

COE-SEMINAR

(in English)



Knowledge of the natural and the social: How do they differ and what do they have in common?

Dr. Zhichang Zhu

Combining natural and social knowledge under the framework of systems science is a main theme and purpose of the COE project in the Knowledge School. As the project approaches to completion, it is a good time to ask whether this is a realistic target or an illusive dream. This seminar will look at the question from the philosophy, sociology and practice of science perspectives.

The seminar will present that knowledge of the natural and the social are significantly different yet have much in common. The differences lie at the levels of complexity they engage, the modes of explanation they demand, the investigation aims they allow and whether they assert a 'double hermeneutic' effect to the behavior of the studied subjects. Knowledge are in common in that they are all construed out of available resources, justified based on the consequences of acting upon them, settled until better, competing alternatives emerge, and serving as a walking stick for beating unknown paths in human life. Because of this, there can be no hierarchy of knowledge or unity of methodology, and dialogical encounters guided by situational ethics, not professional deafness or theory-inspired integration based on ontological/instrumental fallacies, are a viable strategy for morally and practically wise actions.

The seminar will conclude with some practical implications for the natural-social sciences integration project.

Title: *Knowledge of the natural and the social*

Main Speaker: **Dr. Zhichang Zhu**, University of Hull, UK; Visiting Research Professor at JAIST

Date and Time: Feb. 21st (Thu.), 15:00 – 16:30

Place: Collaboration Room (KS 3rd Building, 6FL)

