



APPLIES TO ACADEMIC YEAR 2012/2013

## **ELE 3741 Vikings Roots to a Feminine Society: Reflected in Norwegian Literature**

### **Programme**

Elective

### **Responsible for the course**

Roberta W Berg

### **Department**

Department of Communication - Culture and Languages

### **Term**

According to study plan

### **ECTS Credits**

7,5

### **Language of instruction**

English

### **Introduction**

In the international business community, being able to read people is at least as important as being able to read a spreadsheet or a budget. Just as education in finance and accounting is needed to achieve numeracy, education in how people relate to each other and what values motivate their actions is necessary to achieve literacy in human interaction - the foundation of good leadership. The study of a culture's literature, learning to read between the lines, gives an almost first-hand experience of situations that allows us to come as close as possible to actually experiencing that culture's mores, business and otherwise. Norwegian literature presents us with a composite picture of this society's history, psychology, ethics, and sociology over time; reading Scandinavian leadership and management theory in conjunction with this literature sheds even more light on Norwegian values, management practices, leadership style, and gender roles. Using this combination of sources, the course will monitor the evolution of Norwegian values, from their Viking roots to the feminine society of 21st century Norway - and view these values from a managerial perspective. Being able to use a culture's literature to gain in-depth understanding about that culture will make our students more well-rounded individuals, better able to learn about and thus do business not only in Norway, but also in other cultures they will encounter in their future careers.

### **Learning outcome**

#### **Acquired knowledge**

After completed course should have:

- Learned how basic elements of Norwegian/Scandinavian leadership style are reflected in a selection of Norwegian literature that portrays Norwegian value patterns over time.
- Learned how the actions of present-day Norwegian public figures - organisational leaders and politicians - relate to these values patterns.
- Refined their independent research capabilities through group assignments and researching Norwegian business leaders/politicians.

#### **Acquired skills**

After completed course students will be able to:

- Interpret management and leadership texts as well as analyze literary texts.
- Make connections between Norwegian business leaders/politicians, their leadership styles and the values presented by course literature.
- Use their creative abilities and do independent research; write literature of their own reflecting course material and focusing on a selection of Norwegian leaders - men and women.

#### **Reflection**

This course should whet our students' appetites, inspiring them to turn to literature, Norwegian and other, as a source of intellectual and emotional challenge and enlightenment. Students should be able to reflect upon how powerful a mirror literature holds up to a society, and be motivated to apply their analytical skills to and learn from other literature, about other cultures.

#### **Prerequisites**

The ability and desire to read – a lot.

#### **Compulsory reading**

### Books:

Arnold, Martin. 2007. *The Vikings: Wolves of War*. Rowman & Littlefield Publishers. Chapter 1, pp. 15-31 From Odin to Christ  
Asbjørnsen, Peter Christen and Jørgen Moe. Tr. Pat Shaw Iversen and Carl Norman. 1960. *Norwegian Folk Tales*. Dreyers Forlag. Selection of fairy tales, ca. 18 pages  
Collett, Camilla. 1855. *The District Governor's Daughters*  
Hofstede, Geert. 1994. *Cultures and Organizations: Intercultural Cooperation and Its Importance for Survival: Software of the Mind*. McGraw-Hill International. Chap. 4 - "He, she, and (s)he"  
Kvideland, Reimund and Henning K. Sehmsdorf, eds.. *Scandinavian Folk Belief and Legend*. ca. 2 pages  
Terry, Patricia. Tr.. 1969. *Poems of the Vikings: Sayings of the High One*. Bobbs-Merrill Educational Publishing. pp. 13-38  
Trompenaars, Fons. 1996. *Riding the Waves of Culture: Understanding Cultural Diversity in Business*. Nicholas Brealey Publishing London. Chapters 4-8, 10-11  
Undset, Sigrid ; translated from the Norwegian by C. Archer and J.S. Scott. Grosset & Dunlap. 1923. *The Wreath. The bridal wreath*. (353 pages)

