

Evaluation: a constitutive part of research practice

Friday, 19 November 2010

Faculté des lettres et sciences humaines,
Espace Louis Agassiz, salle RO14
University of Neuchâtel

This conference addresses evaluation in its multiple forms as a constitutive part of research practice. Prior to any external measure or technique of evaluation, researchers themselves are indeed engaged in the evaluation of their own and their colleagues' work. Just how, when and where does such collegial evaluation proceed? In what circumstances, according to which criteria and contingencies? Is evaluation among peers too subjective, arbitrary or otherwise problematic, as sometimes suggested? In (re-)examining these questions, the conference emphasizes the importance of a proper understanding of research activities in their own terms, understanding which should inform the establishment or critique of any « external » system of evaluation.

Conference presentations focus upon different aspects of evaluation constitutive of everyday research practice, publication and citation, both in the humanities and the natural sciences. The conference languages are English and French.

Program

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| 8.45-9.00 | Welcome |
| 9.00-9.15 | Introduction: Jean-François Perret (University of Neuchâtel) |
| 9.15-10.15 | Stefan Hirschauer (University of Mainz)
<i>Oral communication in journal peer review</i>
This presentation examines peer review in a leading sociology journal and, in particular, how judgments are arrived at by its editorial committee members. It is based upon a long-term ethnography. |
| 10.15-11.15 | Andrew Carlin (St Columb's College, Derry City)
<i>"The Literature": Corpus status and problems of differentiation in academic writing</i>
This presentation examines how "The Literature" is constituted, assessed and used in academic writing within the humanities. In particular, it examines how texts exhibit their "corpus status", as a recognizable part of a distinctive discipline. |
| 11.15-11.30 | Break |
| 11.30-12.30 | Alain Bovet (University of Neuchâtel)
<i>La citation comme évaluation? Approches bibliométrique et compréhensive des pratiques de citation</i>
Bibliometrics treats citation scores as indicators of a positive evaluation of the cited texts. A qualitative analysis of citations questions this assumption. How are publications evaluated via particular citations? In answering this question, the presentation contributes to opening the black box of citation. |
| 12.30-1.45 | Lunch |

1.45-2.45	<p>Martina Merz (University of Lucerne) <i>Warranting knowledge:</i> <i>Epistemic strategies of collaborative practice</i></p> <p>What strategies do physicists engage in, collaboratively, to warrant their knowledge? The presentation offers an ethnographically informed answer to this question.</p>
2.45-3.45	<p>Philippe Sormani (University of Neuchâtel) <i>Unique adequacy: the local production of a physics discovery</i></p> <p>This presentation is based on the video recording of the local production of a physics discovery. The video recording is analyzed to specify how the involved physicist proceeds and accomplishes his experiment so that it can count as a disciplinary success.</p>
3.45-4.00	Break
4.00-4.45	<p>Discussion</p> <p><i>Research and evaluation: a tricky tandem?</i></p>

Registration

Conference attendance is free. For organizational reasons, we would appreciate if you register by the **10th of November 2010**, by sending a message to the following address:

Secteur Qualité – Unine
Faubourg de l'Hôpital 106
CH-2000 Neuchâtel
Contact: philippe.sormani@unine.ch

Organizing committee

Philippe Sormani , Alain Bovet & Jean–François Perret (Secteur Qualité, University of Neuchâtel)

Support:

The conference is kindly supported by the Rectors' Conference of the Swiss Universities. The conference is related to the research project "Mesurer les performances de la recherche" (2008-2011).