall be submitted to the ATTR office (i.m.ausland@teologi.ui.no) along with the written responses (above), a few days before the seminar starts. These reflections will be distributed to the presenters in the plenary sessions, who may choose to relate to them during their talk.

Optional: Questions. Designated observer

If, during mandatory reading, a PhD fellow wishes to pose questions or make remarks to the read text, it is possible to formulate a sheet of questions and remarks and send it to the ATTR administration ahead of the seminar. These points will be distributed to the relevant presenter.

If a PhD fellow develops a particular interest for a theme related in the mandatory reading or in one of the lectures, she or he may ask to serve as “designated observer” during the plenary lecture. The designated observer would the occupy an early slot for a substantial response during the Q/A part of the plenary presentation. Members that wish to fill this role should write an email to the scientific director (terje.stordalen@teologi.uio.no) and announce their wish.