Undset, Sigrid. 1929. *Kristin Lavransdatter: The Wreath*

### Other:

Bjerke, Bjørn. 1999. "Scandinavian Culture" from *Business Leadership and Culture*. Edgar Elgar: Cheltenham, UK. Chap. 8  
Excerpts: *The Burning of Njal*  
Ibsen, Henrik. 1855. *Lady Inger of Ostrat*. Penn State Electronic Classics Series Publication  
Ibsen, Henrik. 1879. *A Doll's House*. Oxford University Press  
Ibsen, Henrik. 1892. *The Master Builder*. Oxford University Press  
Sandemose, Aksel. 1933. *The Law of Jante*  
Schramm-Nielsen, J., P. Lawrence, K.H. Sivesind. 2004. "Chap. 1 Making the Case," and "Chap. 2 Context from Management in Scandinavia". Edward Elgar, Cheltenham, UK. Chap. 1 - Chap. 2, pp. 1-49  
Vik, Bjørg. 1974. *Two Acts for Five Women*  
Øverland, Arnulf. 1937. *Du må ikke sove*  
Ås, Berit. 1979. *Master Suppression Techniques*

### Recommended reading

#### Course outline

- Week #1 (4):  
Introduction to the Course: Cultural value definitions, for example, masculine vs feminine. Viking mythology: "From Odin to Christ," "The Beginning and the End," *Hávamál*, excerpts, "Sayings of the High One." Excerpts: *The Story of the Burning of Njal*. (Film)
- Week #2(4):  
Henrik Ibsen: *Lady Inger of Ostrat*. (1855) (Film)
- Week #3(2):  
"Envy and Fear in Scandinavian Folk Tradition." Selected memorats: "My What an Appetite She Has," "To Make a Girl Love You," "Envy Kills," "Inger Petterst." Selected fairy tales: "The Princess Who Always Had to Have the Last Word," "The Old Woman Against the Stream," "White-Bear-King Valemon," "The Ash Lad and the Good Helpers."

#### Group Assignment #1: Due Week 5

- Week #4(4):  
Scandinavian Leadership and Management: Tor Grennes
- Week #5(2):  
Camilla Collett: *The District Governor's Daughters* (1855)
- Week #6(4):  
Henrik Ibsen: *A Doll's House* (1879) (Film)
- Week #7(4):  
Henrik Ibsen: *The Master Builder* (1892) - Guest lecturers: Marianne Mørk Larsen & Frank Jørstad

#### Group Assignment #2: Due Week 9

- Week #8 (4):  
Flow of Values, USA/Norway. Guest lecturer: Steinar Bryn.  
Women leaders in Norway.
- Week #9 (4)  
Sigrid Undset: *Kristin Lavransdatter – The Wreath* (1920) (Film)
- Week #10(2):  
Arnulf Øverland - *Du må ikke sove* (1937) Guest: Frank Jørstad

- Aksel Sandemose: "The Law of Jante" (1933)
- Group Assignment #3: Due Week 12.
- Week #11(4):  
Bjrg Vik: *Two Acts for Five Women* (1974). Berit Ås: "Master Suppression Techniques" (1979)  
Guest lecturer: Guri Hjeltnes ?? / Berit von der Lippe ??
- Week #12(2):  
Yet to be decided upon.

### Computer-based tools

### Learning process and workload

Students will attend lectures and view selected films in connection with the reading list. They must have read the literature assignment before coming to class and be prepared to discuss it. Guest lecturers will bring added insight into these discussions. Students will work in groups to prepare 3 assignments which involve independent research on assigned present-day Norwegian businesspeople and politicians. They will be asked to present their research and then to write a "short story" centered on this character in which they bring the Norwegian values into play which have been identified in the course.

Recommended use of hours:

Activity	Hours
Participation at lectures	40
Assigned Reading	100
Preparation of 3 group assignments 3 x 15 =	57
Individual 3-hour Final Exam:	3
<b>Total recommended use of time</b>	<b>200</b>

### Use of hours

40 hours - Lectures  
5 hours - Conferences, feedback, administration  
45 hours total

### Examination

Final grade in the course will be based on the following activities and weighted as follows:

- Portfolio evaluation: accounts for 60 % of the grade in the course.  
The portfolio shall consist of the three (3) obligatory group assignments. This part of the grade will be based upon the two best of the three.
- A three (3) hour individual written exam: accounts for 40 % of the grade in the course.

Both portfolio and individual exam must be passed to obtain final grade in the course.

### Examination code(s)

ELE 37411 - Portfolio evaluation: accounts for 60% of the grade in the course.  
ELE 37412 - Individual written exam: accounts for 40% of the grade in the course.

### Examination support materials

No support materials permitted for the final examination.

### Re-sit examination

A re-sit for the final examination is held at the next scheduled course. Students who have failed the group requirements will be able to re-take that activity either the following year (if still relevant) or by appointment with the course responsible.

### Additional information