

COURSE OUTLINE

1. GENERAL

SCHOOL	SOCIAL SCIENCES		
DEPARTMENT	INTERDEPARTMENTAL		
LEVEL	UNDERGRADUATE		
COURSE CODE:	SKE611	SEMESTER	3
COURSE TITLE:	Epistemology of the Social Sciences		
INDEPENDENT TEACHING ACTIVITIES		WEEKLY HOURS	ECTS
Lectures		3	6
COURSE TYPE:	General background (Elective)		
PREREQUISITES COURSES:	None		
INSTRUCTION/EXAM LANGUAGE:	Greek		
OFFERED TO ERASMUS STUDENTS	YES		
COURSE WEB PAGE (URL)	https://elearn.uoc.gr/course/view.php?id=897		

2. LEARNING OUTCOMES

Learning Outcomes
<p>The course introduces students to fundamental issues in the epistemology and methodology of the social sciences. The course examines the subject of research and the basic approaches in the field of epistemology. It also highlights the differences and similarities between the natural and social sciences, as well as among different branches of the social sciences. Particular emphasis will be placed on presenting discussions on epistemology and methodology, primarily in three fields: economics, sociology, and psychology.</p> <p>During the sessions, participants are expected to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students are expected to understand basic concepts of epistemology • To distinguish the main schools of thought in the field of epistemology in the social sciences (positivism, hermeneutics, dialectics, critical theory, pragmatism, social constructivism, etc.). • Be able to compare different methodological and epistemological positions, highlighting their premises, strengths, and weaknesses. • Recognize the historical conditions of the emergence and development of the social sciences and their impact on the formation of methods. • Evaluate how epistemological assumptions influence research design, method selection, and the process of data interpretation.
General Competences
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Searching for, analyzing, and synthesizing data and information, using the necessary technologies

- Adapting to new situations
- Working independently
- Teamwork
- Exercising critical and self-critical thinking
- Promoting free, creative, and inductive thinking

3. COURSE CONTENT

The course is conducted primarily through lectures on the basic themes, concepts and methods in the field of the History of Psychology. The content of the course is linked to the 3 main axes of the curriculum: **Scientific Foundations** [1], **Scientific Research and Critical Thinking** [2] **Ethics and Social Responsibility** [3].

Week 1: The subject of inquiry and basic approaches in the field of epistemology. The concept of epistemology is defined, and the basic approaches in the field of epistemology are presented. In addition, the differences and similarities between the Natural and Social Sciences are examined. [1,2,3,4]

Week 2: Basic concepts of epistemology and the dominant method of economic science The concepts of theory, methodology, method are defined, and the method of orthodox neoclassical economics (hypothetical-deductive method) is examined in detail. [1,2]

Weeks 3: Other basic approaches to the methodology of economic science

Other basic methods used in economic science are examined, such as: Deduction – Induction – Popper – Instrumentalism – Operationalism – Marxist method – Austrian method. [1,2]

Week 4: Kuhn-Lakatos and the transition from the classical to the neoclassical school

The evolution of economic science from the classical to the neoclassical school is examined through the lens of the theories of Kuhn and Lakatos. [1,2]

Week 5: Kuhn-Lakatos and the latest developments in economic thought. The latest developments in economic science are examined through the lens of the theories of Kuhn and Lakatos. [1,2]

Week 6: The relationship between the social, biological, and psychological in the works of Émile Durkheim and Marcel Mauss. [1,2]

Week 7: Phenomenology, Social Constructivism. Focusing on Berger and Luckmann's renowned work *The Social Construction of Reality*, we will examine the contribution of the phenomenological school, particularly to understanding how scientific knowledge about the social world is structured, and we will focus on how, according to this approach, the living world provides the foundation for the development of scientific concepts. [1,2]

Week 8: Major epistemological shifts in the evolution of historical science from the

Enlightenment to the present. [1,2]

Week 9: When History Meets the Social Sciences: The Formation of Historical Sociology and Its Epistemological Prerequisites. [1,2]

Week 10: The place and role of Psychology in the system of sciences. The position of Psychology at the intersection of the natural and social sciences is examined, along with the implications this has for the formation of psychological knowledge. The contribution of Piaget's genetic epistemology to the epistemological demarcation of psychology and its limitations. [1,2]

Week 11: Basic Approaches to the Subject Matter and Research Methodology of Psychology
The basic approaches to the subject matter of Psychology and the methodology of psychological research are highlighted, as well as the epistemological assumptions underlying each of them. [1,2]

Week 12: The Epistemological Foundations of Major Schools of Thought in Psychology. The influence of empiricism, positivism, and pragmatism on the development of behaviorism and cognitive behaviorism is examined. Additionally, the contribution of phenomenology to the development of humanistic and existential psychology is analyzed. In conclusion, the emergence of critical approaches in the field of psychology is examined. [1,2]

Week 13: Presentation of assignments - Review - General conclusions [1,2,3,4]

4. INSTRUCTIONAL and LEARNING METHODS - EVALUATION

INSTRUCTION METHOD.	In class (face-to-face). These meetings include lectures, short video demonstrations, and discussions.																	
INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES USED	Use of ICT in teaching Support for learning (communication with students and delivery of all course material) via the UoC e-learn online platform (moodle)																	
TEACHING ORGANIZATION	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="699 1507 962 1563"><i>Activity</i></th> <th data-bbox="970 1507 1193 1563"><i>Semester Course Load (hours)</i></th> <th data-bbox="1201 1507 1361 1563"><i>ECTS</i></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="699 1563 962 1597">Lectures</td> <td data-bbox="970 1563 1193 1597">39</td> <td data-bbox="1201 1563 1361 1597">1,56</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="699 1597 962 1630">Independent study</td> <td data-bbox="970 1597 1193 1630">110</td> <td data-bbox="1201 1597 1361 1630">4</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="699 1630 962 1664">Final exam</td> <td data-bbox="970 1630 1193 1664">2</td> <td data-bbox="1201 1630 1361 1664">0,08</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="699 1664 962 1709">Course total</td> <td data-bbox="970 1664 1193 1709">102</td> <td data-bbox="1201 1664 1361 1709">5,68</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	<i>Activity</i>	<i>Semester Course Load (hours)</i>	<i>ECTS</i>	Lectures	39	1,56	Independent study	110	4	Final exam	2	0,08	Course total	102	5,68		
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STUDENT EVALUATION	Students are evaluated based on their final exams. Students are given the option to prepare and present assignments as part of the course.																	

5. BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Avgelis, A. (2010). *Introduction to the Philosophy of Science*. Stamoulis.
- Dafermos, M. (2023). *Epistemology of Psychology: A Critical Introduction*. Kritiki.
- Deligiorgi, A. (2011). *Philosophy of the Social Sciences: Positivist, Interpretive, and Dialectical Approaches*. Ziti Publications.
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- Kouzelis, G. (ed.) (1993). *Epistemology*. Nisos.
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- Skordoulis, K. (2014). *Scientific Knowledge*. Topos.